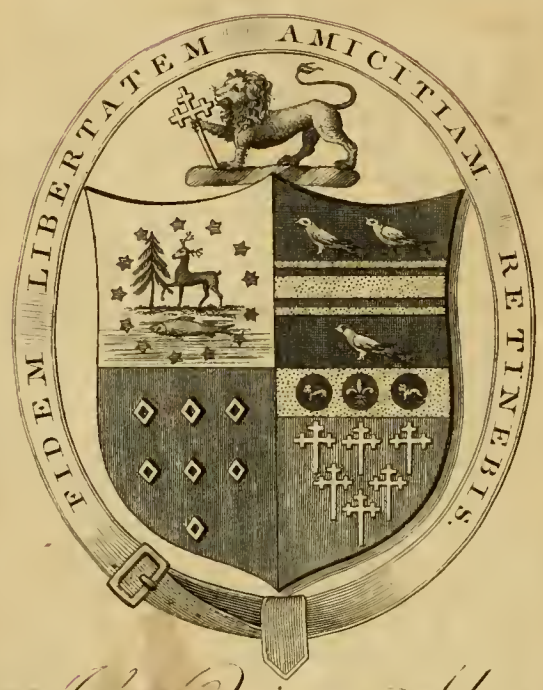




Joh. Quincy Adams.

ADAMS 112.4

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A COMPLEAT

Body of Divinity

IN

Two Hundred and *Fifty*

EXPOSITORY LECTURES

ON THE

Aſſembly's Shorter Catechiſm

WHEREIN

The DOCTRINES of the CHRISTIAN RELIGION are unfolded, their Truth confirm'd, their Excellence diſplay'd, their Uſefulneſs improv'd; contrary Errors & Vices refuted & expos'd, Objections anſwer'd, Controverſies ſettled, Caſes of Conſcience reſolv'd; and a great Light thereby reflected on the preſent Age.

By the REVEREND & LEARNED

SAMUEL WILLARD, M. A.

Late Paſtor of the *South Church* in *Boſton*, and Vice-Preſident of *Harvard College* in *Cambridge*, in *New-England*.

Prefac'd by the Paſtors of the ſame Church.

HEB. xiii. 7. *Remember Them — who have ſpoken to you the Word of* GOD: *Whoſe Faith follow, conſidering the End of their Converſation.*
HEB. xi. 4. *By Faith — He obtained witneſs, that He was Righteous*; GOD *teſtifying of his Gifts: And by it He being dead, yet ſpeaketh.*
II. TIM. i. 13. *Hold faſt the Form of ſound Words, which thou haſt heard of Me, in Faith & Love which is in* CHRIST JESUS.

BOSTON in *NEW-ENGLAND*:

Printed by B. GREEN and S. KNEELAND for B. ELIOT and D. HENCHMAN, and Sold at their Shops.

MDCCXXVI.

ADAMS 117.4

The PREFACE.

THE late Reverend and Learned *Author* of the following *Lectures*, has been ſo univerſally and juſtly admir'd and celebrated in theſe Parts of the World, for his eminent Capacity Piety Wiſdom, his deep and perſpicuous Inſight into the moſt difficult Points of Divinity, and his moſt judicious and accurate manner of expreſſing and clearing, as well as moſt uſeful application of them; that there's no need of our ſetting forth his Character, either for the Information of his *Country-men*, or their Inducement to peruſe the large Compoſure that now preſents it ſelf to their View. We need only ſay, —*'Tis Mr. Willard's*,— and 'tis enough to Recommend it to their high Reſpect and diligent Attention; and that it falls not ſhort of his other excellent Performances, which as well as his rare Accompliſhments and Conduct while alive, have deſervedly gain'd him ſo great a Fame & Eſteem among us.

AND as for *Strangers* that may come to the ſight of the preſent Work, we need only refer them to the *Extract* out of the *Funeral Sermon* annexed, wherein the Author's Superiour Character is very juſtly drawn; in order to their entertaining ſuch an Apprehenſion of Him, as will be enough to induce them to look into the ſucceeding Lectures, and diſcover more than has even yet been ſaid of his great and excellent Abilities in ſearching out Explaining and Applying the important Truths of Reveal'd Religion.

ALL we conceive we have to do in this *Preface* is, — To give ſome Account of the framing and publiſhing of the following Work, for the Information of all that ſee it; To remove the Prejudice of many from the Largeneſs of it, which might otherwiſe diſcourage them from attempting to peruſe it; To prevent thoſe undue Conceptions both of it and the Author, which may be apt to riſe in their minds from thoſe Imperfections that are only owing to the Diſadvantages of the poſthumous Publication; To recommend it to all ſorts of Readers, eſpecially to Students of Divinity; and then Commend it to the neceſſary and effectual Bleſſing of Almighty GOD, to whoſe Glory and Service it is moſt humbly devoted.

LET the Reader then be pleas'd to know, that the Reverend Author having gone thro' the Explication of the *Aſſembly's Shorter Catechiſm* in a more compendious manner among the Children of his People, and having therein little more than Methodiz'd the Subject and laid out the ſeveral Heads to be more largely treated of; He did accordingly on *Jan.* 31. 1687,8. enter on theſe more elaborate Diſcourſes upon them. This he performed *Monthly* on the *Tueſdays* in the *Afternoon*, in his Publick Congregation; and ſo continued till *April* 1. 1707. ſoon after which he was prevented from proceeding by a Fit of Sickneſs, out of which he was ſcarce well recovered before he ſuddenly Died *. And as he judg'd the aforeſaid *Catechiſm* to be one of the moſt uſeful *Syſtems* of Divinity extant, as it is commonly learnt & known among our People; He applied himſelf to Explain it fully & clearly to them, and to conſider what was moſt material in the whole Circle of Religion, in it's proper place: and not only lead them into the right Diſcernment of the Doctrines of it, and confirm their Faith therein both from Scripture and Reaſon; but alſo in the cloſe of his ſeveral Lectures to ſhow the farther beauty uſe and excellence of the Truths explain'd, by reducing them to a ſuitable Practice and applying them to the Hearts and Lives of his Hearers. And as the former Expoſitions were more adapted to the Young and weaker ones; ſo theſe were rais'd to exerciſe and entertain the Riper and ſtronger Minds, of more enlarg'd Capacities and more advanced Knowledge.

THESE larger Lectures therefore ſoon ſent forth their Fame, and drew many of the moſt knowing and judicious Perſons both from Town and College, who heard them with ſo great a Reliſh, that they have ever ſince the Author's Death, which was on *Sept.* 12. 1707, been earneſtly deſirous of their Publication, and given ſuch a Character of them as has continually rais'd the ſame Deſire in others: And this has very ſtrangely rather increas'd than declin'd for theſe Eighteen Years among us; ſo as hardly any Book has been more paſſionately wiſh'd for, till this growing Country is become now capable of taking off the Impreſſion of ſo great a Work, the largeſt that was ever Printed Here, and the firſt of Divinity in a *Folio* Volumn.

* *Ætatis* 68.

BUT in the ſetting it forth, the Publiſhers have found themſelves under many *Diſadvantages*, which have much retarded the Preſs, and been thro' great Difficulty at length overcome. For as the *Manuſcripts* lay ſeparate in ſeveral *Octavos*; ſome were Originals of the Author's own hand-writing, and others were but Tranſcripts from them, in which were ſeveral ſmall Miſtakes, both in the Scriptures cited and in diverſe Words and Pointings, and ſundry obſcure places ſo very difficult to read, as oblig'd us to conſult with one another with the utmoſt caution, to decide their Certainty. And that which ſtill increas'd our Labour was, not only the great Obſcurity of the Pointings both in the Copies and Originals, but their having the *Scriptures* mentioned in *Figures* only, without the words of the Text inſerted: which it ſeems the Author left to ſelect or look for, or pronounce *Memoriter* in his Publick Exerciſe, as he judged moſt convenient and pertinent to the matter in hand; inaſmuch as there being ſuch Numbers of them and ſeveral often ſet together of the ſame Importance, we cannot ſuppoſe that he recited them all. This has therefore oblig'd us to ſearch the Scriptures figur'd, and to uſe our beſt Diſcretion both in ſelecting thoſe we tho't moſt proper to be publiſhed at Length, and in ſetting ſo much and no more of the Text than ſeem'd needful to illuſtrate the labouring Subject. And then another unhappineſs attending the Publication was, that thro' the vaſtneſs of the Compoſure and the Difficulty of Reading, Pointing and Scoring the Manuſcripts, Diſtinguiſhing the Capitals and Figures, and Correcting the Preſs; the Labour was much too great for any ſingle Perſon, unleſs he had been out of all other Buſineſs, to undertake: Upon which account the Work being diſpers'd into the hands of *many*, it cannot be ſuppos'd to come forth with that beautiful *Symmetry* which it wou'd have done in the hands of the Author, or of any one accurate Perſon that had Corrected the whole.

THE Reader therefore muſt make proper *Allowances* for ſuch things as theſe: and where he meets with any Word or Paſſage obſcure, or Pointing miſplaced, by no means aſcribe it to the accurate Author; but either to the miſtake of the Preſs, or of the Manuſcripts, or elſe to our uncertainty of the place therein: we being very cautious of preſuming to mend or alter, unleſs where the caſe appear'd too plain to be doubted; and where it was dubious, we rather choſe to leave it as it ſeemed to be, than change it as we might be apt to think for the better. But there is this happy Circumſtance to prevent the Reader from fearing any very material Error in the *Tranſcript*: that the worthy Copier Mr. *Simon Willard*, to whoſe Memory we are for this ſo deeply indebted, was not only a Son of the Revd. Author and very well acquainted with his manner of Writing; but as he made it his conſtant Practice on the *Lord's Day Evenings* to repeat in his Family one of the Lectures from his own written Copy, while another well inſtructed look'd over the Original Manuſcript, with an Intent to obſerve wherein they differ'd in Reading; ſo when any Variation appear'd, he took care to correct his own Copy immediately, which is the ſame we have us'd when we happened not to find the Original.

WE muſt alſo here obſerve, that tho' the 220th Lecture was the laſt the Author deliver'd in Publick; yet in the midſt of many Avocations both from his numerous Flock & the College, the weighty Care of Both together lying on him for ſeveral Years before his Death, he had moſt diligently redeem'd his time and prepared about 26 others, even to the end of the 100th *Queſtion*, which contains the Explication of the *Preface of the Lord's Prayer*; when at the Entrance of the *Petitions* he was taken up to turn them to Praiſes. Upon which account we have been obliged to ſupply the reſt with his ſhorter Exerciſes in his former Expoſitions: where we therefore have a *Specimen* of them, and may plainly ſee that even they themſelves, tho' ſo brief and ſo long ſince made, yet were worthy of the Light, if theſe larger ones had not more agreably ſuperceeded them. We ſhould have been glad indeed if the Reverend Author, who improved every thing he took in hand, had finiſhed the larger Lectures on *the Lord's Prayer*, and ſo gone thro' the *Seven* remaining *Queſtions*, and perfected the whole in a ſimilar manner: But as he himſelf obſerv'd when under apprehenſions of being prevented from proceeding farther, there is the leſs need of an Expoſition on *this part* of the Catechiſm, ſince there's ſcarce any Subject of Divinity that has been more frequently conſidered by learned Men: and we ſhou'd therefore rather adore the Kindneſs of Providence in bringing on our Author to ſo happy a Period, than diſeſteem it as a defective Labour.

HOWEVER under theſe Diſadvantages, we have yet ſufficient Encouragement to Recommend this Poſthumous work to the Publick, as one of the nobleſt & choiceſt *Bodies of theoretical and practical Divinity* we have any where met with, or we are apt to think has yet appeared to the World: And in this we have the weighty ſuffrage of ſo great a Judge as the late Revd and Learned Mr. *Pemberton*, as the Reader may ſee in the *Extract* of the Funeral Sermon aforeſaid.

HERE we have the excellent Author applying his ſuperiour Abilities, his conſummate Judgment, his uncommon Penetration, in an Age of the greateſt Light, at leaſt ſince the Apoſtles Days; to illuſtrate and eſtabliſh the *important Articles* of our Holy Religion, and to communicate

communicate the ſame celeſtial Light and Heat to others, which ſo eminently ſhone and wrought in himſelf. He forever appears to have a bright Apprehenſion of the Truths he aſſerts, and to be under the ſerious and lively Influence of them while he is writing about them; and not to talk of them as many now adays do in their theological Treatiſes, in ſo cold a manner, as if they were either blind to their Excellence, or in doubt of their Verity, or at leaſt inſenſible of their great Importance to themſelves and others. He is by no means indeed for inflaming the Heart with fanciful or irrational Paſſions; but he firſt endeavours to enlighten and raiſe the Mind with right and clear Conceptions, and then by theſe both to move and regulate the inferiour Powers in their agreable Exerciſe. And he is exceeding careful about the more *fundamental Points* of Faith and Piety; that ſo laying them ſufficiently deep and firm, neither they nor the Superſtructures depending upon them may be in danger of ſhaking, but may remain immovable amidſt every Wind and Tempeſt.

FROM ſuch noble Principles it comes to paſs that the Revd. Author ever maintains the ſame moſt agreable mixture of *Life* and *Gravity* in all his Writings, as us'd to appear in his Looks and Converſation among us: with a Mind continually exalted above earthly and trivial things, the pompous ſhows of *Religion* which many groveling minds are filled up with, and even above the ſudden and unſteady Flights *thereof* which many others are glad to riſe up into. The Holy Temper of his Mind appears to be ſteady and even: and tho' his Imagination was always full of Spirit and Vigour; yet it continually wrought with an unaffected and due *Decorum*, and he for ever reſtrain'd and rul'd it with a correcter and ſuperiour Judgment.

IN his *Style* it is true, he ſometimes takes a freedom in the uſe of ſeveral Terms & Phraſes which are not common among us: But the Language appears to be manly clear & natural, agreable to his manner of Reaſoning, which is regular eaſy & nervous; and his Words & Phraſes exceedingly ſuited to expreſs his *Ideas*, the great Deſign of Language. And tho' this Work may ſeem to be too *Voluminous* by thoſe who view it with a ſuperficial eye; yet a little Peruſal will convince the Reader, that tho' the Author has a rich and plentiful Fund of Words at hand; yet he is very pithy and cloſe and ſparing of them, uſing no more than he has real need to expreſs his Mind and clear the Subject; and that the *Largeneſs of the Volumn* riſes from the great variety of matter compriz'd therein, and the Author's ſearching to the low Foundations of religious Truth, and tracing every Subject to the original Fountain from whence it flows, or to the elementary Principles of which it is formed. The Reader need not therefore fear being tire'd in paſſing thro' ſo copious a Work; *Provided* always he brings thereto or finds therein a Deſire to improve in Knowledge & Goodneſs, is capable of taking a pleaſure in ſeeing the admirable Chain and Harmony of Evangelical Truths, and purſues his Journey with convenient Stages thro' the various Fields before him: And then we do not doubt but he'l meet with a very grateful Entertainment all along, and at the ſame time continually and happily grow both in divine Light and Piety.

SOME Readers indeed may find the Author leſs exact in his *Philoſophical Schemes & Principles*, which happen to be of a more ancient Date, and not ſo ſuited to the Opinions reigning in the preſent Age. In anticipation of which we need only obſerve, that in ſuch things as theſe every Perſon is intirely left to his own Freedom without Offence; that the internal Nature of Things being ſo extreamly incluſe and hidden, *many* of our *Philoſophical Schemes* have been but mere *Hypotheſes* ſubſiſting only in the Imaginations of Men, and being unſoundly rais'd from a few imperfect Obſervations of the Appearances & Events of Nature, have been ſucceſſively thrown out by *others* as unſtable as they; and that our Author chiefly flouriſh'd when we where but juſt emerging out of thoſe Obſcurities. But what is more material to be obſerved here is, that he by no means therefore adopts or takes thoſe uncertain *Theories* into the *Syſtem* of Religion, which will for ever remain the ſame thro' all the ſucceſſive Changes of Philoſophy: He only uſes them as a convenient means of ranking the various Creatures in a clearer and more conſpicuous Order, than if he had made no Diviſions or form'd no *Syſtems* of them: His great Intent being to treat them in a *Theological*, and not in a ſtrict *Phyſical* or *Philoſophical* manner: and in ſuch a view only we wou'd deſire the Reader therefore to conſider them.

UPON this occaſion we wou'd alſo obviate a very vain and ſuperficial Notion beginning to take the Minds of ſome of our unwary Students, in derogation of the Uſefulneſs of *Syſtematical Divinity*, and by conſequence of the juſt Eſteem & Value of our Author and his excellent Writings.

IF by *Syſtematical Divinity* be meant a mere ſlaviſh Subjection or Confinement to any Schemes thereof what ever, conceiv'd or publiſh'd by the mere Wit of Men, tho' founded in their own apprehenſions on divine Revelation, without a Liberty reſerv'd of varying from them upon further Diſcoveries; our Author was of too generous and great a Soul, and had too deep an Inſight into the preſent Imperfection and Fallibility of Humane Nature, than to be capable of ſuch a Slavery. He was indeed a Recommender of *Divinity-Syſtems* even to all ſorts of Perſons, and eſpecially Young Students, in order to Methodize their Enquiries and Conceptions, to keep their Minds from wandering and Inconſiſtency, and help them to ſee the Connection and Harmony

of

of divine Truths; but without obliging them to an implicit ſervile Subjection to any mere humane Compoſitions. And whatever *Syſtem* he fell into, it aroſe from a careful Scrutiny into the genuine meaning of the Holy Scriptures, with a deep Penetration into the Nature & Relations of the things they reveal; and not from any mere previous Veneration of the Syſtems themſelves or their renown'd Compilers or Abettors, tho' worthy of ever ſo much eſteem: making uſe of their *Fame & Worth* as Inducements only to peruſe their *Syſtems*, as the ſpecial Fruits of their laborious Searches and Diſcoveries, and their moſt mature and accurate Expreſſions of them; and making uſe of their *Syſtems* only as the beſt Aſſiſtances to form a perfect notion of their moſt elaborate *Ideas*, that he might more clearly ſee and judge of their Agreement with the *Holy Writings*, the firſt Foundation, the ſovereign Rule and the dernier Reſort of all.

BUT if by *Syſtematical Divinity* be meant the diligent ſearching into the Nature, Connection and Importance of divine Truths from the Holy Scriptures, and then according to them the repreſenting thoſe Truths in the certain Order & Relation they appear to have among themſelves; This is but the very *Exerciſe of Humane Reaſon* on the Sacred Oracles, and our *Diſcourſing* anſwerably to it's internal Exerciſe and Diſcoveries. For humane *Reaſoning* is nothing elſe but a thinking in order, a ſurveying, comparing and diſcovering the various Natures & Connections of things; and humane *Speech* is agreable thereto an orderly Expreſſion of thoſe Diſcoveries. In ſhort it is impoſſible for us either to think or to diſcourſe like Men, but we muſt do ſo more or leſs in a *Syſtematical manner*: we muſt take a part of a *Syſtem* at leaſt, tho' not the whole: There muſt be a Connection of things expreſs'd or imagin'd, as there really is among the things themſelves: or elſe we diſcourſe and think at random without any order: and this is nothing but irrational and wild Confuſion, a perfect *Anarchy* in Tho't, a meer *Harrangue* in Language, unworthy the excellent Powers of Men, and not agreable to the Nature and Reſpects of things; which is always therefore to be avoided by us, and more eſpecially in our conceiving and treating of divine and heavenly Subjects.

SUCH wild Diſorder our Author therefore was very ſollicitous to ſhun himſelf, and to warn others of alſo; as having a dangerous tendency to lead them firſt into irregular and repugnant Opinions, and then to perplex and puzzle their Minds, and at length to bring them into the ſad Extreams of univerſal *Scepticiſm* and Infidelity. And in oppoſition to this he ſtrictly improv'd his intellectual Powers, in finding out the true Contexture of Reveal'd Religion, and then in giving a methodical & juſt Deſcription of his Diſcoveries of it: In which he ſhew'd a moſt eminent Tallent in all his Writings; and in a more peculiar manner bent and imploy'd his Powers in the comprehenſive & regular Work before us.

UPON theſe accounts & many more too numerous here to mention, we wou'd earneſtly Recommend the diligent & exact Peruſal of this excellent *Body of Divinity* both to our younger and elder *Students*; and even to others of *every Order*, that would be well acquainted & concerned with things of everlaſting moment, that wou'd clearly ſee the Reaſons & Foundations of the Sacred Truths we are inſtructed in, and that wou'd deſire to grow in the delightful Knowledge of them, in the Diſcoveries of their ſurpaſſing Symmetry & Beauty, and in the ſavoury Reliſh & Affection for them; In fine, that wou'd feel their directive & quickning Influence both on their Hearts & Lives, & that wou'd have a careful wiſe & knowing Guide, with the Light of Scripture, to keep them from the many dangerous Errors & *Meanders* of the preſent Age, and to lead them on in ſuch a Path of Truth & Righteouſneſs as will ſhine more & more unto the perfect Day: ---*That bleſſed & deſired Day!* when all Obſcurity on the beautiful Face of Truth ſhall vaniſh, ſeeming Inconſiſtencies intirely diſappear, we ſhall behold the *univerſal Syſtem* with all it's admirable adjuſted Members, with intuitive & amazing Views, and be eternally tranſported with the Contemplation of their tranſcendent Beauties, and with the moſt delightful Senſe of their transforming & perfective Influence on us.

IN the mean while we moſt humbly commend theſe ſurviving Labours of the Revd. Author, to the Acceptance & efficacious Bleſſing of the *Father of Lights*, from whom thro' *Chriſt* they at firſt as precious Gifts deſcended; and by which the now unſeen Diſpenſer tho' ſo long ſince gone, yet revives his dear & fragrant Memory among thoſe that knew him, and in a more publick manner ſpeaks both to them & others. May the *Spirit of Grace* that we believe at firſt aſſiſted him in theſe excellent Lectures to the great Delight & Benefit of thoſe who then ſat under the lively Oracles, yet ſtill continue to accompany & ſucceed them alſo on thoſe they may by his gracious Providence be ſent unto. And may the ſame ſound & vital Principles for ever be tranſmitted thro' future Generations of Divines & Writers; and ſo remain alive & flouriſh in theſe *Weſtern Schools and Churches*. thro'out all the ſucceſſive Changes of external Forms & Languages among them, as long as the Sun and Stars ſhall ſhine upon them, and till cloudy tranſient Time give place to bright & permanent Eternity.

Boſton, N. E. *Novemb.* 10th, 1725.

Joſeph Sewall.
Thomas Prince.

THE *Author's* CHARACTER

Extracted out of the Funeral Sermon *on his much lamented Death, By the late Reverend Mr.* Ebenezer Pemberton *his Colleague, from* Matth. 24.45,46, --- *Towards the Close*---.

THIS neceſſarily brings me to the SORROWFUL SUBJECT, which has been the occaſion of my preſent Meditations: To take a view of that *Awful Rebuke of Heaven* upon this *Whole LAND*, and on *this CONGREGATION* in particular, in the ſudden Departure of that eminent MAN OF GOD, who has been for ſo long a time the Light, Joy and Glory of this Place: By whoſe Tranſlation God has given us reaſon to a great degree to take up that Lamentation; *The joy of our heart is ceaſed, our Dance is turned into Mourning*; *The Crown is fallen from our heads*; *For* THIS *our heart is faint, and our eyes are dim.*

I muſt freely confeſs, I never had any fondneſs for *Funeral Encomiums*; unleſs when Gifts and Graces have been Eminent and Diſtinguiſhing; when the Honour of Chriſt the fountain from whence they flow'd, Juſtice to the Dead, and the Good of the Living, do demand them; and when the Merits of the Departed leave no room, at leaſt no neceſſity for the paint of Flattery.

SURE I am, on this preſent Melancholly Occaſion, the juſt ſenſe I have of my own *peculiar Share* in this Loſs, makes it more eligible to take my place in the *Silent Train of Mourners*, that nothing might interrupt the Sighs & Tears of a wounded Spirit; than to appear in this *Desk*. But the Duties of my Station require, that at preſent I chain up my Paſſions, ſuppreſs my own Sorrows, and bank up the ſwelling tide of Grief; that it may not diſturb me, while I am paying to the *Memory* of my Tranſlated Father, that *Juſt Tribute*, which all, but the Ignorant & Envious, will acknowledge due by all the Laws of Juſtice & Gratitude.

I am deeply ſenſible how every way Unequal I am to my preſent Province, to do his Memory Juſtice; and what danger I am in of ſlurring his Character by my unskilful hand. I have neither Art to draw his Picture, nor yet to ſet it when drawn, in a true Light, that it may be ſeen to advantage. What *Livy* ſays of the *Roman Orator*, diſcourages me: That to give *Cicero* his juſt Encomium, *Cicerone Laudatore opus eſt*. To give a Great Man his juſt Praiſes, requires the Skill of One as Great. However, Duty to Chriſt, whoſe Servant he was, and with whoſe Gifts & Graces he was conſpicuouſly adorned; a juſt Honour for the Memory of a Prophet of no common Figure, a Paſtor, Father and Friend, do conſtrain me to riſe up and *Call him Bleſſed*, and command me to Eſſay his CHARACTER.

HIS DESCENT was *Honourable*, from a Sage Patriot in our Iſrael; whoſe Wiſdom aſſigned him a Seat at the *Council-Board*, and his Military Skill, and Martial Spirit intituled him to the Chief Place in the *Field*: But in no External regard could be more Honourable than in being the FATHER of ſuch a SON.

IN Him Bountiful Heaven was pleaſed to cauſe a Concurrence of all thoſe Natural and Acquired, Moral and Spiritual Excellencies, which are neceſſary to conſtitute a *Great Man*, a profound *Divine*, a very conſiderable *Scholar*, and an Heavenly *Chriſtian*. In the light and influence of theſe Perfections he appeared as a Star of the Firſt Magnitude in the Orb of the Church.

THE God of Nature was pleaſed with a *Liberal Hand* to beſtow on him thoſe Natural Intellectual Endowments, which laid the Foundation of great Improvement in Knowledge. And did from his Youth præſage *Uncommon* Service for God and his People, which his Maſter had deſigned him for. In Natural Endowments, he appeared as the *Elder Son* among many Brethren: In theſe very few, if any, could pretend to ſtand upon a Level with him. The Natural Capacity of his Soul was of that *Diſtinction*, that it ſeem'd an undeniable Confutation of the Doctrine of the *Equality* of Souls; and left it no longer Problematical.

HIS *Phanſy* was Copious, tho' not Luxuriant, but moſt Correct, being Obſequious to the Dictates, and kept under the ſtrict Guard of a well poiſed Judgment: By which it was reſtrained from thoſe lawleſs Luxuriances and Extravagances, which this Power is ſubject to, when it has broken looſe from the Government of a well-informed Underſtanding. His *Apprehenſion* was quick, his *Reaſon* bright, and his *Judgment* exact and ſolid: which made him baniſh ſuch things as trivial, as were not capable of Improvement to advance his Soul, either in it's *Intellectual* or *Moral Perfection*. His *Underſtanding* was of great Proſpect: His Mind filled with bright Images of things; inrich'd with a vaſt number of noble Ideas, and knew well their ſeveral Connexions, Relations and Dependencies, how to ſeparate, and how to unite them in deep ſearches after Truth. He had a deep Thought, and penetrating *Sagacity* to make a juſt Eſtimate of things on ſudden Emergencies; which made him juſtly eſteem'd one of the *Wiſeſt Men*, that has been known of his *Order*, in Our Land. His *Natural Genius* and *Spirit* ſeem'd ſuperior to all narrow ſelfiſh Intereſts; not govern'd by the Rules of Carnal Policy, nor biaſs'd by Private Views; but appear'd almoſt uncapable to be under the commanding influence of any thing, but what appear'd Great, Good and Honourable. He had a *Native Modeſty*, which continued in his advanced Years, ſeldom known in Conjunction with Gifts of ſo Conſpicuous an Elevation; which might ſeem to ſome to *Vail* the Brightneſs of ſome of his Publick Appearances; tho' in the Opinion of others was but a *Foil* to his greater Excellencies.

THESE *Gifts of Nature* in him were Advanced and rendred more bright by great Improvements of hard Study, intimate Acquaintance with many of the moſt Celebrated Authors in the Learned World, by long Experience and conſtant Prayer. He was well Verſed in the Principal parts of *Subſtantial Learning*, which furniſhed him with that Knowledge, which was requiſite for a *Wiſe Maſter Builder in the Houſe & Temple of the Living God*. He always affected that Learning, which was leaſt for *Pomp* and *Oſtentation*, and moſt for *Service*; the Knowledge of things more than of empty Words and Names: And he muſt be allowed the Character of an *Uncommon Scholar*; If the Knowledge of thoſe things, which perfect the Underſtanding, may be allowed worthy of the title of *Learning*. And I think it is high Time to reject other Knowledge, which does not *Better* or *Improve* the *Mind*, which does not *Profit*, but only *Amuſe*, as unworthy of the *ſpecious Title*, at leaſt unfit to IMPROPRIATE the Name of *Learning*.

DIVINITY was his Favourite Study; and in the purſuit of this moſt Excellent and Divine Knowledge, he engaged not only from Duty, but Inclination. And Excelled to an eminent degree in the Knowledge of the moſt abſtruſe parts of Theology. And a great Divine muſt of neceſſity be a great Clerk.

HE was a *Judicious Textuary*. Like *Apollos* a Man mighty in the Scripture. His common Publick Diſcourſes were a Demonſtration of this; but eſpecially thoſe *Judicious* and *Elaborate* COMMENTARIES, made in the *School of the Prophets*, upon ſeveral whole Books of the Divine Oracles, remain as a laſting Monument of this Skill.

HIS Knowledge in *Syſtematical Divinity* was celebrated by all. He had a Body of Divinity well digeſted in his head. And was careful to hold faſt the Form of ſound Words. His Knowledge was not like a Light in a Dark Lanthorn: But out of the Treaſury of his

Head

Head and Heart was able to communicate to others. He had a great Dexterity in confirming Truths by inconteſtible Arguments, and to ſet them in an advantagious Light; to Explain them fully, and Apply them with the greateſt Cloſeneſs and Pertinency. This was obſervable in the diſcharge of the common Duties of his Paſtoral Care: But this his Knowledge appeared with a peculiar Luſtre in his CATECHETICAL LECTURES, which if Publiſhed, would be found One of the BEST Bodies of Divinity, that has been known.

IN *Controverſy* he was a Champion, a Worthy of the firſt Strength, Skill and Courage. He was qualified for it by a clear Head, a cool Thought, and inflexible Principles. He was able to weild the Sword of the Spirit to the Terror of Gainſayers; to their Confutation, tho' not always to their Conviction: And has once and again ſheathed this Sword of the Spirit in the Bowels of Triumphant Errors. And was every way fit ro be ſet for *the Defence of the Goſpel.*

HE was an *Excellent Caſuiſt.* Where the Perplexed and Scrupulous might have their difficulties Eaſed, their doubts reſolved with Safety. When any Caſes of Conſcience came under his thought, he was wont to handle them with wiſe Caution and admirable Compaſſion: He deliberated maturely on all Circumſtances, and laid the Whole by the unerring Rule, and with great Judgment determined agreably.

ALL that knew him, and were competent Judges of his Worth, muſt do him the Honour & Juſtice, to acknowledge theſe Gifts were eminent in him. And theſe rendred him as capable as any Man to direct the *Sons of the Prophets*, and *Young Divines* in their *Theological Studies*; and I believe was as oft as any addreſſed to on this Head. His DIRECTIONS to the *Candidates of the Miniſtry*, left in the hands of many, are of great Value and Service, and will be a Teſtimony how ſafe and skilful a *Guide* he was.

AS he was Excelling in *Gifts*, ſo he was no leſs Eminent in the *Graces of Chriſt.* He had a Sanctified Heart as well as a well-Regulated Logical Head; and was a Scholar of great Proficiency in the School of Chriſt. His *Graces* Conſecrated his *Gifts*, and made them appear with a more obſervable luſtre, with Life as well as Light. All the Vertues of the Divine Nature and Life were viſible in his holy Walk: Which openly diſcover'd his Soul to be a LIVING TEMPLE of the LORD JEHOVAH, where his Throne was prepared, his Image ſet up, and his Spirit dwelt.

WITH what warm Tranſports of Affection & Admiration would he diſcourſe or hear of the *Wonders* of Divine Grace unveil'd in the whole Method of the Redemption of Man? How low did he bow in profound Reverence and Adoration of the ſpotleſs Sovereignty of God in the myſterious Diſpenſations of the Kingdom both of Grace and Providence? How jealous was he in his whole Converſation of the Honour of Sovereign Grace? How fearful leſt any thing ſhould betray it, or cloud it's Glory? How thoughtful alſo leaſt Grace ſhould be abuſed unto Wantonneſs? And how careful in all his Diſpenſations to guard againſt this Myſtery of Iniquity, and to ſet out the Glory of Divine Grace, and the Beauty of Holineſs in their proper Luſtre and admirable Harmony? His *Zeal* was what became an Apoſtle; tho' flaming in the Cauſe of Chriſt, yet was temper'd by Love, and guided by Prudence. No pretence could make him tranſgreſs his own Line; and from the Duties of his own Poſt nothing could move him. His Spirit was truly *Pacifick*; and could ſacrifice every thing but Duty for Peace: And accounted nothing too dear, but Truth and Holineſs, for the purchaſe of it. He was a lively Example of Self-Denial, and ſeparation from the World, of Patience under the Reproaches of Men, and Sufferings from God, and of Reſignation to the *Abſolute Supremacy* of Heaven under the darkeſt Diſpenſations. The moſt black and ſorrowful Providence never cauſed him to *hang his Harp* on the Willows, or ſo put him out of *Tune*, as to unfit him to Sing a *Zion's Song of Praiſe*: But he could diſcourſe of, nay realize, the Excellency and Glory, the Majeſty, Righteouſneſs and Grace of his Maſter's Kingdom, even when *Clouds and Darkneſs were about his Throne.*

NO Man had a deeper ſenſe of the Poverty, Impotency and Depravation of Humane Nature by the Apoſtacy; nor any a clearer view of the *Fulneſs of that Proviſion* made in *Chriſt* for the Sinners Righteouſneſs and Salvation. The *Body of Sin* was his conſtant Burden, which he bewailed, groaned under, and expreſſed his longing Deſire to be freed from in ſome of his lateſt hours. *Meditation*, which gives Life and Power to Grace, was his Exerciſe and Delight; and to what good purpoſe he performed this, may be ſeen in many SACRAMENTAL MEDITATIONS, penned for his own Uſe, which are left behind him. He undoubtedly lived under the View of the UNSEEN WORLD, which he is now gone to, and is filled with the Glory of.

THESE *Gifts* and *Graces* in Conjunction made him in a great degree Equal to the *Station* his Lord had fixed him in. And this was the Stage on which they appeared with beauty, and acted their part with glory. All that has been ſaid, in deſcribing the *Evangelical Paſtor* under the Doctrine, belong to his Character; whoſe Picture therein I was deſignedly drawing. And his *Wiſdom* and *Fidelity* in their moſt comprehenſive Senſe, in Feeding and Ruling the Houſe of God, are juſtly Celebrated thro' theſe Churches.

AT *firſt* in his younger Years, his Maſter committed to his Paſtoral Care a Flock in a more obſcure part of this Wilderneſs: But ſo great a Light was ſoon obſerved thro' the whole Land: And his Lord did not deſign to bury him in obſcurity, but to place him in a more eminent Station, which he was qualifyed for. The Providence that occaſioned his Removal to this Place was an *Awful Judgment* upon the whole Land; yet was Eventually a *Mercy* in this reſpect, that it made way for the Tranſlation of this bright Star to a more Conſpicuous Orb; where his Influence was more Extenſive and Beneficial; and in this it was a great *Bleſſing* to this *Congregation*, to this *Town*, nay, to all *New-England.*

WITH what *Prudence* and *Faithfulneſs*, *Diligence* and *Impartiality*, he diſcharged the Duties of his Paſtoral Office to this Flock, GOD, CHRIST and ANGELS are Witneſſes; and I doubt not but he has received the Teſtimony hereof from many in the World of *Perfected Spirits*, who have been Bleſſing God for him, as the Inſtrument by whom they have been led to Glory: And I truſt there are many yet *Living*, and now *Standing before God*, who are the *Seals* of his Miniſtry, and will be his CROWN and JOY in the Day of the Lord. In his whole Miniſtry he expreſſed a true Love and Zeal for Chriſt, and tender Compaſſion to Immortal Souls: There was light, heat and life in all his Addreſſes to them, which argued he well underſtood the worth of Souls, and had a juſt ſenſe of their miſerable Apoſtate Circumſtances.

HIS *Diſcourſes* were all Elaborate, Acute and Judicious; ſmelt of the Lamp, and had nothing *Mean* in them. His common Sermons might have been pronounced with Applauſe before an Aſſembly of the greateſt Divines. The *Matter* of his Publick Diſcourſes was always weighty; his Subjects well choſen; ſuited to the State of his Flock, and every way adapted to make them Wiſer and Better. The *Articles of Faith* he Opened and Confirmed; the *Duties of Holineſs* he Explained, and Enforced with the moſt powerful Arguments; and with an *Addreſs* ſuited to melt the rocky Heart, to bow the ſtubborn Will, to humble the proudeſt Sinner, and charm the deafeſt Adder. The *Manner* in which he deliver'd his Diſcourſes was agreable to the *Matter.* In reſepect of both he ſpoke as became the ORACLES of GOD: With Gravity, Courage, Zeal and Prudence, and with tender Bowels to periſhing Souls. His *Language* was always good; his Stile Maſculine, not Perplexed, but Eaſy as well as Strong. And when the Matter required it, no Man could ſpeak with a greater *Pathos* and *Pungency.*

HE applyed himſelf to *Wounded Conſciences* with great Skill, Faithfulneſs and Tenderneſs. He ſearch'd their Wounds to the bottom, and made Application of *Terror* or *Comfort*, as their State called for, and as became a Wiſe, Tender and Faithful Phyſician: And he knew how to be a *Son of Thunder* to the Secure and Hardned; and a *Son of Conſolation* to the Contrite and Broken in Spirit.

HIS *Publick Prayers* were always Pertinent & Pathetical, animated with the Spirit of Devotion; and in them an *Uncommon Compaſs of Thought was obſervable.* In the Whole of his Work he was Laborious, careful to redeem Time, and was inſtant in ſeaſon & out of ſeaſon in his Maſter's Service.

HIS

HIS Affection & Tenderneſs to THIS HIS DEAR FLOCK was ſingular. He might have ſaid with the Apoſtle, that he could have imparted with the GOSPEL his own SOUL to them.

AS a Wiſe & Faithful Steward over this Houſe of Chriſt, he gave every Man his Portion in due Seaſon. And might at his Departure have called Heaven & Earth to Record, That he had not ſhun'd to declare the Whole *Counſel of God*, and was *Pure* from the *Blood* of all Men.

HE went before this Flock as a Good Shepherd, Gathering the *Lambs* with his *Arm*, carrying them in his *Boſom*, and *Gently* driving thoſe that are *With Young*: And is now gone to the GREAT *Shepherd* of the SHEEP; whoſe Flock he here Watch'd over, Led, Fed & Defended.

HE took his FAREWELL of us at the TABLE of the LORD; and we ſhall Enjoy no more ſuch Fellowſhip with him, till we come to Eat Bread and Drink New Wine with him, in our Father's Preſence.

AND how deeply ſhould we reſent the hand of God herein ſtretch'd out againſt us?

GOD calls this Whole People to lay it to Heart, and to improve this Awful Providence to awaken to Repentance.

HIS Removal is a great Judgment upon the whole Land. He was a great Bleſſing to it, by his faithful Warnings, Counſels, Prayers & Tears, Life & Doctrine. He was a main Pillar in our Building, which is Weakened by his fall; a main Stake in our Hedge is pluck'd up, which has made a wide Gap, and made the whole Wall about this Vineyard to totter. He was a great part of the Chariots and Horſe-men of our Iſrael; a Faithful Watchman, *Quick* to eſpy Danger, and *Faithful* to ſound an Alarm: And has often Warned this People of Evils Approaching, and againſt their Sins the procuring Cauſe of them. He was always ready to ſtand in the *Gap* in times of greateſt hazard.

AND it ought never to be forgotten, with what Prudence, Courage & Zeal he appeared for the Good of this People, *In that Dark and Myſterious Seaſon*, when we were aſſaulted from the Inviſible World. And how ſingularly Inſtrumental he was in diſcovering the Cheats and Deluſions of Satan, which did threaten to ſtain our Land with Blood and to deluge it with all manner of Woes.

WE had ſcarce dry'd our Eyes for the loſs of one * SAMUEL, but Providence opens anew the Fountain of our Tears by Afflicting us with the Death of ANOTHER. It is well if the Conjunction of their Funerals be not Portentous of further, and greater Calamities: I am ſure it will be ſo if it be not laid to heart.

* The Rev. Mr. *Samuel Torrey.*

IT is a *Humbling Rebuke* to the whole *Miniſtry*. By this ſtroke of Heaven a conſiderable part of their Strength, Wiſdom and Beauty is gone; and a Cloud drawn over their Glory. Their *Union*, which is both their Strength and Glory, in the moſt Critical Seaſons, and Hours of Temptation, is well known in a great meaſure to be owing to his *Wiſdom* and *Temper*. And God grant! That we may not too ſoon feel the ſad Effects of this blow from Heaven upon that *Order*. I cannot but here obſerve, That the *Younger Miniſters* always repaired to him, and found him their tender Father, their faithful Counſellor, ſure Guide, and powerful Guardian. Theſe he cheriſh'd under his Wings, and was tender of their Perſons and good Names: And often interpoſed to put by thoſe Thruſts that were made to wound their Reputation; and they have now loſt the Beſt Friend that many of them ever had, this ſide Heaven.

HIS Removal is a *Frown upon the School of the Prophets*, which has been for ſeveral Years under his faithful and prudent Inſpection. And God has now come to the *Sons* of the *Prophets*, and taken their MASTER from their Head. And they have reaſon to Lament after him as *Eliſha* did after *Elijah*; *My Father, my Father, the Chariots of our Iſrael and the Horſemen thereof.*

THIS Judgment has the *Blackeſt Aſpect* upon this *Congregation*, who have long Lived under, and rejoyced in this Light. But this Light of our Iſrael is Quenched, or rather has quitted our World of Darkneſs, and is fixed in a brighter Firmament.

GOD hereby tells us, that He is very angry with us; and expects that we ſhould ſee to pacify his Diſpleaſure.

GOD's Voice herein is loud to Sinners that have been *Deaf* to the *Charms* of this *Wiſe Charmer*; whoſe Hearts have not been wounded by thoſe Arrows of the Almighty which have been ſhot by his ſtrong and skilful Hand. And the Language of it is, that they forthwith encline their Ears unto the Voice of Wiſdom, leſt God withdraw his Spirit, as well as call Home his Ambaſſador; for then they will be ſealed up unto Ruin, and all the Reproofs and Counſels of his Servant will be heavy Items to Inflame their Reckoning.

GOD calls aloud to *Looſe Profeſſors*, that they Gird up the Loyns of their Mind.

AND expects that the *Beſt* of us now make a juſt and ſorrowful Reflection upon our *Barrenneſs*.

In a word, THIS ſolemn Providence ſhould influence all of us to ſearch and try our Ways and turn unto the Lord; leſt he go on to ſmite us in his Wrath, and at laſt quite REMOVE OUR CANDLESTICK, AND HIDE THE THINGS OF OUR PEACE FROM OUR EYES.

ERRATA in the *PREFACE.*

Page 2. *line* 10.--- *for*--- ſelect or look for---*Read*---ſelect and look for
3. *line* 44---*for*---where---*Read*---were

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AN

EXPOSITION

OF THE

ASSEMBLY'S

SHORTER CATECHISM:

IN

Two Hundred and Fifty

LECTURES.

SERMON, *I.*

QUESTION, I.



WHAT is the CHIEF END of Man?

ANSWER.

Man's Chief End is to GLORIFY GOD, and ENJOY HIM for ever.

THAT it hath been cuſtomary in the Church of Chriſt from the beginning, to draw up the main and moſt neceſſary points of Religion into a Method, which we commonly call a *Body of Divinity*, there needs no more to make it evident, but that of *Paul* in his advice to *Timothy*, 2 Tim. 1. 13. *Hold faſt the form of ſound words, which thou haſt heard of me, in faith and love which is in Chriſt Jeſus.* The great *Uſefulneſs* of which cuſtom is manifeſt, in that it is profitable for all ſorts of Chriſtians. It is of great uſe for *Young* ones, that they may be principled in the Truth, and preſerved from being drawn away with Error; which is uſually occaſioned by a confuſed knowledge, and want of being well ſettled at firſt. It is neceſſary for *Miniſters* of the Goſpel, for their profitable Preaching, and help to reduce all their Doctrines, to the proper foundamental Article they relate unto. And for *every Profeſſor*, it is exceeding advantageous, to help them in reading the Scriptures, and trying of Doctrines. The reducing theſe Heads or Articles into a *Catechetical* way, for the better inſtitution of Youth, is of no late Original. The Primitive Church had it's *Catechumeni*, ſuch as were queſtioned about the Matters of Faith diſtinctly, in order to their coming to the Lord's Table. Nor are there obſcure footſteps for Catechiſing in the Scripture: The word tranſlated *Inſtructed*, *Luk.* 1. 4. ſignifies *Catechiſed*; the ſame word is uſed, *Act.* 18. 25. *Gal.* 6. 6. which word ſignifies a being taught the Rudiments of any Art whatſoever, and is in the New-Teſtament applied to the firſt Elements of the Chriſtian Religion. And that it is commonly received among Profeſſors, appears in that all Churches in all Nations, and among all ſorts, have their *Catechiſms*.

THERE have been various Methods obſerved in the compiling of theſe *Syſtems*; But that which hath of late more generally obtained among us, is that of *this Catechiſm*. The Expoſition whereof having once, more glancingly gone over, for the help of Young ones eſpecially; I ſhall endeavour in this ſecond Eſſay, more elaborately to open; adding to the clearing up of the *ſenſe of the Doctrine*, as there is occaſion, the *removal of Objections*, and ſatisfying *Caſes of Conſcience* depending.

TOUCHING the Method of the Catechiſm in general, we may obſerve; That the Great Thing which all Rational, and Immortal Creatures have to be moſtly inquiſitive about, is HAPPINESS: The Subſtance of this Inquiry may be reduced to Two Heads, or gathered up in two Queſtions, viz. *What is Happineſs*; and *How may it be Obtained?* So that the whole Doctrine hereto related, bares reſpect either to the *End* or to the

Means. Happineſs properly conſiſts in our attaining of our End, and this is reached unto by a right uſing of Means ſuitable and proper. The End, tho' it be laſt in execution, yet is the firſt in intention; and being that unto which the Means are to be fitted, is that which is firſt to come into conſideration; becauſe, the better that is known, the fitter we are to judge of the other. A Man cannot rationally tell what he is to do, until he firſt underſtand what it is for: hence therefore *all Arts and Sciences are wont to be defined by their* END S: unto which, all that is delivered under them, is to be Reduced; and the dignity, worth or excellency of every Art, is thereby to be judged of.

THE *Art or Doctrine*, which we have now under Conſideration is DIVINITY, or *Religion*: and not only ſo, but the *Chriſtian Religion*, or that which is ſuited to direct and guide fallen Man to Glory. That there is ſuch a Doctrine is not hard to be proved: for if there be an Happineſs provided for fallen Man, there muſt be a Way to bring him to the Enjoyment of it; and conſequently a Rule to ſet him in that Way, and conduct him in it; and that is Religion.

THE ſpecial Worth of this Doctrine, ſhewing it to excel all others, diſcovers it's ſelf in the *End* that it points Men to; and that is BLESSEDNESS, than which nothing can be more excellent or deſirable.

THE *Firſt Queſtion* with its *Anſwer* is a *Key to all the Reſt*, becauſe they refer to Divinity no further than they refer Hither: it is therefore neceſſary to ſtate this Caſe rightly: for which purpoſe, I ſhall firſt take an account of the *Thing aimed at in the Queſtion*, and then proceed to give the *Right meaning of the Anſwer*.

First. *In the* QUESTION, *we are warily to note what the Enquiry is about*: And here are two Poſitions.

I. *IT is about Mans* END. Man is therefore properly & peculiarly concerned in it: It belongs to every rational Creature to know what he was made for, and what is his proper Work. Till a Work-man knows his *End*, he cannot work prudently: for how ſhould he be able to chuſe and uſe Means, except he knew for what? The reaſon why the moſt of Men lead ſuch fooliſh Lives, and do ſo many impertinent Actions, is becauſe they know not what they live for, nor whereto their actions tend: And if they would be perſwaded to compare their Works with their *End*, they would readily call themſelves Fools. Now when Man's END is enquired after, we are to obſerve,

1. *Negatively*, THE Queſtion is not about that which the moſt of Men do *practically* make their End, or propound to themſelves as their Deſign. The Deſign of Divinity is to tell us what is *Right*; and by that it gives us light to diſcover that which is *Wrong*. Fallen Man is therein unhappy, becauſe he hath loſt his Right End, and is fallen upon others, which are ſo various, that they are alſo endleſs, Eccl. 7. 29. *Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright: but they have ſought out many inventions.*

2. *Poſitively* or *Affirmatively*: THERE are three things eſpecially intended in it.

1. *WHAT is that End, which Man is by the Precept commanded to aim at?* Or, *What it is that God would have Man to make his End?* Mans being fallen ſhort by ſin, doth not nullify the Rule: his Duty ſtill abides: the Force of the Command is not Enervated: whether he doth ſo or no practically, yet it is his Duty to make this his *End*; God appointed him ſo to do, and it is his *Sin* to do otherwiſe; for which reaſon thoſe two things are put together, Rom. 3. 23. *For all have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God.*

2. *WHAT is that End which doth moſt properly ſute the Nature of Man? What is moſt proper and rational for him to follow? and in the making choice whereof, he can only diſcover true Wiſdom?* According to that, Job 28. 28. *and unto man he ſaid, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is Wiſdom, and to depart from evil is underſtanding.* For, as when God wrought the works of Creation, he had a Deſign in every Creature which he made; ſo he therein diſplayed his Infinite Wiſdom, in that he ſuited all the Creatures *Natures* and *Ends* one to another. This then is the End which Man, if he knows himſelf, and his Natural Conſtitution, will propoſe to himſelf, as being made for it, and all his faculties were ſuited to it, before ſuch time as Sin had depraved them.

3. *WHAT is that End which, if attained by him, will make him Happy?* Man is a Creature that was made capable of Happineſs: which no other inferiour Creature, can ever attain unto. Hence God was pleaſed to appoint him ſuch an End, as in the attainment whereof he might be *Bleſſed* for ever. Every other thing by reaching it's End, attains to it's Goodneſs; but Man by his, gains his Felicity: Hence that, Iſa. 56. 2. *Bleſſed is the man that doeth this, and the ſon of man that layeth hold on it: that keepeth the ſabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.* Jam. 1 25. *But whoſo looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man ſhall be bleſſed in his deed.* And if he falls ſhort of it, he makes himſelf Miſerable.

II. *IT is Man's CHIEF End, which is here enquired after.* The Queſtion takes it for granted, that a Man may have *Diverſe* Ends, which he propoſeth to himſelf in his actions; and that not only practically, through miſtake, but lawfully and regularly. There are various Deſigns, and diverſities of Operations which Man is appointed to: and hence there are divers Arts and Sciences, which he hath to guide him therein, and every Art hath its diſtinct End. But we are here given to underſtand, that *Divinity* or Religion hath its peculiar Glory and Preference, in that its buſineſs is to treat of Man's *Cheif* End. That a Man may and muſt have *Divers Ends* in his Operations, appears for *Two Reaſons.*

1. *Becauſe there is many times a Subordination of Means*: It is ſo in every Art: there being a great many Steps to be taken in the Way to that End, which is firſtly and principally aimed at: Yea, Nature it ſelf follows ſuch an order

Hoſ,

Hoſ. 2. 21, 22. A man doth one thing for another, and *that* for another; and ſo till he reſts in ſomething, beyond which he hath no reſpect: which Subordination produceth *manifold* Ends; becauſe *that* for which another thing is done, bears the reſpect of an End unto that which was done for it. Thus a Carpenter cuts one piece of Timber for a Groundſel, another for a Poſt, *&c.* though all be for the Houſe.

2. *BECAUSE a Man bears Divers Capacities or Relations, to which he is to refer his relative Actions, and to aim at the Diſcharge of them.* A Man may be a Member of a Civil or Eccleſiaſtical Society; and he is as ſuch, to ſeek the Good and Proſperity of that Society; and what he doth, as ſuch a Member, ought to look that way. He may have the care of a Family upon him, to provide for, and diſcharge many Offices to; and hence muſt make that his End in many things which he doth: To this purpoſe is that of the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 7. 33, 34. Man hath a bodily Life to take care for, Food and Raiment to provide, and for this is appointed his Labour in his particular Calling; and he is to make it his next End, Eccl. 6. 7. *All the labour of man is for his mouth.*

NOW among all theſe Ends that a Man propounds to himſelf, there is and muſt be *One* that is *Chief*; One that is preferrable to all the reſt, and bears the bell away from them: and the Reaſon is, becauſe there is ſomething that he was ſpecially and ultimately made for: & will farther appear, if we conſider what are the *NOTES, by which our Chief End is to be judged of*, which are more principally theſe Three:

1. *THAT, in the Attainment whereof, a Man's Beſt and higheſt Good doth conſiſt.* It is a Rule in Logick, *Finis et Bonum convertuntur*; the End & Goodneſs of a thing are the ſame. If then there be Degrees of Goodneſs in the things aimed at, there muſt be Degrees in the Ends: If one thing be Better than another, & conſequently if there be a *Beſt* Good, there is a *Chief* End. For that which is Beſt, can be but One; and that there is ſo, is intimated in that of Chriſt, Mat. 19. 17. *There is none good but one*, i. e. eminently, ſuperlatively good; Goodneſs it ſelf, compared to whom the Goodneſs of all other things diſappears.

2. *THAT to which all other Ends ought to ſerve, as ſo many Means*: For that which is ſubordinate, always looks forward, and points to that which is ſupream. That End, to which every other End pays contribution, and no farther truly benefits the Man, than as it helps him to the Enjoyment of that, is the *Chief*; and that there is ſuch an one is certain. It is a received Maxim, *that all Arts are Handmaids to Divinity*; and what are they but Rules to direct Man how to attain his ſubordinate Ends? Man labours that he may eat, he eats that he may live: and if that be all his Happineſs, meerly to live, what is he better than a Beaſt? The Apoſtle plainly aſſures us, that there is One Point in which all Human Actions center, and that muſt needs be Man's Chief End, 1 Cor. 10. 31. *Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatſoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*

3. *THAT which is only an End, and not a Mean.* All ſubordinate Ends are alſo Means reſpectively: as they look backward, they are Ends; but as they look forward they are Means: but that which is the *Chief* ſerves to no other. It is that in which Man ought to reſt, and in the Fruition of it to count himſelf as happy, as he is capable of being made; he is to take it for his full Portion. So he, Lam. 3. 24. *The Lord is my portion ſaith my ſoul* ---. Such an End there muſt be, or Man can never be Bleſſed: becauſe he could never come to his Reſting Place, but muſt be left in a *Labyrinth*, and carried on in an endleſs Purſuit of Happineſs.

HERE that Great CASE belongs, *viz.*

HOW ſhall a Man know that his Ends be Right?

THE foregoing Diſcourſe well pondered, will give light to the Reſolution of it; from whence may be gathered theſe ſatisfactory CONCLUSIONS. *If our Ends be Right,*

1. *WE have an End, which we pay the Reſpect of a Chief End unto.* There is *One* ſo by Appointment; and except we look upon *One* as ſo practically, we muſt needs be in an Error. That Man that hath no more Love to, nor is ſpecially carryed out after *One* more than all other, hath no *Chief*, and therefore is on a falſe bottom: Hear the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 73. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I deſire beſides thee.*

2. *WE have made choice of that to be our Laſt End, which God hath Commanded us ſo to do.* There is but *One*; and if we be not fallen upon *that*, we labour under a Deluſion: for there is no other, the Obtaining whereof is able to render us truly Happy. God hath not left it to Man's Arbitrary Choice, to ſet up what End he will; but hath ſhewn him what is good, and directed him to fix upon it; Deut. 30. 19. *I call heaven and earth to record this day againſt you, that I have ſet before you life & death, bleſſing and curſing: therefore chooſe life, that both thou and thy ſeed may live.*

3. *WE purſue all other Inferiour Ends for the ſake of the Laſt, but the Laſt for it's Own ſake.* Religion doth not diſallow *thoſe*, but only regulates them: It gives them their place, and, if we do ſo too, we do well. And this is done, when we endeavour ſo to follow *them*, as to help and encourage us in following *that*, and not to hinder us; When we labour, both to carry *that* on notwithſtanding the *other*, and to forward that by the other; And when we have brought them thither, there we reſt. Hence that, 1 Pet. 4. 11. *If any man ſpeak, let him ſpeak as the oracles of God; if any man miniſter, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorifyed through Jeſus Chriſt: to whom be praiſe & dominion for ever & ever, Amen.*

4. *WE are more moderate and indifferent in our Purſuit of all Other, but moſt inſatiable in proſecution of This.* As to the Former, *Paul* guides us to a right acting about them, 1 Cor. 7. 29, 30. *And this I ſay, brethren, the time is*

short. It remaineth, that both they that have wives, be as though they had none; And they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoyce, as though they rejoyced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not. As to the Latter, the Scripture describes our Pursuit of it, by the hungring, thirsting, longing, panting, fainting of the Soul after it, Psal. 42. 1, 2. *As the Hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God!*

5. *WE can chearfully suffer Disappointment in our Other Ends, and count our selves Gainers by the Loss, if it promote the Chief.* So did *Paul*, Phil. 3. 7. *But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.* And Chap. 1. 18, 19. So the Hebrews, Chap. 10. 34. *And took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in your selves that ye have in heaven a better & an enduring substance.* And so *John* the Baptist, Joh. 3. 29, 30. *He that hath the bride, is the bride-groom: but the friend of the bride-groom, which standeth & heareth him, rejoyceth greatly because of the bride-grooms voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease.*

AND let it be our *Care* to be well resolved in this Case; it being the Foundation of our everlasting Consolation: If we miss it in the right placing of our End, we lose the Benefit of all the Means. As it is the First Question in Divinity, *What is Man's Chief End?* and all refers to it; so it is the First Enquiry, that every man should make of his own Soul, *What is the Ultimate End that I am reaching after?* This for the sense of the Question.

[JAN. 31. 1687.]

SERMON, *II.*

HAVING thus *stated the QUESTION*, it remains,

Secondly, TO give some *Explication of the ANSWER.*

HERE we have *Two* distinct things put together, *viz. To Glorify God* and *Enjoy him for ever:* But we must warily consider them, else we may be greatly mistaken about them.

IT is to be observed, that in strict speaking, that which is *Chief* can be but *One*. It is a Contradiction to say, there are Two last Ends; if both are Equal, neither of them can be the Chief or Last. Among *Intermediate* Ends, some may be subordinate, others may be co-ordinate, but the *Last* will admit of no Compeer: and as the *Chief* is but *One*, so it is not a thing compounded, but single: It cannot be made of the Meeting of divers in One; for that which is compounded, is indeed manifold; and except there were an Equality between those things so concurring, they cannot be of a like Weight: and therefore the One must needs stand in Subordination to the Other. So, that if we would speak exactly, there is but *One* of these, *viz.* TO GLORIFY GOD, which is *Man's Chief End*; the *Other* is immediately subordinated, or it is Next to the Last. It is Man's Duty to seek his Own Best Good, which consists in his *Enjoying* of God; but he is to do it in and for the *Glory* of God; and so from thence all his seeking of it is to take it's Measures.

BUT *These Two* are *joyned together* in the Answer for these *Reasons.*

1. *BECAUSE God is pleased to put them together in his Word, under the notion of Work and Reward.* God having put into Man a natural Desire after Happiness or Well-being, makes use of it to help him in his Duty: and therefore having made him for *His Glory*, quickens him to it by a Promise of *Happiness* in his so doing. Hence the Scripture is full of such Passages wherein the Command and Promise are connected; nor would fallen man seek God's Glory, had he not this Encouragement.

2. *BECAUSE they are inseparable in Practice.* A Man cannot seek God's Glory aright, but in so doing, he also seeks his Own Salvation; and this follows from the former. And the Conjunction between them in Practice is thus stated; *viz.* God doth, as it were, say to the Children of Men, You have a desire to be Happy; that you can only be in the Enjoyment of Me; I am the only adequate Object of the Happiness of the Children of Men; But if you will truely glorify me, in it you shall be Happy; Do you take care for *My Honour*, and I will secure *Your Felicity.* And by this means it comes to pass, that all the Rules which God gives Men to Glorify him, become thro' this strong Connexion, the sure Guide of Man to Eternal Glory. Hence that forementioned, *Isa.* 56 2. *Jam.* 1. 25. Happiness is made the Reward of true Obedience; and yet because Man owes God Service, by a Tie of Nature antecedent to the Reward, hence he is to seek God's Glory, tho' there were none: so that Respect to his Own Benefit is but a secondary Consideration.

HERE therefore that Great CASE, with which some perplex themselves and others, is easily resolved, *viz.*

Q. *WHETHER a Man ought willingly to be Damned, so God's Glory may be advanced by it?*

Answ. A Willingness to be Damned is inconsistent with a true Desire that God may be Glorified: Because it separateth those things which God hath made inseparable: It supposeth a clashing in that very Order, which God hath put between the End and the Means: It must therefore presume a Consent, that God should be false to his Word and Promise, which militates against his Glory; or else a Willingness to neglect the Duties to which the Promise is made; which is to consent to our own actual dishonouring of him: neither of which are consistent with our sincere aiming at our Last End.

THERE are indeed two Scripture-examples, that seem to make for the contrary Conclusion; that of *Moses*, Exod. 32. 32. and

of

of *Paul* Rom. 9. 3. — But if throughly weighed, they will not evince it. Both of them are of One Tenour, and neither looks immediately to the Glory of God, but to expreſs an exuberant Affection to their People : Neither of them in their extent are juſtifiable. God himſelf ſeems to teſtify againſt, and tacitly to reprove that of *Moſes*, ver. 33. and *Paul* expreſſeth himſelf in the Potential Mood, *I could wiſh*, &c. q. d. *I have ſuch an endeared Love to my Kindred, that I am at the Point of ſo wiſhing ; I could do it, if it were lawful* : It is a pathetical Expreſſion of an hyperbolical Affection. It muſt needs therefore be an enſnaring Trial that is put upon the Children of God, when this is offered as a Rule to prove their Sincerity by. He that inſatiably deſires to be ſaved, and yet reſolves to be ſaved in no other way, but that wherein God may be Glorifyed, certainly is the Man, whoſe Ends are rightly fixed.

IT now follows to ſpeak to theſe here diſtinctly.

I. *MAN's Chief End is to* GLORIFY GOD. As this is firſt mentioned in the Anſwer, ſo it hath the Preheminence in our Conſideration : This and that which follows, are not put diſtributively, but ſubordinately ; for it is a Definition, and not a Diſtribution, that we are upon the Conſideration of.

TWO things here call for our enquiry, *viz.* 1. What is meant by Glorifying God ? 2. The Evidence that this is Man's Chief End.

[1.] *WHAT is meant by Glorifying God ?*

A. WE ought carefully to beware of being miſtaken in this Point ; it being that in which our whole Life is to be employed, and upon which our whole Happineſs hath it's abſolute Dependence: ſo that an Error here ſpoils all,& neceſſitates us to live in vain. Here therefore,

1. Negatively. *IT intends not that we are able to make any Addition to God's immediate & eſſential Glory ; as though we ſhould or could make him more glorious in Himſelf than he is, and hath been from all Eternity.* So to do is out of the Reach, and above the Capacity, either of Angels or Men : and that appears for theſe *Two Reaſons.*

1. *FROM the Infinite Perfection of God's innate Glory, rendring it incapable of any Acceſs or Increaſe.* To that which is abſolutely perfect, nothing can be added : ſuch is God's Being and Glory : could it receive any thing, it were not infinite ; were it capable of Increaſe, it were imperfect in Degrees : Goodneſs it ſelf cannot be made better ; Happineſs it ſelf can never be happier. *Concretes* may receive *Magis et Minus*, but *Abſtracts* are *Superlatives.* God therefore makes that challenge of all his Creatures, Rom. 11. 35. *Who hath firſt given to him* — intimating that there are no Such.

2. *BECAUSE all that any have, they received it of him.* And that is the Argument uſed, Ver. 36. *For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things : to whom be glory for ever. Amen.* All that Men can offer up to God, is nothing but what they were firſt beholden to him for ; ſo that they can give him nothing back but his own : For this we have *David's* full Acknowledgement, 1 Chron 29. 12, 14. *Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praiſe thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we ſhould be able to offer ſo willingly after this ſort ? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.* God is no ways beholden to us for our Service : He needs it not, though it be our Duty and our Happineſs to ſerve him, Job 35. 6, 7, 8. *If thou ſinneſt, what doeſt thou againſt him ? or if thy tranſgreſſions be multiplied, what doeſt thou unto him ? If thou be righteous, what giveſt thou him ? or what receiveth he of thine hand ?*

2. Poſitively. *TO Glorify God is to ſhew forth his Glory, to declare him to be moſt glorious.* There is a *declarative Glory* of God, which he himſelf aims at in all his Works of Creation and Providence ; which is the making himſelf known, in the Manifeſtation of his glorious Being and Perfections by the Foot-ſteps thereof, which leave a viſible Print upon all ; That he deſigned it, appears in, Prov. 16.4. *The Lord hath made all things for himſelf* ---. Rev. 4. 11. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power : for thou haſt created all things, and for thy pleaſure they are, and were created.* That they do declare it may be ſeen, Pſal. 19. begin. *The heavens declare the glory of God : and the firmament ſheweth his handy work*, &c. Rom. 1. 19, 20. *Becauſe that which may be known of God, is manifeſt in them ; for God hath ſhewed it unto them. For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, ſo that they are without excuſe.* So Act. 14. 17. Now Man, as he was made capable of it in Creation ; ſo he is obliged by the Law of Gubernation, to Gather up, and Reflect back upon God the Praiſe and Glory of all this, by acknowledging it to him and anſwerably ſerving of him. Hence the Glorifying of God is expounded to us in Scripture by other equipollent Terms ; *Shewing forth his Praiſe*, Iſa. 43. 21. *Speaking and Talking of his Greatneſs & Goodneſs*, Pſal. 145. 10, 11, 12. *Shewing forth his Salvation*, Pſal. 96. 2. *Giving him his due Acknowledgment*, Ver. 7, 8. & ver. 10. *Saying among the heathen, that the Lord reigneth* ; And many the like.

MORE particularly God is to be glorifyed by us,

(1.) *IN our Hearts* : And that,

1. *BY entertaining ſuitable Thoughts & Conceptions of him.* When we employ our Minds in taking up becoming Apprehenſions of God, ſuch as are honourable, we then honour him in Heart. And indeed Honour, which is one part of our Duty & End, is properly the high Room he hath in our Souls ; without it all outward Shews are hypocritical, and meer Mockery. We know therefore that God calls for the Heart, and judgeth according to it.

2. *BY a Frame of Heart ſuitable to theſe Impreſſions.* Thereby we ſet up his Trophies in

our

our Souls, and that is properly Glorifying him: And that contains divers things in it.

Especially,

1. *A N hearty Adoration of him according to that glorious Goodness we have discovered in him.* We acknowledge him King and Sovereign; and accordingly we bow down before him, and worship him: Hence we are so often called upon to Worship him, and to Adore him, in the Scriptures.

2. *A Fearing of him, for his Greatness, & for his Goodness.* We see that in him which tells us that he is to be Feared; and we therefore nourish a reverential Fear of him in us, to keep us in our Place, and to excite us to our Duty, in Attendance to that Direction, Isa. 8. 13. *Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself, & let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.*

3. *A Trusting in him, a reposing our Confidence, & leaning the whole Weight of our Souls upon him.* The more fully, quietly, and resolvedly, we can do it, the more do we Honour God: and therefore as we are often called upon to trust in him, so they are declared happy that so do; Psal. 2. 12. *Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.*

4. *A Submitting our Wills to his Command.* Such a God is to be obeyed, and all his Perfections challenge our Submission to him: all Religion therefore is comprehended in a Living to his Will; 1 Pet. 4. 2. *That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.* And that begins in Willing his Will.

5. *I N a quiet Entertaining all his Providences, with an hearty Approbation of them, because He is the Potter & we the Clay.* A saying *Good is the Word of the Lord,* when it never so much thwarts our own Natural Inclinations.

(2.) *I N our Words:* By confessing him before men, and verbal Acknowledgment of him to be such a God; and professing of all those Obligations lying upon us, to Love, Obey, Fear, and Believe in him. The Tongue is called our Glory, and we make it so indeed, when we use it to declare Gods Glory.

(3.) *I N our practical Conversation.* When we direct all our Actions, Natural, Civil, Religious to his Glory, according to the forementioned Precept, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. When we so look to our Ways, that they may be to our utmost capacity performed for the Matter, Manner, & all Circumstances, as that God may be Honoured, and his Name Exalted by us. How all this is to be done, is the Matter Discussed in all the rest of the Catechism.

[2.] *F O R Evidence that this is Mans Chief End:* This will appear from these Considerations.

1. *M A N must have a Last & Chief End.* He must have an End, or else he were in vain. A Being that hath no End, is for nothing, and had as good not to have been. Vanity is properly the coming short of an End; and whether it be for Want of one, or by Missing of it, it comes all to one at the last: And he must have a Last End, else he can never be happy; for if there were an Infinite Subordination in his Ends, he could never come to his Resting Place, but must be an Everlasting Seeker, wandring in his endless Quest.

2. *GOD's Glory is the Last End of all the Creatures, and therefore of Man.* He also is a Piece of the Creation, and partakes in whatsoever is common to the Whole: But that all things were made for God's Glory, is clearly asserted in Scripture; forementioned *Prov.* 16. 4. *Rev.* 4. 11.

3. *M A N was nextly and immediately made for the Glory of God.* Other Creatures were made for it ultimately, but Man both nextly and ultimately too. The other parts of the Visible Creation were nextly made for Man and his Service, *Psal.* 8. And in serving Him they were to serve God: They were to be his Helps in it, both to encourage him, and to discover much of God to him: But there was nothing stood between God and Him to intercept his Service. Angels might be his Collaterals, and in many Respects more noble Beings; but They were not to be Worshipped and Served by him, but God alone: And for the fitting him to this Service He received the Image of God, which was his Created Sanctification.

4. *M A N can have no other Last End but God & his Glory.* For then it must be either the Creature or Himself: A Third cannot be thought of: But it can be neither of these as will appear,

(1.) *IT cannot be the Creature*; neither in General, nor any Particular, for these Reasons.

1. *B E C A U S E the Creature is inferiour to Him*: A Man's End is to be looked for above him, and not beneath him: but Man is Superiour to these: He is better and more excellent than they, in his Being, and therefore cannot be for them:

2. *B E C A U S E Man is the Creatures Next End.* That therefore cannot be His Last End: That that should be made for Man's Service, and that yet Man should be to serve that, implieth a Contradiction: But God gave all these things to Man to Rule over them, Gen. 1. 28. *And God blessed them, & God said unto them, Be fruitful, & multiply, & replenish the earth, & subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, & over the fowl of the air, & over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

3. *B E C A U S E the Creature cannot Satisfy him.* Man's Last End and his Objective Happiness are the same: And the Wise-Man when he would prove that this cannot be the Creature, renders that as a sufficient Reason, Eccl. 1. 8. *All things are full of labour, man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.* And that is far from being a Last End, which when enjoyed leaves the Man Miserable, Mat. 16. 26. *For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, & lose his own soul?*

(2). *N E I T H E R can He be his Own Last End.* For,

1. *T H E End must be something Better than the Means that serve to it.* For the Goodness of the Means as such, is nothing else but their Serviceableness

cableneſs to the End; whereas the Goodneſs of the End is in it ſelf: Thus our Saviour argues, Mat. 6. 25. *Therefore I ſay unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye ſhall eat, or what ye ſhall drink; nor yet for your body what ye ſhall put on: Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?*

2. *THERE is a Being Better than Man, and therefore He cannot be his Own Chief End.* The Laſt End, and the Chief Good, are One and the Same: There is therefore no reſting till we come there: God is his Own Laſt End, becauſe there is none better; but then he is no Mean, but only an End: But God is better than Man, Mat. 19. 17. *And he ſaid unto him, Why calleſt thou me good? there is none good but one, that is* GOD. He is only Eſſentially and Supremly Good: All Goodneſs in Man is only by Participation.

3. *MAN cannot be his own Happineſs, and therefore not his own Chief End.* An End that cannot happify him, is not worthy of that Name. Man is a Dependent Being; his Felicity is out of himſelf: It was ſo in his beſt State of Integrity; much more in his lapſed State of Miſery: He muſt go out of himſelf, if ever he will be well: God alone is an Adequate Object for Felicity; He only can be a Portion for the Soul, *Lam.* 3. 24. So that if Man cannot find his Life neither in the *Creature*, nor in *Himſelf*, but in God alone, it follows of Neceſſity, that not They, but He only muſt be his Chief End.

[FEB. 28. 1687.]

SERMON, *III.*

II. MANS *next Chief End to the Glorifying of God, is to* ENJOY HIM FOREVER: Why theſe Two are joyned in the Deſcription, hath been already declared: The *Summ* is, that they are both promoved by the ſame Means; there is no other way to Enjoy God but by Glorifying him; nor ſhall they who do truly Glorify him, ever miſs of Enjoying him. That we have now under Conſideration, is, That in Subordination to the Glory of God, Man is nextly bound for the Everlaſting *Enjoyment of Him* as his Great End. I ſhall not here expatiate in Explaining what is meant by *Enjoying of God*: The diſtinct opening whereof belongs to the Head of *Glorification*, which follows afterwards. In ſum, it intends our having him to be our Portion: It therefore preſuppoſeth our being Reconciled to him, and at Peace with him; our Union to him: And it includes in it the Beatifical Viſion and Fruition; the Derivation of all that Communicable Goodneſs from him unto and into us, which he hath engaged in the Promiſes: It graſps in all inchoated and perfected Glory. That this is Mans Great End, would need no Arguments to perſuade us, had not the Fall beclouded our Underſtandings, and darkned that Light, which was at firſt in the Mind of Man, on which this Principle was Written, as with a Sun beam: Yet there is ſo much of the Light of Nature remaining, as may Sufficiently convince us of this Truth; and it is further confirmed by the Light of the Scriptures: and it will be made evident by theſe CONCLUSIONS.

1. *THAT Man is made a Subject capable of Happineſs.* This is a Priviledge which he hath above the Inferiour Creatures; They can never be Happy, He may: There are thoſe things required to true Felicity, which none but Reaſonable Creatures can pertake in: There muſt be an underſtanding to diſcern, & a Will to embrace the Object, elſe it cannot be called Bleſſedneſs. This therefore was a Favour which God beſtowed upon Man in his very Conſtitution, that he might be Happy; and therein Priviledged him above the Beaſts of the Field. And though the Woful Fall of *Adam* hath made Mankind actually Miſerable, yet it hath not cut him off from all Poſſibility of being reſtored again to Felicity.

2. *THAT all Mankind are Naturally carried forth in Queſt of Happineſs, as their Laſt End.* This Principle is ſo engraven in the Nature of Man, that all the Miſchief which the Fall hath done him, hath not deprived him of. It is true, he hath loſt the Knowledge of what true Happineſs is, in a great meaſure, and is utterly at a loſs in regard of the Way to it, Rom. 3. 17. *And the way of peace have they not known.* But he hath ſuch Notions of the thing, and Apprehenſions of the Capacity of his Nature to enjoy it, of the Neceſſity he ſtands in of it, and what a Miſery it will be to go without it, that he makes it the Aim of all his Actions; It is the Bottom of his Projects and Deſigns; and tho' the far greater Number of Men take moſt wretched Courſes to compaſs it, yet this is it they would be at in all, Pſal. 4. 6 *There be many that ſay, Who will ſhew us any good?* Luk. 12. 19. *And I will ſay to my ſoul, Soul, thou haſt much goods laid up for many years; take thine eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry.*

3. *TRUE Happineſs doth properly conſiſt in Two Things*, viz. *Well-Doing, and Well-Being.* Happineſs in Scripture Language is frequently called Life; and the *Philoſopher* tells us, that *Life is an Act with Delight:* WELL-DOING belongs to Mans Felicity, becauſe his Happineſs is in Attaining his End, and that is mainly in Glorifying God, which is by *Eupraxy* or Well-Doing. Vanity is oppoſed to Happineſs, *Eccl.* 1. 2. Now Vanity is the Loſs of ones End; Happineſs muſt therefore be in the Attaining it: Hence that forementioned *Iſa.* 56. 2. Man being made for God, it muſt be a main Part of his Happineſs to Serve and Glorify him: So *David*, Pſal. 84. 4. *Bleſſed are they that dwell in thy houſe: they will be ſtill praiſing thee.* WELL-BEING alſo is requiſite to Felicity: Miſery therefore and Bleſſedneſs are frequently ſet in Oppoſition: and therefore it is that the Scripture Promiſes are ſo full of ſuch Encouragements to Love

and

and Serve God, as contain in them the Well-Being of the Creature.

4. *THAT Well-Being which will amount to Happiness, can be nothing less than the Enjoyment, of so much real and enduring Goodness, as the Creature may fully and finally rest satisfied in.* David describes Happiness by Satisfaction, *Psal.* 36.8. 63.5. And that which cannot Happify a Man, is called that which cannot satisfy, *Isa.* 55.2. Felicity is called Rest, *Mat.* 11. 29. But till all the Reachings of the Soul are gratified, till all its Appetites are filled, it cannot rest; it will be in Motion as long as it feels any Want.

5. *THAT the Object of Mans Happiness is out of himself.* Man cannot be his own Felicity: He is a dependant Creature: His Being and his Blessedness are two things: He cannot dwell at home: He doth not enjoy in himself a Self-sufficiency. Man in his best and most perfect state of Integrity was to seek his Well-Being out of himself: He was not made Happy, but only Capable of being so by Closing in with his Object. Fallen Man then, who is not only not Happy, but become extreamly Miserable, is under a Necessity of going abroad to seek for Good. Neither can the Body or Soul be at Rest, till they meet with and fall upon an Object that may give them Satisfaction. This is it that hath made the Whole World a Company of Seekers, asking for Good, *Psal.* 4. 6.

6. *THAT the whole Creation affords no such Object, the Fruition whereof can make a Man Happy.* And the Reason is, because they cannot Satisfy: So far are they from Satisfying the Rational, that they cannot do it to the Sensitive Soul; and for that Cause the Wiseman argues them to be Vanity, *Eccl.* 1. 8. Not the Lower World only, but Heaven itself is not enough to Answer Mans Desires, *Psal.* 73. 25. There are *Three Defects in the Creature*, rendring it Insufficient for our perfect Well-Being.

(1.) *ITS Unsuitableness.* If there were enough of it, yet it is not accommodated to all a Mans Wants; nay, those which are his Greatest Wants, and make him truly Miserable. It cannot Purchase him the Pardon of his Sins, Prov. 11. 4. *Riches profit not in the day of wrath.* It cannot deliver his Soul from being Eternally Lost; forementioned *Mat.* 16. 26. It cannot make a Price that will pay his Ransom from the Curse which lies heavy upon him, Psal. 49. 6, 7, 8. *They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches: None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: For the redemption of their soul is precious and it ceaseth for ever.* It is but only his Earthly Part which it can give any Relief unto, that is the least and most inconsiderable of the two.

(2.) *ITS Scantiness.* Were it never so suitable, yet there is not enough of it: The Reaches of Mans Soul are so vast, that they can grasp in the whole Creation, and scarce feel it: The Desire of Man, that *Horseleeches Daughter*, is still crying *Give, Give*, : The Bed is too narrow, and the Covering too short: The World looks bulky, but it is empty, void and waste. Many have had too much, but never yet any had enough, so as to be Content, that had nothing but the Creature, but they have still enlarged their desires as Hell: And the reason is, because the World is a great Nothing, Prov. 23. 5. *Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not?*

(3.) *ITS short Continuence, and Uncertainty.* Man is a Creature made for Perpetuity; and if his Object be not Stable and Durable, it will sooner or later leave him under horrible Disappointment, and so will these things. They are *Broken Cisterns*, Jer. 2. 18. They are Certain in nothing but Uncertainty, *Prov.* 23. 5. *For riches certainly make themselves wings, they fly away as an eagle towards heaven.* They are the Subjects of Moth & Rust, and ly ready for the Thief. Mat. 6. 19. *Lay not up for your selves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal.* Yea, they are made to be Burnt up, 2 Pet. 23. 10. *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up.* How then can they make a Man Happy?

7. *GOD & He Only is such an Object, in the Enjoyment of whom, there is perfect Satisfaction and Blessedness.* That the Creature hath it not in it, hath been Discovered; But still Man is not at an utter loss, because he may find it in God: The full demonstration of this belongs to a following Question: The Scripture Sufficiently informs us in this Truth, see, Psal 16. ult. *Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.* 36. 9. *For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.* So see *Eph.* 3. 20. There is with him enough to fill all their Desires, Psal. 81. 10. *I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.*

8. *HENCE, if Mans Great End be Well-Being, it must be to Enjoy God Eternally.* For therein only can his Well-Being consist: Here only is his Resting Place; Till he comes hither, he doth but wander from Mountain to Hill, seeking Rest, and finding none: And if there be no self concern equally incumbent on him with this, as it is certain there is not, needs must it be an End Superior to all those poor Designs, which the generality of Mankind are in Persuit of with so much Heat and Vigour; and nothing but the Glory of God can be beyond it.

Q. *HOW far is a Man bound to have his mind exercised about this Chief End in all his Actions?*

A. THIS Case hath been too laxly resolved by some, and too severely Strained by others: *Popish Casuists* give too large Allowances to Mens carnal Corruptions, while they tell us, that a *Previous* Intention is enough,

and

and that if a Man at moſt Once a Day think of his End, it is enough; nay an Implicite Intention may ſuffice. They on the other hand lay a Snare to trouble pious Conſciences, who charge Sin and Hypocriſy on Men, if they be not always intenſly thinking upon their Glorifying and Enjoying of God. For a right ſtating of the Reſolution of this Caſe, take *Theſe Concluſions.*

1. *THAT every Action in a Man's Life, that doth not Serve to this Great End, is a vain Action*: Becauſe it miſſeth the mark which man was made to attain; Means are unprofitable, if they be not made Serviceable to their Ends: And if the Chief of Subordinate Means be broken off, before it comes to the Laſt Link, it is loſt. There may be a Civil Goodneſs, but there is no Theological Good in any thing that ſtays ſhort of the Glory of God: That was the Vanity of their Faſts, Zech. 7. 5. *Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the prieſts, ſaying, when ye faſted and mourned in the fifth and ſeventh month, even thoſe ſeventy years, did ye at all faſt unto me, even to me?*

2. *IT is required of Men, that they aim or level all their Actions to this End.* It is not Sufficient that they reach it caſually: for we know God will be Glorifyed by all, whether we will or no; but it muſt be intentionally: forementioned 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. The Nature of an End, to be purſued by a Voluntary Agent, requires it: without this Intention, there can be no Proſecution.

3. *THERE can be no Application to the Uſe of Means, without Thinking upon the End.* A Man may make uſe of things; but not as Means to his Chief End, unleſs his Mind be upon it: For it is the End, that puts him upon the Uſing Means; It is the only Moral Motive that excites him Except a Man think that he was made for God's Glory, and to ſeek his own Salvation, he will never enquire how this may be done. *Iſa.* 1. 3.

4. *THERE can be no Choice of Means, without an Eye upon the End.* It is not indifferent what a Man doth, if he would reach his End: there muſt be a Sutableneſs in the Means, elſe they are loſt; and that cannot be known, without applying them in our Conſideration to it: It is neceſſary therefore for a Man in all he ſets about to deliberate, and ſay to himſelf, *Will God be Glorified by this! Will it help me to the Enjoyment of him?* And accordingly to chuſe or reject it, *Gen.* 39. 9. *How then can I do this great wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God?*

5. *THERE can be no Uſing the Means choſen, Rightly, without the Conſideration of the End*: It is as eaſy to miſs it in uſing Right Means, as in chuſing of Wrong ones. A Man may not only eat, and drink, but alſo read, and hear, and pray, and neither honour God nor further his own Salvation: He that would not be deceived here, muſt lay them by the End, and frame them according to it; which cannot be without ſetting it before him, Pſal. 16. 8. *I have ſet the Lord always before me: becauſe he is at my right hand, I ſhall not be moved.*

6. *THERE are Subordinate Ends & Means, which Man is called to be converſant in, and his Mind muſt be employed about:* by reaſon whereof it is not poſſible that he ſhould without Intermiſſion be actually engaged in the Thoughts of his Laſt End: It would diſtreſs his Mind; and God hath not laid any Duty, in it ſelf impoſſible, upon Men. There are Occaſions calling us to order our outward Affairs with Diſcretion, Pſal. 112. 5. *A good man ſheweth favour and lendeth; he will guide his affairs with diſcretion.* And that cannot be without pondering on them, which will intermit the actual thinking of the other, in a finite limited Underſtanding.

7. *YET we ought in the midſt of all our Occaſions, to be very frequently Reflecting upon our Great End, and in nothing to reſt in any ſubordinate one*: and the oftner the better, ſo it be done with Wiſdom: It is the beſt help to keep the Heart Right, and call it in, if gotten aſtray; to ask ourſelves ſtill on all occaſions, *How do I Glorify God in this? How is Salvation-Work furthered by it?* To ask, *Where is our Heart? What are we Driving on?* And the rather, becauſe the Corruption in us draws us to do many impertinent and unprofitable Actions, for want of being rightly levelled by us, Ezek. 33. 31. *And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they ſit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they ſhew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetouſneſs.*

THERE are a few INFERENCES, which may be drawn from the foregoing Diſcourſe, *viz.*

1. *THAT there are but a very few that know what they were made for*: If the Lives & Practices of Men may be a Rule for us to judge of their Principles by, we may ſafely conclude, that either they underſtand not, or do not conſider (which is called Ignorance in Scripture) what Errand God ſent them into the World about: How wofully are the Children of Men miſtaken about their Ends? They ſuppoſe they were made for nothing elſe but to gratify their own Concupiſcence, to heap up this World's Goods, to drown themſelves in Pleaſures, to climb up the Pinacles of this World's Honours, to ſeek an Happineſs under the Sun: But, for the Glory of God, and everlaſting Fruition of him, they know nothing of that, nor are in the leaſt concerned about it: And may we not declare theſe to be wofully miſerable? The Apoſtle joyns theſe Two together, Rom. 3. 16, 17. *Deſtruction and miſery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known.*

2. *THAT the greateſt Number of the Children of Men live in vain.* What is Vanity but a miſſing the End? That Man, as to himſelf, had better never to have been born, that comes into the World, and goes out of it again, and miſſeth of the End he was born for. And yet how lamentably will this be found true of the *Generality* of Mankind, if we compare their lives by the *End*, which Religion tells us that all Men are made for? What ſhall we

think of the covetous *Worldling*, who makes an *Idol* of the Creature, and ſpends all his thoughts and time in compaſſing the World; who makes *Mammon* his God, & wealth his felicity! What ſhall we think of the voluptuous *Pleaſure-hunter*; who reckons himſelf born to eat, drink, and play; who thinks, drink, fare, full cups, laſcivous company, and wanton dalliances, to be the *Ne plus Ultra* of Mankind: makes his *Belly* to be his God, and the ſatisfaction of his *fleſhly* appetite, to be his higheſt happineſs! What ſhall we think of the ambitious *Glory-Seeker*, who values himſelf by the *Dignity* and *Preferment* he can climb up to among men: and miſtakes airy honour for true bleſſedneſs, and looks no farther! What of the profane *Scoffer* at Godlineſs, who diſhonours God's Name by Oaths, Curſes, Reviling of his holy ways; and is ſo far from ſeeking Communion with God, that he *bids him depart from him!* Certainly, either the *Scripture* is miſtaken about man's cheif end; or *theſe* are beſide it, and will loſe all their labour at the laſt, and their Souls into the bargain: Nay, the *Hypocrite* too, the falſe Profeſſor, who *pretends* to aim at the glory of God, but really makes *Self* his End, He alſo will loſe his Labour, & deceive his Soul into Ruin.

3. *THAT it highly concerns* Young Ones *to ſet themſelves to the ſtudy of Religion betimes.* And let it then be a *Motive* to all ſuch, *early* to engage themſelves in it. Remember therefore, that you were *made* for an End: you can be *happy* only in the attaining of it: You are *capable* of ſerving to it in the days of your Youth: All that time is already *loſt*, which you ſpend in purſuing any *other* ends but this: You have by reaſon of original Sin loſt the apprehenſions of it, and are *naturally engaged* for lower or inferiour ends: True *Religion* only gives you *direction*, how you may come by the right *perception* of it again: If you *miſs* of, and do not reach to this end, you are *undone* forever. And if you are ſo fooliſh as to ſpend away your *Childhood* and *Youth* in Vanity, you may be cut off from any *after*-opportunities of engaging yourſelves for the glorifying of God and enjoying him. As then you love your Souls, and would not come ſhort of God's Glory, & your Souls Salvation, ſet yourſelves earneſtly to attend upon all thoſe *means & helps*, whereby you may be acquainted with your great end, & engaged in living unto it.

[MARCH 27. 1688.]

SERMON *IV.*

QUESTION II.

WHAT RULE hath God given to direct us, how we may glorify and enjoy Him?

ANSWER.

The *WORD* of God (which is contained in the Scriptures of the *Old* & *New Teſtament*) is the *ONLY* Rule to direct us, how we may glorify and enjoy Him.

EVERY wiſe Agent always obſerves this method: he firſt propounds an *End* to himſelf, and fixeth upon it, and then he ſets himſelf to ſtudy and find out proper & ſutable *Means*, which he may improve in his regular purſuance of it. This Scheme, Idea, or Exemplar of the means, and the way rightly to apply them to his purpoſe, is that which is called his *Rule of Operation*. And ſuch a Rule is requiſite in order to the practice of every *Art*; and he that is throughly acquainted with it, and dexterous at it, may only be called an *Artiſt*. Such a method as this is followed in our *Catechiſm*, in laying down the Doctrine of *Religion* or *Divinity*. Having therefore rightly ſtated and limitted man's great *End*, in the *former* queſtion, there remains nothing but to ſet him in the *Way* to his unfailing obtainment of it; which is the deſign of all that follows. And there are two things here requiſite, *viz.* that we be *ſatisfied about our Rule*, and that we be well *acquainted with the Contents of it*. The former is endeavoured in the Queſtion we are now upon; the latter is purſued in thoſe that follow after.

THE main ſcopethen of the preſent Inquiry, is about *the Rule it ſelf*. Man's happineſs is a great and momentous thing; if he miſs of that, he hath laboured in vain. He had need therefore have a *ſure & unerring* Rule, to direct him thereunto, that he be not deceived & diſappointed; becauſe his loſs will be irreparable. We are therefore *here* pointed to this Rule, and have it characterized unto us.

FOR a right Underſtanding, and full Explication of this Queſtion and Anſwer; there are theſe things will call for our diſtinct Conſideration. (1.) That Man *muſt* have a *Rule* to direct him, or elſe he can never attain to his chief end. (2.) That this Rule can be but *one*. (3.) That the *Word of God* is the *only* Rule. (4.) That this word, which is the Rule, is contained in the *Scriptures* of the *Old* and New *Teſtament*.

Prop. I. *THAT Man muſt have a* RULE *to direct him, with which he is well acquainted*; or elſe he can never attain to his chief End. There are two things contained in the Propoſition. (1.) That there muſt be a *Rule*. (2) That we muſt have *Acquaintance* with it. Both theſe may be evidenced.

Article 1. *THERE muſt be a Rule*. Man cannot be led to his End *without* one. The neceſſity of Man's having a Rule, may be argued from two Conſiderations.

[1.]

[1.] FROM the Conſideration of *the Reſpect which Man bears to his End*: and that whether lookt upon in a ſtate of *Integrity* or of *Apoſtaſy*.

(1.) LOOK upon him in his *Primitive Perfection*, ſtanding in his Integrity; and here he could never reach his End without a Rule. The following Concluſions will evidence the Truth of this Aſſertion.

1. *MAN was not made happy.* That Man was (ſtrictly ſpeaking) neither happy nor miſerable in his *firſt* ſtate, is a Truth undeniable, if we do but acknowledge his happineſs to conſiſt in his *attaining his chief End*, and his miſery in his *miſſing* or falling ſhort of it. He was *fitted for* happineſs, inaſmuch as he had all that ſtock of Grace put into his hands, which was ſufficient by improvement to make him happy. There was nothing wanting in that Image of God, which he had ſtamped upon him: And yet he was *capable of loſing* his felicity, and becoming *unhappy*; being made mutable, and capable of loſing that Image, as the Event unhappily proved. *Man* was therefore at firſt made a *Probationer* for happineſs: and that by the law of ſpecial Government.

2. *HAPPINESS was propoſed to Man at firſt in a Covenant-Way.* That there was a Covenant between *God* & *Adam*, the Scripture aſſures us, and gives us an account of the Nature and Terms of it. Now in a Covenant there are always thoſe two things, *Something promiſed* upon condition on one part, and the *conditions required* on the other part, in order to the obtaining it. The *Thing* propoſed to Man in the firſt Covenant was *Happineſs*. The *manner* of propoſing it, was by telling him *how he was to come by it*, if ever he expected to become the owner of it. The Terms therefore ſo run, *Do & Live*, Rom. 10. 5.

3. *HENCE there was a fixed or ſtated way, to which Man's being made happy was reſtrained.* For, if Happineſs were not promiſed to man *abſolutely*, but *hypothetically*, it muſt needs *depend* upon that hypotheſis; and the performance of the Condition is the *way* to his felicity: and that this was fixed, is therein evident, becauſe together with a firm *Promiſe* made to him, That if he obeyed, he ſhould be happy, there was as ſtrong a *Threatning*, That if he came ſhort of it, he ſhould undoubtedly be miſerable, *Gen.* 2. 17.

4. *HE could neither find nor keep this way, without a Rule of direction*; and conſequently could never have reached bleſſedneſs. He could never have known, when he *ſerved* to his end, or when he *miſt* of it. He had been loſt in a wilderneſs, out of which he could not have gotten, but muſt have been at an utter Loſs. In ſumm, there was a *Medium* between a ſtate of *Innocence*, and a ſtate of *Felicity*: there was a way to paſs ſafe to it, and a way to miſs of it. And to enable him to chuſe the one, and avoid the other, he muſt have a Rule.

(2.) MUCH more does Man need a Rule, if we look upon him in his ſtate of *Apoſtaſy*. And this is that which we are moſtly concerned in; for that is the Condition of all *Adam*'s Poſterity. That *fallen* Man needs a Rule to guide him to Salvation, will appear if we conſider, ——

1. *THAT Sin hath made him truly & wofully* Miſerable *and Wretched.* He is not only not happy, but he is fallen from that *Nearneſs* to it, in which he once ſtood, into a great *Diſtance* from Felicity. He is ſeparated from his end; is *fallen ſhort of the Glory of God*, (Rom. 3. 23.) and is removed from the *Enjoyment* of him, (*Iſai.* 59. 2.) and becauſe in theſe Two, his Bleſſedneſs did conſiſt, the *loſs* of them declares him wretched.

2. *THAT if ever fallen Man recover happineſs, he muſt be* brought back *again to this great End of his.* As long as he is out of his road, nothing but *deſtruction* and *miſery are in his ways*, (Rom 3. 16.) He can never be truly bleſſed, but only in the glorifying God, and enjoying him; becauſe happineſs is only in reaching his chief end.

3. *THERE is ſomething* required *of man, in order to his recovering his Felicity.* He is not only to be paſſive, but *active* too in this affair. There is *Faith* in Chriſt, and new *Obedience* requiſite, as will afterwards appear. As man was at firſt made capable of being happy in a Covenant-way: So fallen man is recovered to Bleſſedneſs in a Covenant-way. Hence the terms are declared in the Goſpel. See *Mark* 16. 16. *Rom.* 8. 13. *Heb.* 12. 14.

4. *HENCE he muſt have a* Rule *for this.* The *Goſpel* muſt have its Precepts, as well as the Law. Fallen Man cannot ſteer his courſe without a Compaſs. The *gate is ſtrait*, and *the way is narrow*, and *few find it.* (Mat. 7. 14.) It is vain for him to endeavour it, unleſs he have a Clue to direct him.

THAT Man muſt have a Rule further appears, ——

[2.] FROM the Conſideration *of the nature of a Rule.* A Rule is nothing elſe but *that whereby a man is guided ſo to do his Work, as to ſute it to the End and Uſe for which he doth it*: and the reaſon of it is, becauſe he may elſe miſs, and ſo loſe his Labour. There is neceſſarily requiſite a *Sutableneſs* between the *Means*, and the *End*, for which they are uſed: Elſe means are vain. The right ſuting of them, 'tis the nature of a Rule to diſcover: and no man can be an *Artiſt* in any employment without it. And how then ſhall Man work out his Salvation, if he have no ſuch Direction?

Articl. 2. *THAT Man muſt have Acquaintance with this Rule.* It is not enough that there *be* one, but *he* muſt be *ſkilled* in it. To clear this, Conſider ——

1. *MAN is made* a Cauſe by Counſel *of his own Actions.* God hath given him an *underſtanding*, capable of diſcerning; and a *will*, able to chooſe his way. This is a priviledge beſtowed upon Man above all other Creatures in this lower World. Job 35. 11. *God teacheth us more than the beaſts of the earth, and maketh us wiſer then the fowls of heaven.*

2. *GOD deals with man in a way that is* ſuited *to his Nature.* He treats him as a *Reaſonable* Creature. He ſutes his ſtate to his *Conſtitution*, accommodates it to ſuch a ſort of Being. Inferior Beings have a Rule, as well as Man: But God guides them only by Inſtinct. *They* cannot *know* their Rule. It is ſufficient for them,

them, that *He* knows it, and hath imprinted it upon their Natures. But God deals with Man in a way of *Precepts*, *Promiſes*, & *Threatnings*, which is a *Moral* Way. The whole Scripture gives us account of this manner of God's treating Man.

3. *HENCE Man can never attain his End, without he* knows *his Rule.* The Service God expects of Man is a *reaſonable Service*, (Rom. 12, 1.) He muſt be *voluntary* in his Obedience: God requires the *Heart.* He muſt *chooſe* the ways of God: And how can he do ſo, except he *knows* them? For this reaſon it is ſaid, that *without knowledge* the mind of Man cannot be *good*, and that a people are *deſtroyed* for lack of Knowledge. There is no ſuch thing as blind Obedience in Religion.

Prop. II. *THAT this Rule can be but* ONE. This Propoſition is not ſo to be underſtood, as if there were not *many particular Rules* preſcribed, to be followed by men, in order to Salvation. Out of doubt, ſo many ſeveral *Precepts* as are laid down in Scripture, are ſo many particular Rules to direct us in our way. But the meaning is, that there is but one *Syſtem* or *Body of Rules*; but one Directory, according to which he can ſo order his way as to be happy. This is called a *Rule*, Gal. 6. 16. And that this is but *One*, will appear, if we conſider theſe Arguments.

1. *THAT Man's Happineſs depends upon his performing the* Conditions *of the Covenant, in which it is offered to him.* God is the Author of Bleſſedneſs, and it is his free gift. He therefore hath ſovereign arbitrary Authority to propoſe the Terms on which he will beſtow it: and having ſo done, if Man expects to be happy, he muſt ſee to the fulfilment of *thoſe* Terms; elſe he can never lay Claim or pretend a Title to it. Nay, if he miſs of the *Condition* of the promiſe, he preſently brings himſelf under the *Threatning*; and for this reaſon Precepts are not only given affirmatively, but *negatively* too.

2. *THAT there is but one* Way, *in one* Covenant, *according to which God hath engaged to make Man happy.* It is true, there are two Covenants, in which God hath been concerned with Man; the Covenant of *Works*, and the Covenant of *Grace*: and theſe have their *ſeveral* ways and rules. In the *firſt*, Man was to be made happy by *Works*: in the *ſecond*, by *Grace.* The former depended upon man's *perſonal Obedience*: the latter upon *Chriſt*'s. The former called for *doing*, the other for *believing.* But each of them have their *limited* way. And man being *fallen* from the firſt Covenant-Condition, and ſet it againſt him, and having loſt his ſtrength, it can *no more* be a Rule of Happineſs to him. It is now only by the *New* Covenant, that he can ever hope to obtain Life & Salvation: and the Way to it, according to this Covenant, is determined; and therefore the Rule can be but one. For,

1. *THERE is no Salvation without* Reconciliation *to God.* As long as God and He are Enemies, He is unhappy. God only can ſave him; and he will ſave him only in the way of Reconciliation. Nay, he cannot be happy but in the *Enjoyment* of God; which how can he come at, till reconciled? Till then, He is *without God*, Eph. 2. 12.

2. *THERE is but* one Mediator *of reconciation*, and that is *Jeſus Chriſt*, as the Apoſtle tells us expreſly, 1 *Tim.* 2. 4. There is no coming to God but *by him*: out of him God is a *Conſuming Fire.* He only hath ſatisfy'd provoked Juſtice, and pulled down the wall of partition. Thro' him then, and in no other way muſt we obtain Reconciliation.

3. *THERE is but* one way *to become* intereſted *in the Satisfaction of Chriſt*, and partake in reconciliation by him; and that is by *believing* in him. Joh. 3. 36. *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlaſting life: and he that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.* Chriſt is not *actually* a Saviour to *all* men indiſcriminatively, but *only* to Believers. He therefore bad his Diſciples to preach *That*, as the *Sum* of the Goſpel. Mark 16. 15, 16. *Preach the goſpel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not, ſhall be damned.*

4. *THERE is but* one way of ſerving God *in new & evangelical* Obedience, and that is by *living to the will of God.* (1 Pet. 4. 2.) God hath told man *what* is his Will, wherein he expects to be ſerved by him, (*Mic.* 6. 8.) and this only hath a *Promiſe* given to it: without which, it is bold *preſumption* for a man to challenge to himſelf a reward of Bleſſedneſs.

AND here we have an eaſy Reſolution to that CASE which ſome ſo perplex themſelves about, viz.

Queſt. *WHETHER Man may be ſaved in* any *Religion, provided he be* true *to the Obſervance of it?*

Anſw. TO bring this Caſe to the *Premiſſes*, I'll lay down theſe few following Concluſions;

1. THAT, if there be but *one Rule* guiding to bleſſedneſs, and Man muſt *know* that Rule, or he cannot be bleſſed, then no Religion can ſave a Man, but that only in which this Rule is made known. Hence therefore the Word of God diſcovers the *miſery* of men who are *Strangers* to this Rule. The Apoſtle argues, Rom. 10. 14. *How ſhall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?* How ſhall man guide his ſteps to Life, if he have not a diſcovery of the *Way*? Or guide them right, if he have not the *true* Way? The Wiſe Man tells us, *Where there is no Viſion, the people periſh*, Prov. 29. 18.

2. THAT there may be *different Setts* in Religion, and yet men may be *ſaved* in them. We are to diſtinguiſh between *diverſe* Religions, and *Diverſity in* Religion. Through our knowing *but in part*, it is come to paſs, that Profeſſors of Chriſtianity have been of diverſe Opinions in many things; and their difference hath occaſioned ſeveral *Denominations*; but while they agree in the *Foundation*, they may be ſaved. So *Paul* aſſures us, 1 *Cor.* 3. 11, 12, &c.

3. THAT there are *Religions* in the World, that not only have *no diſcoveries* of this *one* Rule, but preſcribe to men Rules *contradictory* thereunto. The Truth of this Aſſertion cannot be ſuſpected, by him that hath but a little Acquaintance

quaintance with the ſeveral Religions, which the Children of Men have taken up, and followed. If we look upon all the Sects of the *Gentile* Religion, we ſhall not find in them any the leaſt footſteps of man's Salvation by *Chriſt*, and faith in him. They have ſet up *Idolatrous* Worſhip, and ſerved gods of their own making, bowed down to ſtocks and ſtones: among Twenty Thouſand gods, have miſt of the *true One*; have betook themſelves to moral *Vertues*, as the way to felicity; and though they had *Sacrifices*, yet they neither uſed them as *typical* ſhadows of *Chriſt*, nor did they offer them to GOD, but to *Devils*. If we look upon the *Mahometan*; though they do in word acknowledge *God* and *Chriſt*, yet they neither acknowledge Chriſt as a *Redeemer*, nor do they preſcribe *faith* in him as neceſſary, nor yet do they acknowledge his *Laws*: but ſet up *their own* in Oppoſition to his. If we conſider the *Anti-Chriſtian*; whatever pretence they make, yet they have *ſubverted* this Rule, in the foundations of it; inaſmuch as they have joyned *other* Mediators unto Chriſt; have *enervated* faith in his Righteouſneſs for Juſtification & Salvation; and brought back a Covenant of *Works*; have ſet up their own *Canons*, not only in equality with, but in *Oppoſition* to his Commands; and becauſe they loved not the Truth, have been left to *believe Lies*.

4. HENCE the *cloſer* ſuch men follow *theſe Religions*, the further they are from *Happineſs*; becauſe they thereby keep at the greater *diſtance* from the *only Rule* of Salvation. They miſtake, that think *conſcientious* following an erroneous Rule, is a *Salve* for the Errors of it. Ignorance is a damning evil; and Ignorance in the Underſtanding will beget *Error* in the *Conſcience*, and there is no reaſon why God ſhould not puniſh Sin in the *Conſcience*, as well as Sin in the *Will*.

IT therefore tells us, that it is a matter of great, yea infinite Concernment to us, that we labour to be *rightly acquainted* with the Rule we are to follow in our purſuit of happineſs: and therefore that we do not take it upon Credit; but make *diligent inquiry* to know, what is the good & perfect and acceptable Will of God, leſt otherwiſe we take a great deal of pains to *no purpoſe*, and following a *falſe* guide, do in the end miſs of, and finally fall altogether ſhort of our deſired Salvation.

[APRIL 24. 1688.]

SERMON V.

Prop. III. THAT *the* WORD of GOD *is this only Rule.* If Man cannot be happy, without a Rule that can direct him to it, it muſt needs be his great concernment to know it, and not be miſtaken. Now when the Word of God is ſaid to be the Rule, it is a *metonymical* Expreſſion, and intends that it is therein *contained* & no where elſe. Here therefore, two things are to be conſidered. (1.) What we underſtand by the Word of God? (2.) How it appears to be the only Rule?

Q. 1. *WHAT are we to underſtand by the Word of God?*

A. THIS Expreſſion is *variouſly* uſed in Scripture: Eſpecially,

1. For *the Son of God*, who is the *Eternal Word*, (*Joh.* 1. 1, 14.) So called, becauſe by him God hath been pleaſed to make himſelf *known* to his People. Ver. 18. *No man hath ſeen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the boſom of the Father, he hath declared him.*

2. FOR *the Eternal Decree* or Ordinance, in which God laid out and determined the works of Efficiency. So *Pſal.* 148. 8.

3. FOR God's powerful *Adminiſtration* of the Works of Creation & Providence. There is a *Creating* Word (*Pſal.* 33. 6.) and there is a *Preſerving* Word, (*Mat.* 4. 4. *Heb.* 1. 3.) But neither of theſe is here applicable.

4. FOR *the Revelation or Diſcovery of his approving Will.* The proper uſe of *Speech* or *Words* among men, is to communicate their minds & thoughts one to another: and hence 'tis metaphorically applied to God, in reſpect of thoſe *manifeſtations*, which he makes to the Children of men, of himſelf; and is more eſpecially reſtrained to thoſe diſcoveries, wherein he lets them know what is their *Duty*, and wherein they may be capable of pleaſing him. And this is the moſt frequent uſe of the Word in Scripture. In what way ſoever God ſees meet to make known his mind to us, in that way he may be ſaid to *ſpeak* to us; which the Apoſtle tells us hath been in *divers manners*. Heb. 1. 1.

Q. 2. *HOW does it appear to be the only Rule?*

A. WE may here (to expedite this matter) call to mind, that there have been *two Covenants*, in which God hath traded with men about their happineſs, *viz.* that of *Works*, and that of *Grace*. As to the *former*, or that of works, there needs no applying of this Conſideration to it, becauſe man is no longer to expect felicity by it. If fallen man could have attained his end according to the tenour of that, the ſecond had been *ſuperfluous*. Gal. 3. 21. *Is the law then againſt the promiſes of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily Righteouſneſs ſhould have been by the law.* That Covenant ſtands armed with *Curſes*, and all that are under it can expect nothing elſe: Ver. 10. *For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curſe: for it is written, Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.* And yet if there were need, it might be evidenced that God's *Word* was Man's only Rule there: but becauſe *Adam's* apoſtate Children can expect Life & Salvation only according to the tenour of the Covenant of *Grace*, it will ſuffice to make it appear, that the Word of God is the only Rule, to direct us to glorify and enjoy him, in the way of *this* Covenant. And this will be manifeſt by theſe Propoſitions. I.

1. THAT Man by his fall *miſt* of the happineſs offered in the firſt Covenant, & brought himſelf under a condition of *miſery*. Man's happineſs conſiſts in the *glorifying* of God, & *enjoying* him : and the fall cut him off from both. From the former, Rom 3. 23. *For all have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God* : From the latter. Iſa. 59 2. *Your iniquities have ſeparated between you and your God.* And hence he fell from Life into a ſtate of Death : for therein did the Curſe conſiſt. Gen. 2. 17. *In the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die.* So that all the Children of men are not only born *capable* of Miſery : But they are born *actually* miſerable. Hence this *Death* is ſaid to be *paſt upon all men*, Rom. 5. 12.

2. THAT fallen man is *no longer capable* of being made *happy* by *that* Covenant. For, though his happineſs be ſtill in attaining his end, and his end be ſtill the ſame that ever it was, yet it is not to be advanced by him *in that way* wherein it was at *firſt* preſcribed : and this, not by reaſon of any default in the Law or Covenant, (that is holy, & juſt and good) but by reaſon of *his own Impotency*. Rom. 7. 13, 14. *Was then that which is good, made death unto me? God forbid. For we know that the law is ſpiritual : but I am carnal, ſold under ſin.* And here is a double Impotency expreſt in the two Phraſes : — *Carnal*, i. e. Sinful, *naturally* and *habitually* ; and ſo not able to *keep the Law*, by which God may be glorified, and I perform the Condition of Life : —— *Sold under Sin*, i. e. under the *Sentence* of Condemnation ; not able to *make Satisfaction*, and remove the Curſe. So that this Covenant ſpeaks nothing but *terrour* and *deſpair* to all thoſe that are held under the Conditions of it.

3. THAT hence, if ever the undone Creature be *reſtored* to happineſs, by attaining his end, there muſt be *another way* found out for it. If bleſſedneſs can be no longer *by the law*, then either man muſt *never* be bleſſed ; Or, there muſt be a *new law* of bleſſedneſs provided for him ; Or he muſt be made bleſſed *without any*, which cannot be ; for, if he could not be happy when he was *innocent*, but by cloſing with his Rule, and reaching his End, much leſs can he be ſo now he is *miſerable*, unleſs there be a way to rid him of his miſery, and bring him back to felicity. If therefore the law of *works* cannot, ſomething *elſe* muſt, or otherwiſe he muſt needs periſh. And if there be another *way*, there muſt of neceſſity be another *Rule* ; This being a directory ſuited to the way, and therefore cannot but vary accordingly. Hence that, Heb. 7. 12. *For the prieſthood being changed, there is made of neceſſity a change alſo of the law.*

4. THAT the *Recovery* of fallen man from this Miſery, is an act of *God's ſovereign Pleaſure.* It derives from hence, and hath its dependance here. If, when man had come ſhort of his end, and loſt his happineſs, he had left him there without hopes forever, he could not have done him any *injury* ; it had been but an Hell of *his own* procuring. Hence the Original of man's Recovery is referred to *God's Will*. Eph. 1. 5. *Having predeſtinated us to the adoption of children by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will.* God had once brought himſelf under an Obligation to give him life in caſe of Obedience ; but he had not obliged himſelf to deliver him, if he ſhould caſt himſelf away.

5. THAT hence *the Way*, in which this recovery is to be obtained, *depends upon* that Pleaſure of His. He that might have choſen, whether *ever* he would have ſaved us, hath the liberty of preſcribing (as he ſees meet) *how* he will bring it about, and upon what *Terms* we may expect it. If *he* do not reſtore us, none can : and if he do, it is *free Grace.* Who then ſhall preſcribe to him ? Or who ſhall make his terms for him ? And for this reaſon it is, that *Salvation* is ſaid to *belong to God.*

6. THAT as God *purpoſed* from Eternity to bring back a number of fallen Men, ſo he provided a *new Covenant-way* to accompliſh it in. God hath a company of *Elect* or choſen ones among the ruins of the fall, whom he appointed to felicity in the days of Eternity, before the World was, (*Eph.* 1. 6.) And when he appointed them to the *End*, he alſo allotted the *Means*, by which they ſhould reach it. Eph. 1. 4. *According as he hath choſen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy, and without blame before him in love.* The new and living way was then fixed, & prereemptorily reſolved upon ; and it was but *one* way that was then determined, unto the which the terms of the new Covenant are in the publication of it reſtrained. Mark 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized ſhall be ſaved ; but he that believeth not, ſhall be damned.*

7. THAT *except God had revealed* this Way and Rule, it could *never* have been *known* in the World. Men nor Angels could not have ſo much as *publiſhed* that good news, *that there is ſuch a thing*, unleſs he had firſt declared it : much leſs could they have given a *draught* of it. Hence it is, that where there is none of this Revelation, a People are in a ſtate of Perdition, Prov. 29. 18. *Where there is no viſion, the people periſh : but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.* Rom. 10. 14. *How then ſhall they call on him in whom they have not believed ? and how ſhall they believe in him of whom they have not heard ? and how ſhall they hear without a preacher ?* For who ſhould be able to know the mind of God, or enter into the ſecrets of the decree, till God was pleaſed to break them open ? Hence when *Peter* confeſſed Chriſt, he tells him, as Matth. 16. 17. *Bleſſed art thou Simon Barjona : for fleſh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my father which is in heaven.*

8. THAT *in what way ſoever* God reveals this will of his, *that* is to be accounted *his Word.* For Gods word is nothing elſe but his *making his mind known* to his Creature. Now there have been *divers ways*, that God hath taken thus to inform his people of their duty ; ſometimes

times by *Oracles*, giving vocal Commands to them; ſometimes by *Urim* & *Thummim*; partly by *Angels* appearing in humane Shape, & by the *Son of God* before his Incarnation, who often came to his Servants of Old: partly by *Viſions* and *Dreams*, appearing to them in ſleep, in raptures, and trances: and partly by *Prophets* and extraordinary men ſent and ſpirited by him: and partly by appointing ſuch men to *write down* his Will for the uſe of his People: of all which ways we have an account given unto us in the holy Scriptures.

9. THAT *nothing but what* GOD hath thus *revealed* to his People, doth or can belong to the *Rule*. That there *needs* no more, will be afterwards conſidered, when we come to obſerve the Perfection of Scripture; But here we obſerve, that there *can* be no more. We are therefore ſeverely *forbidden* to *add*. Prov. 30. 5, 6. *Every word of God is pure. — Add thou not unto his words, leſt he reprove thee and thou be found a liar.* For, if the *Salvation* of fallen man depends meerly on the *good pleaſure* of God, the *knowledge* of it neceſſarily depends upon his *revelation*. How elſe ſhould it poſſibly come to be known? Hence we have that challenge, Rom. 11. 34. *For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counſeller?* None was admitted to ſit at Council-Table with him, or hear what he purpoſed in the Days of Eternity, or read thoſe Records of his Decrees. Till *he* told it, it was a *ſecret*. For any therefore of their own head to make any addition to this Rule, is a bold Intruſion upon the Divine Prerogative; an impoſing upon God, which he will never admit of: nor ſhall they find any other thanks from God, but a ſevere Demand, *Who required theſe things at your hands?*

HERE I ſhall take into Conſideration a CASE controverted among many *viz.*

Queſt. *WHETHER the* Light of Nature, *which Men bring with them into the world, may not be* improved, *ſo as to be a* ſufficient *Rule to guide them to their chief End?*

Anſw. WE are here to conſider Man in his *lapſed* Eſtate, and the Light of Nature *as* it is to be found in him in this eſtate of his: And *thus* taken, the Anſwer is in the *Negative*. For the full Illuſtration whereof, let theſe things be thought upon.

1. THAT the light of Nature *at the firſt* only diſcovered to Man *the Rule*, by which he was to attain his end, according to a *Covenant of Works*. It was properly adapted to the firſt covenant, in which man was by his *perſonal* Obedience to ſerve to God's glory, and ſecure his favour. Hence it contained in it only the *moral* law, or the ſubſtance of what was contained in the ten Commandments. Rom. 2. 14, 15. *The Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, theſe having not the law, are a law unto themſelves: Which ſhew the work of the law written in their hearts.* It ſaid, Theſe things ought to be done, and thoſe to be avoided; & if thou ſo do, thou ſhalt be happy. It was accommodated to the Image of God, that was imprinted on man, and ſerved to guide him in the right improvement of it. It was the candle of the Lord, ſet up in him to light him in his way wherein he ought to go.

2. THAT though the light of Nature clearly diſcovered to man his *Obligation to God*, yet it did not ſhow him *every point of the Rule*, by which God would be ſerved by him. There were ſome things *poſitive* required, which were not to be particularly found in it, but were made known to man by Revelation. Man knew, that God was to be obeyed in whatſoever he ſhould enjoyn him, by the light of Nature: but this did not tell him that the Tree of life & knowledge were *ſacramental*, and that it was *Death* to eat of the latter. The difference between the trees was arbitrary, and not natural. Poſſibly that might tell him, a *Sabbath* was due to be kept; but that *one* day of ſeven, or *this* day of ſeven was it, he had by revelation; God is therefore ſaid to *ſanctify* it.

3. THAT this light in *fallen* man is wofully *impaired*. Man knock't his head in his fall, and craz'd his underſtanding, as to divine Truths. It is but a little that he knows of that Rule. Some broken fragments, & moth-eaten regiſters, old ruſty outworn monuments there are; but ſo imperfect & illegible, that there are but very few of them, that he can ſpell out what they mean, and in others he is miſtaken. For this, we have that good Man's confeſſion, Prov. 30. 2. *Surely I am more brutiſh than any man, and have not the underſtanding of a man.* For this reaſon, a ſtate of Nature is called a ſtate of *Darkneſs*, and natural men ſaid to be *brutiſh*. Hence Divine Revelation is neceſſary to the right & thorough diſcerning of what was required in the old Covenant; in which a miſtake is a capital crime, *Gal.* 3. 10.

4. THAT if the light of Nature, were as *clear* in man *now* as it was at *firſt*, yet his *Inability* to follow it, renders it *unprofitable* to him. The impotency, which is in natural men, to obey the demands of the Law, cuts them off from a capacity of improving the greateſt diſcoveries they can make of it, to their advantage & happineſs. For if men know & do not, their *Guilt* is *aggravated*; but fallen man can not do, not ſo much as the thing which he knows ought to be done. Whereas happineſs is not in bare knowing, but doing. Joh. 13 17. *If ye know theſe things, happy are ye if ye do them.* So that the utmoſt that this light doth for the man, is to let him ſee that he is *undone*: and the more diſcoveries he makes by it, the more conviction he hath of his great Infelicity.

5. THAT the light of Nature makes *no* diſcovery to man of *any other way* to attain his end and be happy, beſides what was exhibited in the Covenant of *works*. And here let it be obſerved, —

1. THAT man by the light of Nature could *never have known*, that there was *any other poſſible way* for God to be glorified in man's ſalvation. Fallen *Adam* knew himſelf to be miſerable, curſed, under a ſentence of Condemnation; that Juſtice was engaged againſt him:

but

but how Juſtice could be ſatisfyed, Holineſs be maintained, and yet Mercy be magnified, was beyond his reach. How God ſhould puniſh ſin, and yet love the ſinner; take vengeance on men's Inventions, and yet extend grace to their Perſons, was above the diſcoveries of Nature, a Riddle beyond all it's Rules & Principles to expound. It had it's notions about *happineſs*, but none about *ſalvation*. Hence that is aſſerted concerning all natural men, Rom. 3. 17. *The way of peace have they not known.*

2. THAT *much leſs* are there any footſteps of the *Way it ſelf*, to be found in the hearts of men: there are no umbrages of any ſuch Diſcovery to be found there. If we ſhould follow the whole method of it, ſtep by ſtep, and ask nature what it can ſay to it, it muſt be altogether ſilent. I ſhall inſtance only in three things that are moſt comprehenſive.

1. IT hath no notices of the *Perſon* of CHRIST, and the *Redemption* wrought out by him. It might ſpeak ſomething of a *Trinity* of Perſons in the God-head once; though, of that there is ſcarce any thing to be found in the relicts of it ſince the Fall: but that the ſecond Perſon ſhould be made *Man*, and ſubject himſelf to the Law, and make ſatisfaction for ſin, and make way that man might be juſtified by his imputed Righteouſneſs, and ſaved by his merits,---here was a deep ſilence. Some would have *Adam* to be a Type of *Chriſt*; but if he were, he was an arbitrary, and not a natural one. Others would have us to believe, that *Adam* before his fall knew of the Incarnation of the Son of God: but we have no evidence for this in Scripture; and if he did, it muſt be by revelation. Others have thought that the *Gentiles Sacrifices* intimate ſome dark apprehenſions of Satisfaction by another: but it is certain, ſacrificing was handed down to the World by Tradition from *Noah*, and not by the light of nature; and that the Heathen lookt upon them as ſatisfactions *ex Opere operato*, and not as ſhadows of a better Sacrifice. Hence the preaching of a Chriſt is ſo far from the guſt of humane reaſon, that it hath the reputation of *fooliſhneſs* by it. 1 Cor. 1. 23. *But we preach Chriſt crucified, unto the Jews a ſtumbling-block, and unto the Greeks, fooliſhneſs.*

2. IT gives no direction about *Goſpel-Faith*. Faith in *God* is a great Duty of the firſt Commandment, and was clearly written in the law of nature; and fallen man hath natural Convictions of it as a Duty: But to believe in *Chriſt*, to reſt in God for life and ſalvation upon the ſcore of *Chriſt*'s Righteouſneſs, under a deep ſenſe that we have none of our own, and to depend upon a *Promiſe* in ſo doing, it is ſo far from bearing any witneſs to it, that it looks upon it with greateſt contempt: and for this very reaſon it is, that men who make higheſt pretences to Reaſon, ſpeak moſt contemptuouſly of it, as is obvious in *Socinians*, *Pelagians*, *Arminians*, and ſuch like men. And hence ſuch endeavours to confound the Doctrines of Juſtification & Sanctification in one: becauſe nature's light hath notions of a *Perſonal* Righteouſneſs, but knows nothing of a *Relative* one.

3. IT is altogether a ſtranger to *Evangelical Obedience*. If it could afford any thing to man's information, it is here; but it is as much at a loſs in this, as any thing. For, tho' it knows ſomething of moral Duty (and that is but a little) yet it gives fallen man no information how to *pleaſe God* by his Obedience, and when he hath followed it to the higheſt, it leaves him unprofitable, (*Luk.* 17. 10.) and his Duties are but painted Abominations. It may convince man of wofull flaws in his Obedience, but how to mend them it tells them not. Moral Obedience and Deeds of Sanctification, are vaſtly different things. Now, it tells not man where he may get a new Principle of ſpiritual Life, to enable him to live to and pleaſe God. It ſets not open before him the Fountain, in which his Uncleanneſs may be waſhed away: where he may be furniſhed with grace to ſerve God, and live to his glory: nor how his imperfect Duties may find acceptance with an holy God, and receive his approbation; or where he may fetch thoſe continual ſupplies of renewed ſtrength to conquer his Corruptions, to deny Ungodlineſs, &c.

NOW all theſe things are *eſſential* to that Rule, by which fallen man may be guided to glorify God, and enjoy him: and to be miſtaken about them, or not to be acquainted with them, will undoubtedly leave him ſhort of happineſs. And this ſhews us their great folly, who will meaſure Divinity by natural Light, and will admit of nothing in Religion, which will not ſtoop to the teſt and trial of human Reaſon. And it tells us, how deeply we are engaged to God for his word of Revelation!

[MAY 22. 1688.]

SERMON *VI.*

Prop. IV. *THAT this Word, which is the Rule, is contained in the* SCRIPTURES *of the Old and New Teſtament.* The holy Scriptures are called a Rule *Metonymically*, becauſe they contain in them all that is needful to be known, to guide or direct fallen man to the attainment of his chief end: and they were given by God to this very purpoſe, that they might ſhew to man his way.

THERE are three things which will be here requiſite to be made good, *viz.* (1.) That the Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament are the Word of God. (2.) That God hath given them to be our only Rule to direct us to our chief end. (3.) That they are a ſufficient Rule to this purpoſe.

Article 1ſt. *THAT the Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament are the Word of God.* This Concluſion muſt be cleared up, becauſe we have already heard, that the word of God muſt needs be our Rule: except therefore we are ſure that this is his word, we cannot reſt upon it, as our Rule, with any ſafety to our Minds: and tho' one would think it ſuperfluous, to do much here among *Chriſtians*, becauſe they profeſs their belief in this Article, yet when *Atheiſm* begins to put

put it ſelf forth, and the Scriptures to be reproached, and God blaſphemed upon their account, it is requiſite that young ones be confirmed in the evidence of this truth. Now there are two ſorts of Arguments uſed to prove things by; *Artificial*, which are drawn out of the thing it ſelf; and theſe are always the moſt evidencing, becauſe they contain the Reaſons of things in them: and *Inartificial*, which are Teſtimonies given to a thing, the Credit whereof is always depending upon the quality of the Witneſs. And we may prove the Scriptures to be the word of God in both theſe ways. They have good evidence in them, and they have good witneſs for them. I ſhall offer ſomething of both ——.

Arg. 1. *THE Scriptures* ſpeak enough for themſelves *to prove their own Legitimacy.* As the Sun proves it ſelf to be ſo by its own beams, ſo Scripture-light proves it ſelf to derive from the Father of lights. I do not mean, that it is therefore neceſſarily the word of God, becauſe it tells us that it is ſo: for it were an eaſy matter for men to make any fooliſh writing to ſay as much; but it hath ſuch *qualities* in it, as bear a manifeſt *ſtamp of Divinity* upon them, and carry conviction that none but God could be the Author of them: and they are ſuch as theſe which follow.

1. *THE great and glorious* Truths, *that are therein diſcovered & handled*: Myſteries, which if God had not revealed them, they could never have been known: ſo far above humane underſtanding to have found them out, that now they are revealed, they are beyond its comprehenſion; hence ſaid to *paſs knowledge*, (Eph. 3. 19.)---things that lay hid for Ages; and had done ſo forever, if God had not revealed them, (*v.* 5.) --- riches unſearchable, (*v.* 8.)--- things that Angels themſelves admire, as not being able to graſp, (1 *Pet.* 1. 12.) --- Myſteries great and unfathomable. 1 Tim. 3. 16. *Without controverſie, great is the myſtery of godlineſs.* --- What elſe is the revelation of one God in three Perſons, an undivided Eſſence, containing in it three diſtinct Subſiſtences, three and yet but one: So the hypoſtatical Union of the Divine & the Humane Nature in the Son of God; the reconciling of Juſtice & Mercy in the recovery of fallen man; the tranſlation of our guilt to Chriſt, and his Righteouſneſs to us; the nature and way of the work of Converſion, the giving of the Holy Ghoſt. --- There are no footſteps of theſe things in the light of Nature, nor any diſcoveries to be made of them in the book of Creation and Providence. This is the Wiſdom of which is ſpoken, Job. 28. 12, 13. *Where ſhall Wiſdom be found? and where is the place of underſtanding? Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living.* So Ver. 21, & 23. *It is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept cloſe from the fowls of the air. God underſtandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.* Now theſe are the main ſubjects of Scripture-revelation: to which we may add the knowledge of the Covenants. Needs therefore muſt they be of God and no other.

2. THE Foretelling *of future Events, which have certainly come to paſs according as predicted.* It is the prerogative of the true God thus to do. Hence that challenge, Iſa. 41. 21, 22, 23. *Produce your cauſe, ſaith the* LORD; *bring forth your ſtrong reaſons, ſaith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and ſhew us what ſhall happen: let them ſhew the former things what they be, that we may conſider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods: yea, do good, or do evil, that we may be diſmayed, and behold it together.* It is true, there are ſome Events, which ariſe out of natural cauſes, if not impeded. Hence there are fair probabilities. Hence *Satan*, who is a great Naturalliſt, foretels many things that do evene: *Aſtrologers* have their Predictions, that do ſometimes fall out right. But let us obſerve, that the Scriptures have things foretold in them, which had no natural cauſe to indigitate them, being arbitrary, preter & ſupernatural, & contrary to the tendency of ſecond cauſes. It muſt needs therefore be a Divine Foreſight, that could acquaint the Children of men with them ſo long before hand, and declare the time, means & ways of them, & call out Inſtruments by Name, and that ſo long too before hand. There are too many of theſe upon Scripture-record to be here inſtanced: and ſeveral being ſuper-natural effects, could not be read in natural Cauſes. To be ſure, what concerns the coming of *Chriſt*, which takes up great part of the Old Teſtament, muſt undeniably be ſuch. Hence the Apoſtle (*Gal.* 3. 8.) aſcribes to the Scripture a *Foreſight*, metonymically, becauſe the *Author* of it hath one. Now becauſe the futurition of contingent things depends upon his Will, who only can bring them to paſs, he only can aſſure us they ſhall be: and hence the fulfilling of Scripture-Oracles is a witneſs of their Divine Authority.

3. *THE wonderful* Efficacy *of the Scriptures upon the hearts and conſciences of men*: The conquering power of it, and irreſiſtible operation of it, whether conſidered extenſively or intenſively.

(1.) *EXTENSIVELY.* How large an Empire hath this gained? And that by no carnal Stratagems, or outward force, but by its own ſpiritual energy. How did the word prevail in the Apoſtles days, when the preaching of the Goſpel won ſuch Multitudes to the faith of Chriſt? For, tho' *Paganiſm* & *Mahometaniſm*, and many *Hereſies* have been powerfully prevalent, yet they were things, either ſuted to the corruptions of men, or advanced by external force and policy. Whereas it is evident, that the Scriptures are levelled againſt all theſe Corruptions, and require the things that are moſt contrary to man's natural Inclinations. The Rich, the Wiſe, and Noble of the earth, Kings and Counſellors ſet themſelves againſt it. The Inſtruments, by which it was carried on, were poor, illiterate, ignoble, contemned ones. The rage and violence uſed to ſuppreſs it, expreſſed in all manner of Cruelties, was managed with greateſt fury. All which notwithſtanding, did

this word go on conquering and to conquer. Col. 1. 6. *Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world, and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth alſo in you, ſince the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth.* And from whence ſhould it derive this vertue? One that little loved it, could ſay of it; Acts 5. 38, 39. *If this counſel, or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it.*

(2.) *INTENSIVELY.* What work it doth make in a Soul, where it comes with power, they that have felt and found it can beſt tell. It's force is irreſiſtible. Heb. 4. 12. *For the word of God is quick, and powerfull, and ſharper than any two-edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of ſoul & ſpirit, and of the joynts & marrow, and is a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* It's power of *Conviction* is very terrible and amazing. It can ſtrike more terrors into the Soul of a proud Sinner, than all the World beſides. It is compared to *ſharp Arrows*, Pſal 45. 5. *Thine arrows are ſharp in the heart of the kings enemies; whereby the people fall under thee.* One Line of it could ſet that proud King into an amazing horror: when he ſaw the hand-writing on the wall, 'tis ſaid, *The King's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, ſo that the joynts of his loyns were looſed, and his knees ſmote one againſt another.* (Dan. 5. 5, 6.) Nay it ſtrikes the ſtout hearts of *Devils* themſelves, and fills them with Conſternation. Jam. 2. 19. *The Devils believe & tremble.* It is compared to a *Sword*: Eph. 6 17. *The ſword of the ſpirit, which is the word of God.* And it cuts not Bodies but Souls One Sermon out of it wounded Three Thouſand at once, and laid them as dead men. Acts 2. 37. *Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart* ---. Again, it's power of *Converſion* is aſtoniſhing. This is it that converts the Soul. Pſal. 19. 7. *The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the ſoul: the teſtimony of the Lord is ſure, making wiſe the ſimple.* Hence is the new birth aſcribed to it. 1 Pet. 1. 23. *Being born again, not of corruptible ſeed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth & abideth for ever.* And in this work is the unperſwadible heart of man perſwaded: it raiſeth the dead to life, quickens them that were dead in ſin: it caſts down all the powers that did mightily oppoſe. 2 Cor 10. 4, 5. *For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty thro' God, to the pulling down of ſtrong holds: caſting down imaginations & every high thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt.* It turns Sinners into Saints; Wolves, Bears & Lions into Men; Devils incarnate, into holy ones. (*Iſa.* 65. ult.) Again, It's power of *Conſolation*; it's efficacy in comforting diſconſolate and deſpairing Souls is great. Them that were dying of deſpondency, and all friends & creature-helps could not ſupport, one word hath filled with Joy. Pſal. 19. 8. *The ſtatutes of the Lord are right, rejoycing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightning the eyes.* In a word it's power, is a *ſaving* power. Rom. 1. 16. *For I am not aſhamed of the goſpel of Chriſt: for it is the power of God unto ſalvation, to every one that believeth, to the Jew firſt, and alſo to the Greek.* And could it be ſo, if it did not proceed from God?

4. *THE* Deſign, *which is carried on through the whole Book of the Scriptures.* There is one Aim, in which both the Old & New Teſtament do center, as the ultimate ſcope they are driving forward; and that is the glorifying God. The *holineſs* of the Scriptures proclaimeth who is their Author. They breath nothing but purity. They call upon, and direct men to glorify him, that is the Author of them. They muſt have an Author: they could not dictate themſelves. This Author muſt be either *God* or a *Creature*: a third cannot be named. If a Creature, than either one that is *wicked* or one that is *godly*. It could not be a wicked, either Devil or men: for theſe are enemies to God and his glory, hate holineſs, and muſt needs croſs their own inclinations, and condemn themſelves. It would have thwarted all the deſigns of impure Creatures, to have given out a Rule ſo adverſe to their aims and ends. They therefore could not be Authors hereof. Neither could it be a holy, either Angel or Man: becauſe theſe are all of them bound for God's glory; and therefore could not arrogate to themſelves that honour, which he who is the Author of the Scriptures challengeth to himſelf; they have made him their laſt end, and therefore could not make themſelves ſo: they would not challenge to themſelves ſovereign power & authority over the Creature, call for adoration, challenge the Dominion & Kingdom. For they all cover their faces before God, and caſt their Crowns at his feet, and aſcribe all might, power, dominion and ſovereignty to him.

5. *THE perfect* Conſent *or* Agreement *of the Scripture with it ſelf.* Tho' it came thro' many hands, was written by ſeveral Men, who were uſed as Amanuenſes; yet it appears to be dictated by one and the ſame Spirit, becauſe of the excellent harmony there is in it. The *ſtyle* indeed is divers, the manner of expreſſion various; there is great diverſity between the language of the Old & New Teſtament: but yet the *matter* is agreeable. One writer doth not contradict another, nor do they charge each other with falſehood. One Prophet agrees with another, and all of them with *Moſes*. The Evangeliſts alſo and Apoſtles agree with them The later written books of the Bible do add confirmation to the former. The Goſpel gives aſſurance of the fulfilling of what was predicted in the law. (*Luke* 1. 70.) There are indeed men of perverſe minds, that go about to ſet the Scripture at variance with it ſelf: but notwithſtanding all their atheiſtical attempts, they cannot obtain. All may be reconciled, and it is only men's ignorance and prejudice, that leads them to ſuch atheiſtical attempts. They all agree in Chriſt,

and

and center in him. Rom. 3. 31. *Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we eſtabliſh the law.* Heb. 13. 8. *Jeſus Chriſt the ſame yeſterday, and to day, and for ever.*

6. *THE* Preſervation *of this Book miraculouſly, is alſo an evidence that it is of God.* To this alſo that of *Gamaliel* is applicable, Acts 5.38. *If this counſel, or this work be of men, it will come to nought.* The Five Books of *Moſes* are tho't to be the firſt and moſt ancient Books, that ever were: and yet they are ſtill preſerved intire, when the other Writers of thoſe Ages are almoſt forgotten, and ſcarce any fragments of them preſerved, and they that bear their names, are ſuſpected to be ſpurious, *Solomon's* natural Philoſophy is loſt in the ruins of time, when his canonical Books are preſerved. The Books of the New Teſtament have abode more than One Thouſand and ſix hundred Years, whilſt multitudes of a later date are ſwallowed up in Oblivion. And that which adds to the confirmation of this evidence, is, that whereas the world bare no prejudice to thoſe other writings, but ſought their preſervation, yet the moth of time hath conſumed them: While Men and Devils have done their utmoſt to deſtroy the Bible, and could never obtain. God hath miraculouſly preſerved this Book. When in the time of Heathen Perſecution all Bibles were to be burnt, and they to dy with exquiſite tortures, that concealed them, yet all the ſearch, and all the cruelties uſed could not extinguiſh this light. God preſerved his word, becauſe it was his: yea, hath uſed enemies to preſerve it. The *Jews*, who ſtoned the Prophets, yet kept their writings, and why ſhould God ſo ſignally own it, if it were not his own?

7. *THE glorious* Majeſty *of the Scriptures teſtifies for them.* Compare all the writings in the world with theſe, and they muſt vail to, and fall down before them. For the Subject-matter of them, they are incomparable,--but of that already. For the manner of their delivery, they are moſt ſtately. The Style indeed is for the moſt part *plain*, but that takes not from their majeſty, but illuſtrates it. The Sun needs no Ornaments to emblazon it; it's own light is ſufficient. And yet when God pleaſeth, he gives ſtrains of grave Rhetorick imparallel. (See *Job* 39. 19. &c. with many others which might be inſtanced.) It is moſt comprehenſive in it's delivery. *Luther* ſaid, he admired the fulneſs of Scripture. A *Philoſopher* reading *Job.* 1. 1.--- cried out, 'This barbarous man hath ſhut up 'more in theſe few words, than all the Philoſo-'phers & Orators in their voluminous Writings. There is enough Majeſty in this word, to captivate all the Kings of the Earth, if they could but diſcern it. Pſal. 138. 4, 5. *All the kings of the earth ſhall praiſe thee, O Lord, when they hear the words of thy mouth. Yea, they ſhall ſing in the ways of the Lord: for great is the glory of the Lord.* Yea the very delivery of it is with powerfull majeſty. God ſpeaks it, like a God, with greateſt Authority. He ſummons all the World to give attendance to him. Pſal. 49. 1,2. *Hear this, all ye people, give ear all ye inhabitants of the world: Both low & high, rich & poor together.* So Pſal. 50. 1. *The mighty God, even the Lord hath ſpoken, and called the earth from the riſing of the ſun, unto the going down thereof.* He gives his Edicts and menaces to the greateſt earthly Potentates. Pſal 2. 10, 11, 12. *Be wiſe now therefore, O ye kings: be ye inſtructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling. Kiſs the Son, leſt he be angry, and ye periſh from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little: bleſſed are all they that put their truſt in him.* Another Inſtance you may ſee in *Jer.* 27. 3, &c ---And he confirms his Commands by his own Will, and gives no other reaſon many times for it, but, *I am the Lord*: and now who but God would ſpeak after this manner?

Arg. 2. *THERE is alſo good* Teſtimony, *to prove to us that the Scriptures are the word of God*; and that both Humane & Divine.

(1.) *THERE is* Humane *Teſtimony*, (which will at leaſt help to confirm the former Evidence,) and that is of the *Church*. And here,

1. *THE* Viſible *Church gives ſome Evidence hereto.* It is an Article, in which all the World, that acknowledge themſelves *Chriſtians*, are agreed. The man that denies this, is in all men's account judged to have renounced Chriſtianity. And indeed, all the Chriſtian Religion is built upon the Scriptures, ſo that the denial of one, is the rejection of the other. Theſe Oracles of God are committed to the *Church*, (Rom. 3. 2.) and they are therefore to be witneſſes to them.

2. *THE* Faithful *People & Children of God do give the teſtimony of their own* Experience *to it.* They have *ſeen & felt* the Divine vertue and efficacy of the word of God, and are thereupon able to ſet their ſeal to it. For they witneſs nothing but what they have ſeen & heard, 1 *Joh.* 1. *beg.* They have found the irreſiſtible efficacy of the word, convincing, humbling, converting, comforting of them; have felt it to be all that to them which it is commended for in it ſelf. 2 Cor 3. 2, 3. *Ye are our epiſtle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: For as much as ye are manifeſtly declared to be the epiſtle of Chriſt, miniſtred by us, written not with ink, but with the ſpirit of the living God; not in tables of ſtone, but in fleſhly tables of the heart.*

3. *THERE have been thouſands & millions of thoſe that have* ſeal'd *their Teſtimony with their* Blood: and theſe are therefore called *Martyrs* or witneſſes of Chriſt. (*Rev* 2. 13. *Acts* 22. 20.) And tho' ſome ſometimes have dyed for a falſehood, yet they have been but few in compariſon; and theſe uſually with a dead, ſtupid, and ſenſeleſs frame of ſpirit. Whereas the *Martyrs* have ſuffered with great Patience, Joy, Courage and higheſt Reſolution, and have ſeemed to have been carried far beyond any natural ſtrength; the Spirit of glory & of God evidently reſting upon them. And what was it they died for? ſee Rev. 20 4. *I ſaw the ſouls of them that were beheaded for the witneſs of Jeſus, and for the word of God, and which had not worſhipped the beaſt, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands.* And now out

of doubt, ſuch a Teſtimony adds a great confirmation to this truth:---Multitudes were converted by it.

(2.) *THERE is* Divine *Teſtimony*; which is infallible, it proceeding from God, who cannot ly. He hath not left himſelf without witneſsbearing to this, That the Scriptures are his own word: and that, ——

1. *OUTWARDLY* and *Openly*, by thoſe many *Miracles*, which he hath ſet as a ſeal to the truth of them. A Miracle is ſomething wrought by a ſupernatural and divine power. And theſe have always been wrought to confirm the truth of Doctrines contained in the Scripture, and are for that reaſon called *Signs*. Heb. 2. 3, 4. *How ſhall we eſcape, if we neglect ſo great ſalvation; which at the firſt began to be ſpoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God alſo bearing them witneſs, both with ſigns & wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the holy Ghoſt, according to his own will?* And whenever they are uſed, they are a voice from Heaven, ſpoken by God himſelf.

2. *INWARDLY*, in the Conſciences of all his People, by the Teſtimony of his *Spirit*. It is true, the Scripture is a Rule to diſtinguiſh of ſpirits by: but ſtill it is the Spirit of God, who leaves glorious impreſſions of the Wiſdom, Majeſty, and Holineſs of the word of God upon the hearts of his Children; whereby they are made to diſcern the beauty of it, and apprehend the powerful efficacy of it: as Chriſt did to thoſe two Diſciples, Luk. 24. 32. *And they ſaid one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the ſcriptures!* And to the reſt of them, *Verſe* 45. *Then opened he their underſtanding that they might underſtand the ſcriptures.* And now the word of God is glorified in them, (2 Theſ. 3. 1. *Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free courſe, and be glorified, even as it is with you.*) i. e. They apprehend a divine glory in it, and they apprehend the goodneſs, grace, power of God deriving it ſelf to them by and through the word, whereby they are fully aſſured, that that word which is able to work ſuch effects in and upon them, can be no other but the word of God: and all the policy of Hell, & Arguments of the ſubtileſt Enemies of the truth cannot prevail with them to relinquiſh this faith of theirs. And this is a witneſs that abides in men.

USE. *LET this Conſideration provoke Young & Old to love the Scriptures*, to take delight in the holy Bible, ſet an high price upon thoſe Oracles, which are contained in it: *and let it engage you to be much converſant with it*, and make it the man of your Counſels. If it be God's word, it muſt be full of Wiſdom; and will make you wiſe, if you be much in it. This is the way to have a great deal of Communion with God, to know much of him, whom to know is life Eternal. If you deſpiſe the word, you deſpiſe God himſelf: all the reflections that you make upon it, reflect upon him: and he will look upon himſelf as concerned to vindicate the glory of his own Name in it. If you would be wiſer, holier, more intimate with the great God than others, meditate in the Scriptures day and night. Only be ſure to look up to his Holy Spirit, to give you ſuch *entrance into the word*, as may give you life, and light, and warmth.

[JUNE 19. 1688.]

SERMON *VII.*

Articl. 2. *THAT God hath given us the Scriptures to be our only Rule, to direct us to our chief End.* That this Poſition may be well & rightly underſtood & receiv'd, it will be requiſite to explain and confirm it. For which take the following Concluſions.

1. *THAT the Scripture* (as we have already heard) *is called the Rule*, Metonymically; *becauſe it is the* Subject *containing it.* The Rule it ſelf did exiſt before any part of the Scripture was written: and on ſuppoſition, that they had never been committed to writing, the Rule had notwithſtanding been of force: as the Law, that is once proclaimed, is valid, tho' it be not printed, and ſo diſperſed among the Subjects.

2. *THAT tho' the* Rule *hath been* one & the ſame, *ever ſince the fall of man, yet God hath uſed* divers ways to diſcover it *to the children of men.* It was not written from the beginning. The firſt records were made by *Moſes*, who lived in the fourth Period of time, which was near Two thouſand four hundred years after God had a Church in the world, to whom he had given the Rule of the true Religion, and theſe had what was ſufficient to guide them to bleſſedneſs.

IT will here therefore not be amiſs to conſider, *How God hath communicated himſelf to his Church from the beginning?* And here take theſe Rules.

(1) THAT God in the *infancy* of his Church taught them by *Revelation* & *Tradition.* As to what concerns the ſtate of man in innocency, it is not to our purpoſe. And reſpecting the relicks of the law on the minds of fallen men, it is certain that they have no natural light telling them how to improve them to their great end: ſo that Revelation was neceſſary, if man ever obtain ſalvation. No ſooner therefore had *Adam* fallen under the curſe of the firſt covenant, but God revealed to him the way of recovery by the ſecond, (*Gen.* 3. 15.) And during the time that followed, till *Moſes*, God made known his mind to ſome of his ſervants, by *Chriſt*'s appearing to the Patriarchs, declaring his counſels to them, & giving them direction how he would be ſerved; by ſending *Angels* to them on frequent occaſions; by inſpiring them extraordinarily; by coming to them in dreams & viſions, *&c.* which diſcoveries of his to them, were handed from one to another, and taught by Fathers to their Children; and this during the long lives of thoſe Patriarchs, ſerved for the continuation of the Rule among the People of God: altho' by degrees the generality

nerality of mankind loſt the ſenſe of the true Religion, and degenerated, before the flood, to all manner of Immorality ; and after it, to Paganiſh Idolatry, as Scripture-records ſufficiently inform us.

(2.) THAT from *Moſes* to *Chriſt*, God inſtructed his Church, partly by *Writing*, and partly by the continuance of *Revelation* and *Tradition*. God having choſen *Abraham* & his Poſterity to be his peculiar People, and they being now grown up to a Nation, and God's worſhip to be no longer reſtrained to private Families, the lives alſo of the Fathers being reduced to a ſhort term, and the People having been wofully defiled with the falſe worſhip of the *Ægyptians*, and being now called out of Ægypt, God gives them his law in writing ; partly written by his own hand, partly by *Moſes*, to whom he did immediately impart it, and commanded that it ſhould be left upon Record. Yet there was but part of the Scripture then given, in which the Rules of life were obſcurely wrapt up ; and therefore God continued extraordinary Revelations, inſpired Prophets, ſent his mind to his People, by ſuch to whom he appeared, either in Viſions or Dreams, or by his Angel. And by theſe he continued to be commending to writing, ſuch other parts of Scripture, as were needful, for the further inſtructing or reforming of them. Hence the writings of the Prophets were added to thoſe of Moſes. 2 Pet 1.20, 21. *Knowing this firſt, that no prophecy of the ſcripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man : but holy men of God ſpake as they were moved by the holy Ghoſt.*

(3.) THAT *ſince Chriſt appeared*, and hath revealed by himſelf, and his Apoſtles, the Goſpel-truths, the *Canon is now perfected* ; and the *whole* mind of God (ſo far as concerns our direction to our end) is there revealed : and *now* God treats men only by his *written Word*. Viſions and immediate Revelations are ceaſed ; inſpired Dreams are at an end : the Urim and Thummim are gone. And now the Scripture is left us to repair to, where we are to look for our direction, that we may attain unto perfection. This is that *ſurer word of Propheſy*, to which we are pointed. 2 Pet. 1.19. *We have alſo a more ſure word of Propheſy ; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that ſhineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-ſtar ariſe in your hearts.* This is that word by which we muſt try the words of an Angel. Gal. 1.8. *But though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other goſpel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accurſed.*

3. *THAT it was in ſingular* Favour *to his Peop'e, that God hath ordered our Rule to be left on* Scripture-*Record.* Hereby his People have a ſtanding Rule to repair unto ; they have a counſeller always with them ; a light and a lamp ſtill to carry before them ; a remembrancer at hand to put them in mind, when ready to forget ; a judge to determine them, when at a loſs. Here they may examine all Doctrines, prove all Opinions, try all Spirits, be taught the right way, and helpt to keep it. And it is the moſt *familiar* method of God's communicating his mind to his People in this life. Apparitions, Viſions, Dreams, have been more terrible to them. Thus alſo the truth is *continued*, when men degenerate, and by theſe God's people are preſerved in times of greateſt Apoſtaſy. For all which ends, *David* commends the written word, *Pſal.* 119.

4. *THAT God hath appointed the* Scripture *to be our* ſole *Guide as a Rule.* It is true, there is a ſecret ſovereign conduct of ſpecial Providence, by which God leads his People ; but he deals with men, as with Reaſonable Creatures, and hence they muſt have a Rule to apply themſelves to in all things : This is only God's word. There are indeed in men common principles, which a natural Conſcience dictates to them ; but the way to improve them for ſalvation, is pointed in the word of God ; without which, they can never make them ſerviceable to that end. God hath not left men to the guidence of their own ſpirits, nor to the direction of men : but commends them in all things to his word. Iſai. 8. 20. *To the law and to the teſtimony : if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them.*

Now——

(1.) THIS doth limit us in matters of *Faith*. If we would be informed, what are articles to be believed, we muſt conſult this Oracle. All things that we are to entertain, as Principles in Religion, muſt be ſought for, and taken upon God's teſtimony in his word : beyond or beſide which we are not to fix our Credit ; for which reaſon it is called *the word of faith* : not only as by it God works faith in us, but alſo as it contains the articles of faith in it. Divine faith depends upon this teſtimony : what it ſpeaks, commands our belief : where it is ſilent, our Credit is juſtly ſuſpended. Hence the Apoſtle's way of arguing, Heb. 7. 14. *For it is evident that our Lord ſprang out of Judah ; of which tribe Moſes ſpake nothing concerning Prieſthood.*

(2.) THIS doth regulate us in all points of *Manners*. He that would know his duty, muſt look for it there, and that both in reſpect of the matter and manner. All that belongs to us, is here comprized. Deut. 29. 29 *The ſecret things belong unto the Lord our God : but thoſe things which are revealed, belong to us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.* This is to be the guide to our paths. Here we are to inform our ſelves, what is duty, and what is ſin. If God hath not here commanded or allowed, it is enough to declare it ſin ; if he hath here enjoyn'd it, it cannot be evaded. Here we are to enquire, who, when, where, how, in reſpect of our whole converſation, if we would enjoy true Peace, as the Apoſtle intimates, Gal. 6. 16. *As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, & mercy, and upon the Iſrael of God.*

(3.) THIS doth judge & determine all *Controverſies*. Whenſoever any truth, that concerns either faith or manners, comes into debate,

bate, it is not the opinion or authority of men, that muſt or can determine us ſafely; but all muſt be brought to this touchſtone, and tried by it. This therefore was the *Bereans* commendation, when the Apoſtles doctrine was ſo much diſputed againſt and contradicted: Act. 17. 11. *Theſe were more noble than thoſe in Theſſalonica, in that they received the word with all readineſs of mind, and ſearched the ſcriptures daily, whether thoſe things were ſo.* Chriſt himſelf confuted all Satan's Sophiſms, with, *It is written*, Math. 4. beg.

5. *GOD hath forbidden any* Additions *to be made to his word*; and hereby he evidently *reſtrains* us to it, as our *only* Rule. Such prohibitions we find, and they are backed with ſevere comminations againſt all thoſe that dare to make them. Deut. 4. 2. *Te ſhall not add unto the word which I command you, neither ſhall you diminiſh ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you.* It is true, God himſelf added thoſe that follow: but it ſignifies, that when he ſees meet to finiſh the Canon, *Man* may not make additions. Hence that in, Prov. 30. 6. *Add thou not unto his words, leſt he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.* And the awful threatning, upon the finiſhing of this work. Rev. 22. 18. *For I teſtifie unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book. If any man ſhall add unto theſe things, God ſhall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.* The Rule therefore is hither reſtrained; nor can it be either more or leſs, except God ſhould reveal more.

6. *THE* Spirit *of God guides us to Salvation*, according *to this word.* We muſt diſtinguiſh between a Rule, and a Guide. For tho' every rule be to guide, yet every Guide is not a Rule. When we ſay, The *word* is our only Rule, we do not deny the conduct and guidance of God's *Spirit*; but believe that without it, we cannot take one right ſtep in the way to life. But ſtill he hath given us the Scripture to be our Rule of direction, and pointed us thither to enquire our way, and doth alſo himſelf make uſe thereof in bringing us to happineſs. His work is to guide us into all truth, (*Joh.* 16. 13.) And he hath ſo reſtrained himſelf hereto, that, whereas there are other ſpirits which muſt be tried, He is hereby to be diſcerned, by comparing the ſuggeſtions with the word, and if they agree not with that, they are none of his. Hence theſe are put together, as the Agent and Inſtrument. Jam. 1. 18. *Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth.* *Paul* aſſures us, that the things, which the Spirit revealeth, are the ſame which they teach. 1 Cor. 2. 12, 13. *Now we have received, not the ſpirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things alſo we ſpeak, not in the words which man's wiſdom teacheth, but which the holy Ghoſt teacheth; comparing ſpiritual things with ſpiritual.* And he aſſures his *Galatians*, that there is no other Goſpel to be entertained by them, but that which the *Apoſtles* preached, Gal. 1. 9. *As we ſaid before, ſo ſay I now again, If any man preach any other goſpel unto you, than that ye have received, let him be accurſed.* And for this reaſon, is the Goſpel called *the power of God to ſalvation*, (Rom. 1. 16.) becauſe God exerts his ſaving power in and by it.

7. *THAT* where *God intends to bring Salvation to a perſon or people, he* ſends *them his word*: not but that he could, if he ſaw meet, inſtruct them otherwiſe; but he hath choſen this way: it is his holy pleaſure. 1 Cor. 1. 21. *For after that, in the wiſdom of God, the world by wiſdom knew not God, it pleaſed God by the fooliſhneſs of preaching to ſave them that believe.* And ſuch is the connexion, that he hath made between theſe two, that, tho' all are not ſaved to whom the written word came, (many falling ſhort thro' unbelief) yet where it comes not, ſuch are left in a ſtate of perdition. 2 Cor. 4. 3. *But if our goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt.* It may be hidden to men, where it doth come in the viſible diſpenſation of it; but it is certainly hid from them, where it comes not at all. Becauſe *God hath much people in Corinth*, therefore *Paul muſt preach* in that City, Acts 18. 5, 10. And why was he forbidden to preach in *Aſia* & *Bythinia*, (Chap. 16. 6, 7.) but becauſe God would leave them without the diſcovery of the way of peace? Yea, God hath ſo conjoyned the enjoyment of the word to be preached, with the hopes of Salvation, that the Apoſtle does ſo uſe that *Enthymema* (Rom. 10. 14, 15.) *How then ſhall they call on him in whom they have not believed; and how ſhall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how ſhall they hear without a preacher? And how ſhall they preach, except they be ſent?* And adjoyns that firm Concluſion, Ver. 17. *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* Nor do we read in the whole New Teſtament, that God brought any to faith and felicity, but only in this way, *viz.* by ſending his word to them.

HERE let me a little enquire into that CASE. *viz.*

Queſt. *WHETHER we may have any grounded* Hopes *of the Salvation of ſuch as* never enjoyed *the Scriptures?*

Anſ. IT is true, our Hopes or Fears will not make their *State* better or worſe; but becauſe there are many that count it *cruel* not to have an extenſive Charity here, and yet it is certain that divers Foundation-Truths are hereby undermined, it will not be amiſs to ſay ſomething to it. Hence therefore, let theſe *Concluſions* be well pondered.

Concl. 1. *THAT the Salvation of* Elect Infants, *without the written word, is not to be doubted of.* No doubt but there are Infants that dy in their Infancy, who are choſen Veſſels, and paſs into glory. That theſe have not the uſe of the Scriptures is evident, they being altogether uncapable hereof. God therefore hath a ſecret and unaccountable way of applying the New Covenant-condition to them, and making them fit for glory. And tho' we know not *how* it is done, yet we need not ſuſpect but that *it is* done.

Con. 2. *THAT none of fallen Men were ever ſaved but* by & thro' *Jeſus Chriſt. Peter* aſſured

aſſured the *Jews*, that there is Salvation *in no other*. (Acts 4. 12.) There never was any other way found out and appointed by God, to bring any of the loſt race of men to glory in. The firſt Promiſe (*Gen.* 3. 15.) had a proper reſpect to him. All the Sacraments and Sacrifices of the *Moſaical* Pædagogy had a reſpect to him. He was the Kernel wrapt in thoſe husks and ſhells. This the Apoſtle deſigns to make evident, *Heb.* Chap. 8, 9, 10.---It is he of whom the Scriptures have ſpoken from the beginning. Joh. 5. 39, 46. *Search the ſcriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which teſtify of me. Had ye believed Moſes, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.*

Concl. 3. *THAT Salvation by Chriſt comes* only *in the way of* believing *in him.* That Faith in Chriſt is a neceſſary condition or medium of Salvation is fully aſſerted in Scripture: yea ſo neceſſary, as that without it there is no Salvation. Joh. 3. 36. *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlaſting life: and he that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.* 1 Joh. 5. 12. *He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life.* Tho' negative Unbelief be not a cauſe of men's damnation, yet it is an evidence of their being in a damnable ſtate; and that becauſe there is no paſſing over for a condemned ſinner, into a ſtate of happineſs, but only by believing in Chriſt: and therefore, tho' it be not ſome men's *ſin*, that they do not believe in Chriſt, yet it plainly declares them to be miſerable.

Concl. 4. *THAT there can be no believing in Chriſt, without a* knowledge *of him.* Faith is a rational confidence; it is a grounded reliance or dependence; and therefore it requires a diſcerning or apprehending of the Object. Hence that, Pſal. 9. 10. *They that know thy name will put their truſt in thee.* Faith is the act of a reaſonable creature, and muſt have a foundation in the underſtanding. *Paul knew* whom he hath truſted. (2 *Tim.* 1. 12.) A believer hath a *reaſon* of his hope. (1 *Pet.* 3. 11.) Faith is a leaning of the whole weight of our hope for ſalvation upon Chriſt; which would be nothing better than frenzy, if it ſaw nothing in him for which it ſo doth.

Concl. 5. *THAT it's only by* Divine Revelation, *that the knowledge of Chriſt as the Object of a ſaving faith, is to be attained.* The light of Nature ſpeaks nothing of the deſign of the ſaving man by another; of the appointing the Son of God to this Province; of his Incarnation; Active & paſſive Obedience, death, and reſurrection; of his ſufficiency to ſave, and the Offices belonging to him, as a Saviour. Theſe things had never been heard of, if God had not told us of them. The natural man *cannot receive* them, (1 *Cor.* 2. 14.) much leſs could he *dig up* theſe truths out of the ſhallow mines of his remaining natural principles.

Concl. 6. *THAT God can (if he will) eaſily* inſpire *men with this knowledge, by* immediate *Revelation.* God's uſing other ways to bring us to the underſtanding of the Truth, is not of neceſſity, but of choice, becauſe his infinite wiſdom hath ſeen it meet ſo to treat the Children of men. There was a time when God did thus diſcover himſelf to ſome, and by them he communicated his mind to others; and he could have continued it, if it had not pleaſed him to do otherwiſe: but it is certain, that God doth not do all that he can do, but hath in his works of Efficiency limited the exertion of his Power by his Will: ſo that there is no reflection upon Divine Omnipotency, nor a ſtinting of it by men; but if he himſelf pleaſe to ſet bounds unto it, who are we, that we ſhould reply againſt God?

Concl. 7. *THAT God hath in the days of the Goſpel, and the ordinary courſe of his Providence, made the* enjoyment *of the Goſpel or written word, a neceſſary* Medium *to Salvation.* I ſay, in Goſpel-times, *i. e.* ſince the Canon is perfected, till when, immediate Inſpiration was continued to ſome men; and in the ordinary courſe of his Providence; for what he will do extraordinarily, we know not, the ſecret things belong to him. It is certain, where there is no Viſion the People periſh, and we do enjoy no other Viſions now but theſe; ſuch as bring contrary to them, are Anathematiz'd: all that are pretended to are uncertain, and have no ſuch confirmation, as can command a divine Faith: hence no Salvation without Preaching. Rom. 10. 14: *How then ſhall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how ſhall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how ſhall they hear without a preacher?* And this is the Goſpel we are to Preach and no other, Gal. 1. 8. *But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other goſpel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accurſed.* See, 2 Tim. 4. 2.--- 3. 16, 17.

Concl. 8. *HENCE all hopes of their Salvation, who have not the Scriptures, is groundleſs.* There is no reaſon to be given for it, yea and it tends to ſubvert the Goſpel, and make the Ordinances of it unneceſſary, to encourage men in neglect and ignorance of the Scriptures; for either they muſt be ſaved without Chriſt, which is impoſſible, or by him without believing, which takes away the new Covenant-Condition, or believe without knowledge of him, which takes away the very nature of Faith; or come to the knowledge of him ſome other way, which is unaccountable; the light of nature will not do it, the only way of God's appointment is by the Scriptures; to ſuppoſe any other, is to impoſe upon God.

LET it then put us upon it to prize our Bibles, to bleſs God for his written word, to be much and frequent in making uſe of it, and acquainting our ſelves with it, acknowledging it God's ſingular mercy to us, that he hath given to us ſuch a Rule, without which we had been left in the dark, and could never have groped out our way to Eternal Life.

[JULY, 17. 1688.]

SER-

SERMON *VIII.*

Articl. 3. *THAT the Scriptures are a ſufficient Rule to direct us to our chief end.* Let it be here remembred, that the ſufficiency of the Scripture as a Rule, doth not deny the neceſſity of the guidance of the Spirit in order to our attaining our end : for, beſides our want of a Rule to direct us, we alſo need eyes to ſee, and ears to hear, & hearts to conſider, which muſt be given us by the Spirit of God, or elſe the Scriptures will not profit us; the Diſciples had the Word of God, but they were ignorant of the Myſteries of it, till Chriſt opened their underſtandings, (Luk. 24. 45.) We therefore have David praying for this, Pſal. 119. 18. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.* But ſtill all theſe great and wondrous things are contained there, and there is no truth needful to guide us to bleſſedneſs, but what that word recommends unto us; the perfection of the Scripture is celebrated by the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 19. 7. *The law of the Lord is perfect* --- &c. And ſet forth by the Apoſtle, 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. *All ſcripture is given by inſpiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs : That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furniſhed unto all good works.* And what more can be ſaid to aſſure us of the Scripture's ſufficiency! But becauſe this truth is impugned by many, and man's inventions are introduced and impoſed as needful to ſupply the Scripture's defects; and this being the foundation of all the following Doctrines of Religion, it needs to be well laid, that we may be firmly eſtabliſhed in the belief of it. Here then I ſhall lay down this aſſertion, & endeavour to make it good, viz.

THAT whatſoever is requiſite in a Rule to make it perfect, is to be found in the Scripture, in reſpect of that whereof it is a Rule. All Arts and Sciences have their Rules, under which the Doctrine of them is comprehended; and that ſyſtem of Rules which is adequately ſuted to the Art, is a ſufficient Rule, & perfect, tho' it teach nothing of another Art : and if the Scripture be every way ſuted to guide men right to happineſs, it muſt be ſo, tho' it doth not teach other inferiour Arts : Here then, let us conſider what are the properties of a perfect Rule, and ſee how they agree to the Scripture, with reſpect to felicity. Now there are Three eſſential Properties of a Rule, without all of which, it will not deſerve ſo to be called, *viz.* 1. It muſt be true. 2. It muſt be full. 3. It muſt be plain. The neceſſity of each of theſe, and how truly they belong to the written word of God, will be worth our while diſtinctly to take notice of.

I. *IT belongs to a Rule that it be true.* This is firſtly and moſt eſſentially neceſſary to it, as will appear from the very nature and end of a Rule; the uſe of a Rule is to guide a man right to the end he aims at : All art is practical; but all practice is not artificial. There are right, and there are falſe ſtrokes which man may take, and it is of great concernment which of the two they do. Hence knowledge is prerequiſite to practice : the underſtanding muſt be informed, what is to be done, how elſe can the actions be orderly? the eye muſt guide the hand, otherwiſe it will make miſerable work; and it cannot guide, except it have a rule to guide by : Now the very proper object of the underſtanding is truth : If then the rule be not true, it is falſly called a rule; it is indeed none : the end of a rule is to tell a man what is right, & what is wrong; which it cannot do, except itſelf be true; it is to keep a man from erring and miſtaking, but if that be falſe, it is ſo far from this, that it is the very parent of error, and a miſtake built upon a ſuppoſed rule, is the moſt dangerous miſtake of all : a rule is to inform men, and give them knowledge, but unleſs it be true, it leads men into ignorance, and is ſo far from informing, that it deceives them : and is ſo far from bringing them to their end, that it leads them quite away from it, and leaves them wide of it : every rule therefore muſt be of an eternal and unchangeable verity : and from hence ariſes one great vanity of humane ſciences, that men being ſhort ſighted, have laid down conjectures inſtead of rules, and ſo ſetled their ſyſtems with uncertain canons : But if we apply this to the Scriptures, we ſhall find it fully agreeing to them; they are all of them true, and there is no falſehood, error, or miſtake in them; all that is left upon record in the book of God, is of unqueſtionable verity : this is one of the excellencies which David aſcribes to the law or word of God, Pſal. 19. 9. --- *The judgments of the Lord are true,*--- Hebr. *Truth*: Truth in the abſtract, and altogether ſo; there is not one flaw to be found in them. Here two things may come under conſideration. 1. How the Scriptures appear to be true? 2. Wherein the truth of the Scriptures as a rule doth conſiſt?

Q. 1. *HOW the Scriptures appear to be true?*

A. THERE needs no more to evidence this, but only the conſideration, *that they are the word of God* : and if they be acknowledged to be ſo, none but an Atheiſt will call the truth of them in queſtion. That they are the word of God hath already been proved in a ſet diſcourſe; that becauſe they are ſo, they muſt needs be true, is now to be proved unleſs it might be thought ſuperfluous; however, let theſe few things be conſidered for the confirmation of it.

(1.) *GOD who is the author of the Scripture, is truth itſelf, and therefore his word muſt needs be true.* Truth is one of the divine attributes or perfections which belong to God eminently, and inſeparably, he is ſo true, that he cannot ly. Heb. 6. 18. ---*impoſſible for God to lie.*---Had it come from men originally, it might be ſuſpected; but it's above ſuſpicion in that it is from him. Rom. 3. 4. —— *Let God be true, but every*

every man a lyar. When Truth it ſelf may be ſuſpected of falſehood, then, & not till then, may the truth of the Scripture be made a doubt of.

(2.) *GOD gave the Scripture to the children of men on purpoſe to be a Rule to them, to point them out the right way.* It therefore muſt either be true, or not a Rule; and this muſt either be by reaſon of ignorance, or miſtake in him, which cannot be; for God is light, and in him is no darkneſs: beſides, Mans Rule depends upon his Divine Will, & how can he not throughly know his own Will? except we ſhould conceive him to change his mind, which cannot be, for he is Immutable, and becauſe he is God, he changeth not, *Mal.*3.6. or elſe it muſt be becauſe he purpoſely deceives men, which as it is derogatory to his glory to conceive; ſo it will appear impoſſible in reſpect of the Scriptures in the next thing.

(3.) *THE principal end of God's giving the Scriptures, was for the ſake of His Church, and choſen ones:* They muſt needs therefore be true. This inference will be evident, if we conſider,

1. *THAT there is a number whom God hath ſet his love upon from Eternity, and appointed them to Glory.* This is a truth which we have full teſtimony for in Scripture: if we call the truth of that in queſtion, we have nothing to aſcertain us, of the ſalvation of any of Mankind, and what would this tend to, but to deſtroy all Religion out of the world? but this is an article believed by all that own the Orthodox Religion.

2. *THESE had loſt the way to the Kingdom.* The fall had loſt all mankind, and the Elect as well as others in the dark. That was a truth of them all, Rom 3.17. *The way of peace, have they not known.*

3. *GOD gave them the Scripture on purpoſe to guide or direct them to the way of life & happineſs.* It was he made known to them how they might come to ſalvation: for this reaſon *David* gives the word of God that Encomium, Pſal.119.104. *Through thy precepts I get underſtanding: therefore I hate every falſe way.* And *Solomon*, Prov.6.23. *The commandment is a lamp; and the law is light* ——. Hence that of our Saviour, Joh. 5.39. *Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which teſtifie of me.*

4. *IF then it had not been true, it could never have attained this end, or profited them to this purpoſe.* It could not have led them to life; if it can make them happy, it muſt needs be true; for nothing elſe but truth can bring us to goodneſs, which neceſſarily pre-ſuppoſes it.

(4.) *THE great peace which is enjoyed by walking in conformity to the Scripture, proves the truth of it.* The happineſs of theſe men ſtands to confirm the verity of the word of God. It is the Pſalmiſts Obſervation; Pſal. 119. 165. *Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing ſhall offend them.* When there can be nothing but trouble & vexation ariſe from the following of a falſehood; and it is the Apoſtle's aſſertion, Gal. 6 16. *As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them.* It brings them to peace with God, and eſtabliſheth peace in their Conſciences, yea, finally, it brings them to everlaſting peace.

Q. 2. *WHEREIN the truth of the Scriptures as a Rule, doth conſiſt?*

A. TRUTH and Falſhood being contraries, hence that which cannot be charged with any falſhood may be ſaid to be true: but there is ſomething more to be conſidered in the truth of a Rule, to denominate it ſo. The general nature of Truth conſiſts in conformity; but the Truth of a Rule requires conformity in more reſpects than one. In particular,

(1.) *EVERY Canon or Article in a Rule, muſt have a ſelf conformity*: It muſt agree with it ſelf; and thus it holds in common with all truth whatſoever. That which diſagrees with it ſelf, is therefore falſe, becauſe it diſagrees; for there is a perfect Harmony in Truth. Every Precept of any doctrine, muſt have an *Axiomatical Verity* in it, *i. e.* it muſt ſay of the thing as it is, it muſt connect things to be connected, and disjoyn things to be disjoyned; it muſt ſpeak of things as they be: and this truth belongs to the Scripture, and runs thro' every ſentence of it; there is not a word there, but what is ſo as ſpoken. There are various matters contained in the Scripture, and there is truth belonging to each of them, and in them. There are *matters Hiſtorical*, and the truth of them is *in relating matters of fact as they were*; and there is no ſtory there, but is related right, however incredible ſome things may ſeem to a carnal mind; there is nothing Romantick there: Hiſtories indeed are delivered compendiouſly, being bro't in only in ſubſervience to an higher deſign, but there is nothing ſpoken but what was. And there are *Propheſies* there of many future things: the Predictions of after events, and the truth of theſe is in the Harmony between the Prediction and Accompliſhment: Many of theſe have been already fulfilled, and that exactly. No one circumſtance omitted which hath verified thoſe Propheſies, and the reſt ſhall in their proper ſeaſon, and are therefore true, becauſe of the certain futurity of them, not poſſible to be fruſtrated. There are *Precepts* there, both Poſitive and Negative, the truth whereof conſiſts in *their agreement with the will of God concerning mans duty*: now all theſe do ſpeak God's mind to us. Hence that, Mic 6.8. *He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* And for this reaſon they are called good Statutes & Judgments, which they could not be unleſs they were true. There are *Promiſes* and *Threatnings*, the truth whereof conſiſts in the *Connection* there is between the things promiſed or threatned, and the *Conditions* to which they are annexed: when theſe are made according to the ſettled purpoſe, and unchangeable reſolution of him that made them, they are true, and ſuch are they all: that may be applied to them, with reference to the Promiſes, Numb. 23. 19. *God is not a man, that he ſhould lie, neither the ſon of man, that he ſhould repent: hath he ſaid, and ſhall he not do it? or hath he ſpoken and ſhall he not make it good?* And in reſpect of the threatnings, 1 Sam.15.29. *And the ſtrength of Iſrael will not lie,*

nor repent : for he is not a man that he ſhould repent. And to theſe heads may each part of Scripture be reduced ; ſo that each part of it is true.

(2.) *TO the truth of a Rule is required an agreement between the ſeveral Articles contained in it.* A Rule is but one, tho' it may conſiſt of many branches ; but then there muſt be no contradiction between them : Truth is always conſenting ; where there is contradiction there is falſhood, that which is aſſerted in one place, muſt not be denied in another, becauſe there would be an inconſiſtency ; and if one be true, the other cannot be ſo : This truth alſo belongs to the Scripture ; there is a great harmony in it, as hath already been proved. The adverſaries of the word of God have endeavoured to ſet it at variance with it ſelf, but all in vain ; and thoſe ſeeming contradictions in it have been no more than ſeeming, ariſing from the darkneſs of mens underſtandings, and perverſeneſs of their hearts : and God hath raiſed up many faithful Inſtruments in his Church, who have wiped off all thoſe aſperſions, and ſhewn how eaſily thoſe miſtaken differences may be reconciled.

(3.) *TO the truth of a Rule, as ſuch, there is further required, that all the ſeveral parts of it do concurr to the ſame deſign or end.* That a rule may be true, it muſt be *Homogeneal.* Truth is methodical ; Error lies latent in confuſion. A thing may be true in it ſelf, and yet not a truth in ſuch a Science, becauſe it belongs not to it ; now a Rule is directive to an end, and hence every thing which it preſcribes is ſo far of the truth of that Rule, as it is directive or helpful to that end : The end of the Rule of Religion is to point man to Happineſs, to glorify God, and obtain Salvation, whatever is really ſubſervient to this end, may truly be ſaid to belong to it, and to be a Truth in it. And thus alſo *the Scriptures are true* : There is nothing ſpoken in the whole book of God, but contains ſome *Theological Verity* in it, and there may a ſpiritual improvement be made of it. It is true, God ſpeaks there to us after divers manners ; but all is not only accommodated to the ſtate & capacity of his People, but alſo to the furtherance of our ſerving of God, and obtaing of Salvation. The Rule of Divinity hath to do with the Underſtandings, Wills, Affections, and Senſes of men ; and they need both teaching and quickning : and tho' the Scripture is ſometime delivered hiſtorically, yet all is for information, or excitation ; and there is no text ſo barren but there is ſome Doctrine, and ſome Uſe ſpiritual that may be made of it ; nothing that is beſides this purpoſe, either to give us light, or to put life into us ; all may be reduced to ſome of thoſe heads mentioned by the Apoſtle, 2 Tim. 3. 16. *All ſcripture is given by inſpiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs.* Thus are the Scriptures every way true, and this is one property of them, commending them to us as a ſufficient Rule.

Use. Inſtead of anſwering Caſes here, give me leave to *commend the reading & ſtudy of the Scripture to all,* particularly to *young ones, from the conſideration of theſe properties of it,* and at preſent from this of *Truth,* and I may hence offer ſuch perſwaſives as theſe,

1. *IT is a pleaſant employment.* The Wiſe man tells us, that light is ſweet ; and what light is to the eye, that is truth to the underſtanding. This is an Object ſuted to that faculty : it is the food or repaſt of the Soul. We are therefore adviſed to feed upon it, *Pſal.* 37. 4. And there is no truth ſo ſweet and delectable as Divine truth is, and this is that which the Word of God is full of. *Job* therefore preferred it before his neceſſary food, *Chap.* 23. 12. *David* found it ſo, and was therefore always chewing upon it. Pſal. 119. 103. *How ſweet are thy words unto my taſte, yea, ſweeter than honey to my mouth.*

2. *IT is a very profitable employment.* Falſhood is pernicious, but Truth is beneficial : and there is manifold profit in it.

1. *IT is profitable for direction.* Truth is a Compaſs, a Pole-ſtar to ſhew man how to ſteer his Courſe, ſo as to reach his haven, and not miſs of it : All men are travellers, they have a pathleſs wilderneſs to go thro', their going right is of everlaſting concernment ; if you would know your way, and not miſs of it, ſtudy this unerring Rule, enquire at this Oracle, and you need not be at a loſs ; hear what the word ſaith, and you ſhall do well. Iſa. 8. 20. *To the law and to the teſtimony : if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them.*

2. *IT is profitable for Correction.* Poor Sinners are out of the way, and gotten into a maze of fooliſh and deſtructive errors ; if ever you would have a Clue to help you out, you muſt make uſe of the word of God : it muſt be Truth that muſt bring you into the way again ; and you muſt ſearch the Scriptures to find it. (*Joh.* 5. 39.) This was it by which *David* was admoniſhed. (*Pſal.* 19. 11.) And it directs young men to it ; Pſal. 119. 9. *Wherewith ſhall a young man cleanſe his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.*

3. *IT is profitable in point of ſafety & ſecurity.* There are a great many courſes men take, but they are at a loſs about them, and kept in ſuſpenſe ; becauſe they have no certainty in them, they may be deceived : but Truth hath that property in it, that it cannot deceive. Men indeed may deceive themſelves, through the falſeneſs of their own hearts, by perverting the truth ; but that is their own, and not the Scripture's fault : if you keep always cloſe to the word of God, you ſhall be ever ſafe ; and that you may do ſo, make it continually the man of your Counſels.

4. *IT is profitable in point of comfort.* There are many promiſes which Satan makes men ; but they have no comfort in all, becauſe they have no truth in them. There are many hopes men ſupport themſelves withal, but they give little ſatisfaction, becauſe they have no ſecu-

rity :

rity; but the Promiſes of the word of God, are therefore ſolid & ſubſtantial comforts, not only becauſe they contain more excellent things in them, but alſo becauſe they are built upon Truth, which is a foundation that cannot be ſhaken. This *David* remarks, Pſal.132.11. *The Lord hath ſworn in truth unto David* ---. God hath ſet his Truth as a ſeal to all his Promiſes, and that is an unmoveable ſecurity. Labour then to believe that the word of God is Truth, and let that allure you, to take pleaſure in laying it up in your minds and hearts; and while others feed their fancies with lies, Romances, and fooliſh vanities, get your heads & ſouls full of the word of God: read, hear, and meditate much on it, ſo ſhall you have a Rule to go by, which will both counſel & comfort you in the houſe of your Pilgrimage, & deliver you from all the falſe & crooked paths of deſtruction, in which multitudes are loſt for ever, becauſe they deſpiſed & neglected this Rule; yea, this light & truth, ſhall lead you into his holy hill, and keep you to his everlaſting Kingdom.

[AUGUST 14. 1688.]

SERMON *IX.*

II. *IT is required in a Rule that it be Full.* Every Rule ought to be perfect in its kind, and that wherein its perfection doth mainly conſiſt, is that it be *adequate* to the Art or Science which it teacheth. It is not an univerſal perfection that we are here conſidering, but particular. A thing is then perfect in its kind, when it anſwers fully to the end that it is to ſerve to: there are ſeveral Arts in the world, & every one hath it's diſtinct deſign; the Rule belonging to it, is that whereby that Praxis may be rightly performed; and it is then perfect, when there is nothing wanting in it, which belongs to the doctrine of ſuch an Art, tho' it have nothing in it belonging to the doctrine of another Science. That every Rule ought thus to be full or perfect, will appear if we conſider,

1. *THAT the Rule is our proper directory by which we are to be guided in our Operation.* Hence there can be no perfect Operation, without a perfect Rule: the Rule is that which points out the way to the end; and if in any one ſtep of it, that fail to give us direction, it leaves us at a loſs, it either makes us to ſtand ſtill, or expoſeth us to miſtakes; for where our Rule leave us, there we are in a labyrinth without a clue to lead us out: and that is one great reaſon of the vanity of humane Sciences, becauſe of the conjectural & imperfect Rules that man have to follow in the practice of them.

2. *THAT the Rule is that by which only the Actions can be tryed.* If a man would know whether his work be right, he muſt apply the Rule to it, and it is juſt ſo far approveable as it is commenſerate with it; if then it be not perfect, it will not be fit to weigh all Actions by; and conſequently there would be ſome of which no judgment could be made; and it cannot be known whether it be worthy of praiſe or blame, or whether it be leading to or diverting from the end.

3. *THAT all imperfection is a coming ſhort of the Rule.* This is the proper notion of a thing that is imperfect, for that which in all points anſwers its Rule, and in nothing comes ſhort of it, is a perfect work; if therefore the Rule ſhould be imperfect, it would be irregular, and what greater contradiction than this?

THAT this properly alſo belongs to the Scriptures, is that which is now to be made evident; which will further clear up it's ſufficiency, to direct us to our end. This is one of the commendations which *David* gives it, *Pſal.*19.7. And that it is ſo will be very apparent to us, if we do but conſider theſe things,

(1.) *THE Scriptures were given on purpoſe by God to be a Rule to man, to direct him to his chief end*: They muſt therefore be every way ſuted to that purpoſe. It is good arguing from the perfection of the Author, to the perfection of his work: God is the Author of the Scriptures, this hath been already proved; He gave them to man for a Rule, that alſo hath been made evident; that therefore they are perfect is a genuine conſequence; ſo he argues, Deut.32 4. *He is the rock, his work is perfect* ---. If God work, he muſt work like himſelf: if he intended to ſhew man his way in his word, he hath done it; for what ſhould hinder him? Not ignorance, for how ſhould he not know his own mind? Not deſign, for it was his very deſign, to give man a Rule in it. Mic. 6. 8. *He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good* ———.

(2.) *EITHER the Scripture is a perfect Rule, or elſe God hath left fallen man without one.* That he hath not ſo done, is evident, for if he hath, it is either becauſe he could not, or would not give him ſuch an one; not becauſe he could not, for if God was able, and knew how to reſtore the fallen creature to happineſs; if he could bring him back to the recovery of his end; he muſt then be able to lay out, & diſcover to him a way, after which it might be done. If God can ſave Apoſtate man, he can tell him how he may be ſaved: If God have an *Idea* of it in himſelf, he can give man an *Exemplar* of it; but there was no impoſſibility in this: not becauſe he could not, for the event proves the contrary: There is a company of this fallen Race that are reſtored to felicity, by attaining their end; and how they ſhould ſo do without a Rule, or how without a perfect Rule, is not to be conceived: ſo that it is unqueſtionable that man hath ſuch an one given him: only the diſpute is, where we may find it; and I ſay, either the Scripture is ſuch an one, or there is none revealed: where is there one to be produced? Let all them that are pretended to, be examined & tryed whether they have in them the perfection requiſite.

[1.] *THE law of nature which was at firſt written upon the heart of man, cannot be it.* For tho' it were adapted to the ſtate of man in innocency, and had an anſwerable perfection; yet to fallen man it cannot be a perfect Rule, becauſe it cannot give him life, *Gal.*3.21. It pointed him to a right exerciſe of his grace while he had

it, but told him not how he ſhould recover it when he had loſt it, nay, that fair copy is loſt by the fall, and not recoverable but in the Scripture; for,

[2.] *THOSE Relicts or broken fragments of it, that are found in the hearts of men ſince the fall, can much leſs be it.* They have indeed enough to leave them under condemnation, without excuſe; but to guide them to happineſs, is beyond them. There is nothing of the old Rule but what is imperfect, and the conceptions thereof miſerably intangled & crazy; and it hath nothing elſe in it, but ſome confuſed parcels of that, and muſt therefore be much more imperfect. Rom. 1. 21. *Becauſe that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their fooliſh heart was darkned.*

[3.] *THE Book of nature, or of the works of Creation & Providence, is not a perfect Rule of Religion.* The whole Rule of Phyſick is therein contained, but not ſo of Divinity: there is indeed a great deal to be there learnt, the Creature doth lead to the Creator. Rom. 1. 19, 20. *Becauſe that which may be known of God, is manifeſt in them; for God hath ſhewed it unto them. For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power & Godhead.* Whence ſome men diſcourſe of natural Theology; but this is not able throughly to inform us in our way to Life, becauſe it hath this defect in common with the former; that is, that it gives us no account of *man's Redemption*, and the *way* in which we come to have it applied to us. This ſpecial Article of ſpecial Government, without the knowledge whereof there is no hope of Salvation, hath neither print nor footſtep to be found there.

[4.] *MUCH leſs is that impulſe which natural men find upon their ſpirits directing & prompting them, a perfect Rule.* Which is the thing that *Enthuſiaſts* plead ſo highly to, and boaſt of their great perfection in compliance with it: for, either we muſt ſay, that it is no Rule at all; for how can the perverſe inclinations of man's heart that is wholly corrupted, and become altogether filthy, be called a Rule? and if none, much leſs a perfect one; or if we call it a Rule, it muſt be abuſively, it is not a Rule of happineſs. Sin reigns, and Satan reigns in natural men; and theſe have their Laws, which they give by way of ſuggeſtion, and preſs upon men by a ſecret, and oftentimes a violent impulſe, and back them with carnal Reaſonings; and they have the efficacy of a Rule upon men, and ſtrangely command them, but will never lead them to Bliſs. It is certain, that Enthuſiaſts impulſes are carnal or diabolical, and conſequently no divine Rule at all, much leſs one that is perfect and compleat.

[5.] *NOR yet is this Rule given to each man by immediate Revelation.* Fallen man's Rule is indeed of Revelation, as formerly hath been aſſerted, but God ſpake it to ſuch as he made choice of, and by them imparted it to others, (2 *Tim.* 3. 16.) 2 Pet. 1. 21. *For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God ſpake as they were moved by the holy Ghoſt.* But ſince the Canon is perfected ſuch Revelation is ceaſed: Hence that, Gal. 1.8. *But tho' we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other goſpel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accurſed.* And if none of theſe be it, either there muſt be ſome others which I know not of, or none, which cannot be, or the Scriptures muſt be it, to whoſe perfection I further argue.

(3.) *THAT Rule which is able to make us perfect, muſt needs be a perfect Rule.* That the Scripture is ſo, we have it aſſerted, 2 *Tim.* 3. 16, 17. Reaſon tells us, that the vertue of the Cauſe muſt not be leſs than the vertue of the Effect: only this is to be interpreted of it, ſo far as a Rule is ſerviceable to it, and that is, that if the Rule be exactly attended, the man will be perfect, and the ground of it lies here, *viz.* becauſe there is nothing requiſite to direct man aright in this way to his great End, but it will rightly inform him about; and when this is proved, the perfection of Scripture will ſtand againſt all gainſayers.

TO make this good, let us conſider, that the Rule of Religion being to direct fallen men in the way to Eternal Life. Hence there are four things requiſite to render it compleat, all of which are to be found in the Scriptures, fully, and are therefore aſſerted concerning it, in the forecited, 2 *Tim.* 3. 16. on account whereof he tells us that the man of God is fully furniſhed, *Ver.* 17. viz.

1. *IT contains in it the Doctrine of Faith.* And is therefore ſaid to be *profitable for Doctrine.* Faith is one eſſential part of fallen man's Religion. For his direction about it, it is needfull that he be informed both about his Object and Act; he muſt know who is to be believed in, and after what manner. Faith is grounded upon knowledge; it is requiſite that we know him whom we truſt in; what an Object he is; what it is that renders him an Object ſutable for our Faith's reliance; how he comes to be one that may be truſted in by a ſinful Creature, what need there is that we come to him in Faith; in what way we may have confidence in believing in him; and how we may come by ſuch a Faith as is ſaving: and for this the Scripture is full; it ſufficiently acquaints us with all thoſe great truths, which concern the diſcovery of God to us in his back parts; his glorious Perfections; his Eſſence and Subſiſtence; his wonderful works of Creation and Providence; the integrity of man in his firſt ſtate; his woful Apoſtacy, and the ſinful & miſerable condition to which he and all his Poſterity were reduced by it; the Curſe and Condemnation lying upon men by reaſon of it; his incapacity of ſatisfying Juſtice, and delivering himſelf; the riches of grace diſcovered in the work of Redemption; the way how Juſtice came to be ſatisfied by *Chriſt* for us; the manner and way of the application

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of this Redemption to us; and the glorious privileges & benefits ariſing there-from: All theſe doctrines are fully laid down here; and there is need of no more to be known about them, than what is left upon record in this Book. Hence that, 1 Joh. 5.13. *Theſe things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God: that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*

2. *IT contains all the Rules of Obedience.* This is the ſecond part of our Religion, and it is that wherein our faith is to exerciſe it ſelf; for *faith worketh by love*, Gal. 5.6. Now Obedience is properly a conforming our ſelves in our thoughts, words, and deeds to the revealed will of God, or his command, and that which comes up fully to anſwer this will of God in all points, is perfect Obedience; and that we may do the will of God it is requiſite that we know it; and what God reveals to us is the bound or limit of our Obedience. Deut. 29.29. *The ſecret things belong unto the Lord our God: but thoſe things which are revealed, belong unto us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.* Now God hath revealed his whole will in this reſpect in his word. *Rom.* 10. 6, 7, 8. There needs no new revelation; let men but mind what the word ſaith, and that will be a lamp to their feet, and a light to their path. Hence it is ſaid to be *profitable for inſtruction in righteouſneſs.* There are a great many duties incumbent upon man, with reſpect to God and to men; many relations that they bear to God, to themſelves, to them that bear a particular relation to them, to all men; and there are ſpecial Evangelical Duties enjoyned them; and there is the right manner of performing them: but there is nothing on this account, but this word inſtructs us in: nor doth God expect any more of us, than what he hath here required, *Mic.* 6. 8.

3. *IT contains in it ſufficient Refutation of all the Errors that are oppoſite to the doctrine of faith.* It is a Rule by which all Doctrines may be tried & diſcovered, whether they be ſound or falſe. And it is ſo ſaid to be *profitable for reproof.* The word is uſed to ſignifie a refutation of falſe Opinions, and that by evidence; and ſo it is tranſlated evidence, *Heb.* 11.1. Satan and his Emiſſaries endeavour to pervert men from the truth, and draw them to follow doctrines of Devils; the Rule is not perfect, unleſs it be fit to try & diſcover theſe by: But if all the *Hereſies* in the world be laid by the Scripture, they will fall before it. A ſtraight Rule will make that which is crooked be ſeen to be ſo: there are many plauſible pretences uſed to ſet off errors by; but the Scripture plainly manifeſts the vanity of them all. This doubtleſs was the ſquare the Church of *Epheſus* made uſe of, *Rev.* 2. 2. —— *Thou haſt tryed them, which ſay they are Apoſtles, and are not; and haſt found them liars.* We are commanded not to believe every ſpirit, but to try them, 1 *Joh.* 4. 1. and it is by the word this proof is to be made, *Iſai.* 8. 20.

4. *IT alſo contains in it enough to rectify all our ſwerving from the Rule of Obedience.* If we are fallen into any erroneous practices, or tempted to do any thing that is diſpleaſing to God, here we may be inſtructed how to reform them. Thus it is ſaid to be profitable *for Correction*; the word ſignifies a reducing of things that are amiſs, to their former rectitude. We are exceeding apt through the deceitfulneſs of our own hearts, and the cunning inſinuations of Satan, to turn aſide to the right or left hand; but here we may be rightly helped to reform. Pſal. 119.9. *Wherewith ſhall a young man cleanſe his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.* It is that light which reproves evil deeds, and tells us when we do amiſs. Joh. 3.19. *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkneſs rather then light, becauſe their deeds were evil.* *David* was admoniſhed by it, *Pſal.* 19.11. And if we are willing to receive the information of it, we need never be at a loſs to know whether our ways be right or wrong; for it diſcovers all the works of darkneſs: and what can there be more required in a Rule to make it perfect? It muſt needs be a full Rule that hath all this compleatly in it; the word of God therefore is ſo: Only let theſe two things be here obſerved,

(1.) *THAT the great & fundamental Principles of Faith & Obedience are ſet down expreſsly in the Scriptures.* There are ſome Principles belong to the Rule, which as they have diverſe others depending upon, and reſulting from them, ſo they are not deducible from others, being themſelves prime Truths, and ſo, except they had been declared in terms, they could never have been diſcovered to us, or inferred from others; ſuch in ſpecial are the myſteries of Redemption, and the Doctrines of faith in Chriſt: of theſe the Scripture gives us a diſtinct and full account.

(2.) *THAT there are other truths concerning Religion, that tho' they are not in ſo many words there written, yet are contained therein, and to be thence concluded by juſt & neceſſary Conſequence.* It is true, many leſſer Rules are there alſo expreſſed; but God hath left ſome things to be ſought out, and found by ſearch, that ſo our underſtandings may be exerciſed, and our rational faculties employed about ſpiritual things. Man is a reaſonable Creature, is able to draw inferences from inferences; and our Saviour Chriſt hath taught us how to argue. So, Matth. 22.31. *But as touching the reſurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was ſpoken unto you by God, ſaying*, &c. And thereby he aſſures us that Scripture conſequence is Scripture: and thus there is nothing that is needful to point in any caſe to the glorifying of God, or the enjoying him for ever, but is here to be had. And for this reaſon we are ſo ſolemnly forbidden to add any thing to the word of God, for, becauſe to that which is perfect nothing can be added, therefore every addition which is made to the Rule, is if a Tacit, yet a real imputation of Imperfection to it, which reflects great reproach upon God.

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USE; *LET the conſideration of the Scriptures perfection, be a further perſwaſive to us all, and particularly to young ones, to be very converſant with them*: And it yields powerfull incentives hereunto. Conſider then,

1. *HERE you may have abundant Satisfaction in your way.* The work of a Chriſtian is a great work, and the conſequence is of everlaſting moment; and what can be more ſatisfying to a man than to have a Rule before him, by which he may regulate himſelf in all points, and need not to be left at a loſs in any: there can be no duty in which you are concerned, and would do it aright, no doubt by which you are perplexed, and are deſirous to be reſolved in, but if you bring it hither you may be fully informed about it; and the more you ſtudy the Scripture, the more will you be able to ſatisfy your ſelves about every thing.

2. *THIS will be the way for you to attain to high degrees of ſpiritual Wiſdom.* Wiſdom conſiſts in the right underſtanding of a Rule; and the beſt wiſdom is in knowing the Rule of Religion, becauſe the practice of it is the beſt and moſt happy trade: and ever, the more perfect the Rule is that we ſtudy, the more likely are we to attain this Wiſdom; and this is the Scripture; and the more you read and meditate in it, and pray over it to God for an underſtanding heart, and that he would give you entrance into his word, the more wiſe you are like to be. If you ask *David* how he came to ſuch meaſures of Wiſdom as ſurpaſſed his teachers, and the ancients among whom he lived, he will tell you he gat them by ſuch a courſe as this. Pſal. 119. 99. *I have more underſtanding than all my teachers: for thy teſtimonies are my meditation.* But neglect this perfect Rule, and it is certain that you will never be better than fools. Study that, and that will be the way to be always in a readineſs for practice of duty, and ſhunning the cunning temptations to ſin, that you are continually in danger of.

3. *HERE is enough in the Scripture t omake you happy now, and forever.* This perfect Rule is your life, and that Argument the wiſe Man uſeth with his Son, Prov. 4.13. *Take faſt hold of inſtruction, let her not go; keep her, for ſhe is thy life.* The word of God is the Rule of life, and all that concerns life and godlineſs is to be found in it; every Rule in it, is a Rule of life, and it points to grace and glory. So alſo *Moſes*, Deut. 32. 46, 47. *And he ſaid unto them, Set your hearts unto all the words which I teſtify among you this day; which ye ſhall command your children to obſerve to do, all the words of this law. For it is not a vain thing for you: becauſe it is your life.* And it is not a dying life, but life Eternal which is here to be had, Joh. 17. 3. *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.* And this is the thing which you are led to by the Scriptures. Joh. 5. 39. *Search the ſcriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which teſtify of me.* There is no knowledge beyond the Scriptures, of ſpiritual things; you are ſhort of perfection; here is in them enough to employ you, a mine that you may always find new treaſures in, and in which you may reſt with greateſt ſafety. Let this then be your daily converſe, if you would be perfect, let this perfect Rule be your Counſellor, that will tell you how you may ſo be: be much with it, Morning and Evening in particular: you may ſee an end of all other perfection, but here is none of this. Love it then, and let that love put you upon following the Advice of God by *Moſes*, Deut. 11. 18, 19, 20. *Therefore ſhall ye lay up theſe my words in your heart, and in your ſoul, and bind them for a ſign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye ſhall teach them your Children, ſpeaking of them when thou ſitteſt in thy houſe, and when thou walkeſt by the way, when thou lieſt down, and when thou riſeſt up. And thou ſhalt write them upon the door-poſts of thine houſe, and upon thy gates.*

[SEPTEMBER, 11. 1688.]

SERMON X.

III. *IT is requiſite that a Rule be Plain.* The end and uſe of a Rule being to direct men in their work, to ſhew what is to be done, and how to do it, it ought therefore to be eaſy and intelligible, elſe inſtead of directing, it will be perplexing. The Precepts of every Science, ſhould be ſcientificall; that which a man cannot underſtand, will not be for his information: It is therefore the commendation of every teacher, to lay down his Rules in the eaſieſt and moſt intelligible words. This property alſo belongs to the Scriptures: the Rule of Life and Salvation therein is perſpicuous. God hath therein wonderfully condeſcended to write heavenly truths in earthly language, that ſo he might ſute them to the capacity of ſuch as were to be inſtructed by them. The Queſtion about the perſpicuity of the Scriptures, is a matter of great controverſy between us, and them of *Rome*, who deny it; and for that reaſon forbid the *Laity* the reading of them, as being too deep for them, and endangering their being led into Hereſy. That therefore this property of them may be evidenced, I ſhall firſt give ſome Arguments to prove that they muſt needs be ſo, and then ſhew wherein they are ſo.

1. THAT the Scriptures muſt needs be plain, will appear if we ſhall conſider theſe things;

(1.) *THE great end for which they were written*, viz. *To be a Rule for the direction of men in the way of peace.* They were to teach, inſtruct, inform us; So (2 *Tim.* 3. 16.) Now they would loſe this end, if they were dark, obſcure, ambiguous; they could not be profitable for ſuch a purpoſe, but would be rather dangerous, and expoſe men to miſtakes, which cannot without blaſphemy be aſſerted of them, if we conſider, (2.)

(2.) *THE Author that gave and appointed them for this end, and he is no other than God himſelf.* That God is the Author of the Scriptures, is already proved; that he deſigned them to this purpoſe, is no leſs certain: Now we muſt hence grant the Concluſion, or elſe ſay that he either could not, or would not thus accommodate them: To affirm that he could not, is to ſay, that God could propound an end to himſelf, above his power of obtaining, which caſts reproach upon his Wiſdom, as well as his Omnipotency: If we ſuppoſe that he would not, we may as well ſay it was not his end; for every one wills his end, and this is to impute falſhood to him, who aſſures us that it was.

(3.) *THE ſubject for whom the Scriptures were written*, i. e. *for Man.* And therefore they muſt be ſuted to mans underſtanding: Yea, they were not only written for wiſe and learned men, for great Clerks that have a deep reach, and piercing judgment; but for the ſimple and unlearned. Prov. 1. 4. *To give ſubtilty to the ſimple, to the young man knowledge and diſcretion.* Chap. 8. 8, 9. *All the words of my mouth are in righteouſneſs, there is nothing froward or perverſe in them They are all plain to him that underſtandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.* They were deſigned to lead God's choſen ones in the right way, and we know not many wiſe are choſen.

(4.) *THE Inſtruments whom God made uſe of in writing the Scriptures: and they were men, who muſt needs write in an humane language.* Yea, and for the moſt part plain men, ſuch as were not adorned with humane literature; but ſhepherds, fiſhermen, herdſmen, and ſuch like.

(5.) *THEY are called light, which intimates their clearneſs.* Prov. 6. 23. 2 Pet. 1. 19. *We have alſo a more ſure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that ſhineth in a dark place* ---. It is of the proper nature of light to make things clear & manifeſt; it diſcovers that to man, which without it would ly hidden. *What the ſun is to the world, that the Scripture is to the Church.* But,

2. TO give an account wherein the Scripture appears to be plain and perſpicuous, & in what reſpect it is ſo. I ſhall offer theſe Concluſions,

[1.] *THERE are various matters and methods contained in the ſeveral writings of the Scriptures.* They are not penned after the mode in which men are wont to compile their ſyſtems of Arts; but there are hiſtories, propheſies, precepts, promiſes, threatnings, commentaries, *&c.* interwoven in them, and hereby God hath accommodated them to all ſorts of men; and they are filled with all that variety of matter, which anſwers all the ends of Religion. Sometimes to inform the underſtanding: Sometimes to engage the will; and ſometimes to move upon the affections: in each of which they are ſerviceable to help man to the attainment of his chief end.

[2.] *WE muſt diſtinguiſh between thoſe things which are neceſſary to Salvation, and ſuch matters which are of leſſer concernment.* It is certain that all theological truths are not equally neceſſary, though all have their excellent uſefulneſs. There are diverſe prophetical Scriptures, which contain in them predictions of things to come, which are dark, as to the aſſigning of the perſons and times of their Accompliſhment. But yet there is the matter of Inſtruction, either for awakening or encouragement eaſily to be gathered from them. And there is much of God's Wiſdom appears in their obſcurity, both reſpecting his children, and his enemies; But the teachings of them are plain; and to this head may that be referred, 2 Pet. 3. 16 --- *In which are ſome things hard to be underſtood* ---.

[3.] *WE muſt diſtinguiſh between the nature of the things aſſerted, and the manner of the aſſerting of them.* There are many things ſpoken of in Scripture, which are altogether above the comprehenſion of a created underſtanding to graſp them in: and therefore no wonder if after all our enquiry into the Word of God, we are forced to confeſs ourſelves to be at a loſs about them: and yet theſe things are ſo laid down as plainly to intimate what is intended, & that without any Obſcurity. Nothing more plain than that the Scripture aſſerts, that there is one God in three Perſons; that the ſecond Perſon in the Trinity ſhould aſſume the nature of man, and of two natures conſtitute but one perſon. That believers are by faith united to Chriſt, and by him to God. And a great many more like things are fully and clearly there laid down: but how theſe things are, is beyond our reach to know, as exceeding the reach of a created capacity, and is therefore no argument that it is dark and obſcure; it is not the words that are ambiguous, but the things are too big for us to imbibe: Hence that, *Exod.* 34. 18.

[4.] *THE many miſtakes, errors, falſe opinions which men have drawn from miſunderſtood & perverted Scriptures, is no argument neceſſarily to prove their obſcurity.* It muſt indeed be either in the Scriptures, or the men: if I underſtand not what another ſaith, the fault muſt be in him or me. Now there is a great deal of reaſon to be given why the Scriptures may be plain; and yet men not underſtand, or miſunderſtand them. For,

1. *AS to the literal and hiſtorical ſenſe of Scriptures.* Tho' there be a faculty in man to know the Grammar & Logick of thoſe diſcourſes, yet there are carnal reaſonings in us, backed with the natural enmity we bear againſt Divine Truth, which puts us upon wreſting and perverting them, ſo as to accommodate them to our falſe principles and corrupt luſts; becauſe we would bring all to ſpeak according to our vain minds. And that is the reaſon *Peter* gives of ſome of *Pauls* writings being ſo hard. 2 Pet. 3. 16, 17. --- *Things hard,---which they that are unlearned & unſtable wreſt.*

2. *AS to the ſpiritual underſtanding of theſe things, no wonder if natural men receive it not from the Scriptures, who have no ſpiritual faculty to receive it withal.* Natural men therefore

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are not competent judges in this caſe : as well may a blind mans word be taken, that the Sun hath no light in it; as well may we ſay that the rules of any Art are obſcure, becauſe a fool apprehends them not. Natural men are fools and blind in ſpiritual things ; ſee 1 Cor. 2. 14. *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foliſhneſs unto him ; neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.*

[5.] *HENCE as plain as Scriptures are, there is need of the illumination of the Spirit, to help us to underſtand them aright.* And that both as to a Literal underſtanding, and Spiritual diſcerning. The Diſciples had read the Word of God, and could diſcourſe of it ; but they knew not the mind of God clearly in it, till Chriſt opened their underſtandings ; *Luk.* 24. 45. But let us here take notice, that this is not to ſupply any defect in the Scripture, but to help our infirmity : It is to reſtore eyeſight to us. The Sun ſhone before as brightly as afterwards ; but the Blind man ſaw it not, till his eyes were opened.

[6.] *HENCE the neceſſary truths to Salvation in the Book of God, are plain to thoſe for whoſe ſakes it was written.* The Scripture was chiefly given to make the Man of God perfect : 2 *Tim.* 3. 17. Theſe therefore have their Eyes opened, ſo as to diſcern hidden things in Gods Law. Hence that of *Paul*, 2 Cor. 4. 3. *But if our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt.* As for others they may be judicially left to believe lies : They may have a judicial Blindneſs added to their Natural. It is true, Godly men know but in part, ſanctification is gradual, but yet they do know unto Salvation ; nor do they impute their remaining ignorance to the Scriptures, but to themſelves : They lay the blame there.

[7.] *NOTWITHSTANDING the Scriptures plainneſs, it is required in the people of God, that they uſe diligence in ſearching out the mind of the Spirit in them.* Wiſdom muſt be dug for, as for hid treaſures. See, Prov. 2. 3, 4, 5. *Yea, if thou crieſt after knowledge, & liftſt up thy voice for underſtanding : If thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver, and ſearcheſt for her, as for hid treaſures : then ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the Lord ; and find the knowledge of God.* Hoſ 6. 3. Joh. 6. 39. We are therefore to uſe all means, reading, meditation, hearing, praying, enquiring; and for this end hath God ſet up his Ordinances. Jer. 3. 15. *And I will give you Paſtours according to mine heart, which ſhall feed you with knowledge and underſtanding.* But neither is this for the Scripture ſake, but for our ſake; our dulneſs and incapacity require it ; becauſe we receive things ſo ſlowly : ſo that if we neglect thus to do on preſumption of the eaſineſs of the word, we expoſe our ſelves to be left either under ignorance, or unto error. But ſtill,

[8.] *THE Native perſpicuity of the Scriptures will appear, if we conſider theſe things,*

1. *THAT all Scripture expreſſions are ſuted to the language of mankind.* God ſpeaks every thing there according to the way and manner that men expreſs themſelves in, one to another, and that for the *Grammar*, *Rhetorick* & *Logick* of it. *Chriſt* tells *Nicodemus* that he ſpake earthly things to him; *Joh.* 3. 12. They were heavenly truths, but they were cloathed with earthly expreſſions, *i.e.* Such as men that dwell upon earth are wont to uſe : The *Grammar* of them is ſuch as is ſuted to our ſpeech ; and hence the ſame literal ſence is to be put upon the words that they ſound in vulgar ſpeech : The *Rhetorick* is ſuch as men make uſe of, to ſpeak in Metaphors, Metonymies, Allegories, and Similitudes, & are to be ſo interpreted ; the *Logick* of them is ſuch as man's Reaſon is won't to make uſe of, whether Axiomatical or Syllogiſtical ; and hence are to be ſo taken, hence the word is called *Logical milk* ; 1 Pet. 2. 2.

2. *THAT there is but one ſenſe belongs to one Scripture.* If there were diverſe ſenſes belonging to it, it would make it intricate & unintelligible ; but no Scripture hath more ſenſes belonging to it. My meaning is, there is but one conſtruction of the words ; there is but one literal meaning ; for if there were more ſenſes than one belonging to any text, God ſhould uſe equivocation, which is impudence to charge him withal ; nay, in reality, to ſay it hath more ſenſes, is to ſay that it hath no ſenſe at all ; for that whoſe ſignification is not reſtrained to one, hath no certainty in it at all. It is true,

(1.) *THIS one ſenſe may be applyed to divers Subjects.* Thus in typical Scriptures, the things ſpoken may be applied both to the Type and Antitype, as *Pſal.* 2. & 16. & elſewhere. Thus all Allegories, and many Scripture Hiſtories. So the ſtory of *Abraham*'s two Wives, *Gal.* 4. Here therefore, the Allegory it ſelf and the Myſtery, make but one entire ſenſe.

(2.) *THIS one ſenſe may include divers particular things under it.* But that makes it not divers, for we know that a general includes all ſpecials : and ſo, where the words are few, the ſenſe may be very comprehenſive. Thus in each command of the *Decalogue*, there is abundance contained : Becauſe under a general Precept or Prohibition, all of the kind and every ſpecies, is contained.

(3.) *THERE may be Uſes or Inferences manifold, drawn from one text, ariſing from the ſenſe of it.* Which are not a new ſenſe, but conſequences contained in it : thus when any Sin is forbidden, we may well infer, that ſuch things as do lead men thereto naturally, are to be avoided : from Hiſtorical Scripture, when we read that God thus puniſhed ſuch a Sin, we may infer that ſuch a thing is a Sin, and that it is provoking to God : and they who dare to commit it, are expoſed to his diſpleaſure : So that the Allegorical, Tropological & Anagogical ſenſes, are not divers from, but Coincident with the literal ſenſe.

3. *THAT hence from the Scriptures themſelves, we may fetch ſafe rules for the interpretation of them,* viz.

1. *ALL*

1. *ALL Rhetorical expreſſions muſt be reduced to the Grammatical ſenſe, and accordingly interpreted.* Types and figures muſt be allowed to the Scriptures as well as to other writings, elſe God had not ſpoken in our mode, and this way is not to obſcure, but illuſtrate, and alſo to move the affections; but ſtill we muſt reduce it to the Intention: Rhetorick is but an Ornament of Speech, and muſt therefore be brought to the Grammar of it. Thus when Chriſt calls *Herod* a *Fox*, the ſenſe is a *Crafty Enemy*. When the *Lamb* is called the *Paſſover*, the meaning is, it is the *token* of Gods *paſſing over*. When Chriſt ſaith this *Bread is my Body*, it intends, it is a *Sacramental ſign* of his Body; and a great many the like.

2. *ONE Scripture muſt be compared with another.* One text may look obſcure to us, but if we bring it to another, it will help to give us light to it; and it is certain, that the *Scripture is its own beſt Interpreter*; and that which ſpeaks moſt plainly, gives us to underſtand that which ſeems more dark. Thus if we would know what Chriſt means by *Debts*, *Mat.* 6. 12. let us compare it with *Luk* 11. 5. and we ſhall find that he intends *Sins*: If we would underſtand the meaning of Allegories and Ceremonies in the Old-Teſtament, we muſt conſult the expoſition given of them in the New. If we would not miſtake what is more briefly expreſſed in one place, we muſt conſult where it is more largely ſet forth in another.

3. *WE muſt reduce all to the form of wholſome words.* The Apoſtle gave *Timothy* one, which he is to hold faſt; 2 Tim. 1. 13. *Hold faſt the form of ſound words, which thou haſt heard of me, in faith and love which is in Chriſt Jeſus.* There are foundation Principles moſt evident in Scripture: Theſe are ſo many heads to which all is to be reduced, and nothing contradictory, to theſe is to be admitted, for then they are not held faſt: There is an Analogy of Faith, which the Truth of the Word of God requires it neceſſary to hold to, and we muſt obſerve it; Rom. 12. 6. *Having the gifts, differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us propheſie according to the proportion of faith.* For if the Scripture ſhould build up any thing in one place, and pull it down in another, it would not be true.

4. *WE muſt put the largeſt ſenſe upon Scripture that it will bear.* *David* tells us, the Law is exceeding broad; *Pſal.* 119. 96. It is therefore injurious to the Word of God, to put a ſtraitned ſenſe upon it: not that we are to ſtrain it to ſpeak beſides the ſcope & intention, but according to it: we muſt extend it to the utmoſt: Chriſt interprets the Command againſt Adultery, to extend to a look and a thought; *Mat.* 5. 27.

5. *WE muſt obſerve the ſcope of the Context.* What is diſcourſed of, and what place every expreſſion bears in the Analyſis; for when we know what is ſpoken of, it will point us to the Intention of each particular: ſome words in all languages, of the ſame ſound, have diverſe uſes far different; this will give light in what ſenſe they are here or there to be underſtood.

6. *WE muſt exerciſe our Charity, in Interpreting many Scriptures, ſuch eſpecially, as refer to the Actions of God's People.* They indeed had their infirmities, and it is better they bear blame, than the Word of God be perverted: But where there may ſafely be a putting a fair ſenſe upon the Action, and the Words of the text will bear it, Charity which thinks no evil, requires it; becauſe we know they were Holy men, and bound for the Glory of God. I might here farther urge the Reading and Meditating of the Scriptures, from the conſideration of the plainneſs of them: and ſince they are a Rule of Life, and therefore of Infinite concernment, & are alſo ſo plain and clear to a ſerious humble Soul: would we then be great proficients in Spiritual Wiſdom, and gain intimate acquaintance with the way leading to Salvation, let us be much in theſe things, Read much in it, Ponder much on it, and Pray much over both; and by this means we ſhall be directed aright, and kept from miſtakes, and Soul Deſtroying errors, and be more ſatisfyingly acquainted with the Holy Will of God, in order to our more chearful and Comfortable doing of it.

[OCTOBER, 9. 1688.]

SERMON XI.

QUESTION III.

WHAT do the Scriptures principally teach?

ANSWER.

The Scriptures principally teach, what Man is to believe concerning God, and what Duty God requires of Man.

THE Scriptures being fallen man's Rule, to direct him how he may attain his Chief End, hence the ſum and ſubſtance of them muſt needs be ſuted hereunto; they muſt therefore comprize all Divinity in them, *viz.* to guide a man right in his way; for a Rule is always of the means to an end: ſo that the parts of Divinity, and the ſum of the Scriptures muſt be one and the ſame. Now the parts of our Religion are properly *Faith* and *Obſervance*; theſe therefore are the things which the Scriptures muſt direct unto, and inſtruct us in. We have already been aſſured that God is man's laſt end; to glorify and enjoy him, is the Reaſonable Creature's Felicity, and there are two things very requiſite in order to this, *viz.* That we know him, and

that we serve him; and under these two is fallen man's Religion summed up: these two do therefore carry in them, the substance, scope and end of the Scriptures. The great design of the word of God, is to lead us to him. He is the great end of it, so far as he may be served & enjoyed by man: some other things by the by, may be learnt from thence; but this is the direct aim. Knowledge and Practice make a man happy. Joh. 13. 17. *If ye know these things, happy are ye, if ye do them.* Faith then and Obedience are the two Channels in which all the Scriptures do run. *Solomon* will inform us in the sum of all that is said there, Eccl. 12. 13. *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter, Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.* And to these two heads *Paul* reduceth the whole form of wholesome words, 2 Tim. 1. 13. *Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.*

I shall here only briefly glance at the meaning and ground of the distribution, it being the first and most comprehensive in all Divinity: A few words then to each part, as they are here expressed.

I. *THE Scriptures teach what Man is to believe concerning GOD.* Faith in God is the first part of fallen man's Religion. The foundation of the happiness of any of *Adam*'s natural Posterity is laid in believing: it must therefore be essential to Religion; and all sincere Obedience derives from it; for faith works by love; hence it is before it, in order of Nature & Doctrine. Now in our treating about Faith, there are two things to be considered of: *viz.* The *Nature* of it, which in the method of our Catechism, will come to be treated of afterwards: And the *Object* of it, *viz.* GOD, so far as he hath seen meet to reveal himself to man; and this is that which is now before us. This then is the assertion here laid down, *That the Scriptures do reveal* GOD *to us, as a suitable & sufficient Object of our Faith.* Concerning which let these things in general be taken notice of.

1. *THERE is no happiness for man, but in the enjoyment of God.* He only can be man's objective felicity: This the Psalmist well understood when he said, as Psal. 73 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.* Every other thing, that man trusts to for his well being, becomes to him a lying Vanity.

2 *THERE is no enjoying God, but in the way of glorifying him.* It is an honour that he bestows upon none but those that honour him. To have him for their portion is the recompense which God bestows upon such as make it their great design to glorify him. Psal. 50. ult. *Whoso offereth praise, glorified me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I shew the salvation of God.* Our fruition of God is the proper fruit of our being entirely devoted to him.

3. *THERE is no glorifying of God, without knowing of him.* How is it possible for men to give him the glory that is due to his name, if they know not his name? If we know not who, or what he is, we cannot acknowledge him as he is. Knowledge & trust go together, Psal. 9. 10 *They that know thy name will put their trust in thee.* All the Atheism and irreligion in the World ariseth from men's nescience of God, Psal. 14. *begin. The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.* The Apostle chargeth all the wicked's carriage to Christ, upon their not knowing him, 1 Cor. 2. 8, 9. *Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.* For this ignorance of God, is declared to be destructive, Hos. 4. 6. *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.*

4. *NATURE makes no such discovery of God, as may furnish us with a knowledge sufficient for happiness.* Not the *light of nature* in men's hearts, for that was only adapted to the law of the first Covenant, which cannot give life to man that is dead in sin. Gal. 3. 21. *Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.* And the better part of it is also obliterated by the fall: and though there be such an impression indeleble upon every man's heart, as carries in it the conviction of a Deity; whereupon there is no nation but hath some Religion or other; yet their minds are so darkned, that they know not who or what manner of God he is; hence they have taken up with false gods, and false Worship. Nor yet the *book of nature*, the great and admirable works of God; for tho' there is never a leaf in this Book, but hath something of God written legibly upon it, and many Characters of his Divine power, wisdom and goodness there engraven; yet all this will leave a man short of the saving knowledge of him; there is enough there for man's Condemnation, but not for their Salvation; to stop their mouths; but not to light them their way.

5. *THE Scriptures reveal so much of God, as is necessary to be known to Salvation.* Tho' they do not discover God in the utmost extent of his Being, yet they declare him as he is knowable by us, and so as may make us happy: not his face, but his back parts: there is enough of God there exhibited to make a man perfect, (2 *Tim.* 3. 17.) Enough to light man the way to Eternal Life, (*Joh.* 5. 39.) In sum, God is there revealed as a suitable object of faith, for fallen man to trust in for life; as one who can save us; and how we may come to obtain Salvation of him; to give men such a knowledge as our Saviour speaks of. Joh. 17. 3. *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.*

6. *THAT knowledge of God which we obtain by the help of the Scriptures, is called a know-*

ledge

ledge of Faith by Divines. And the reaſon is, becauſe it is a knowledge which we come at by Revelation; and for this Cauſe, believing is in Scripture expreſſed by the knowing of God; not only becauſe a ſaving knowledge of God is an ingredient into true Faith, but alſo in that we are to come to the underſtanding and knowing of theſe things, by the report that is made of them to us in the word of God. Rom. 10. 14, 17. *How then ſhall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how ſhall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how ſhall they hear without a preacher? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* For a more full clearing of this point obſerve;

[1.] *THAT in Faith there are two things inſeparable,* viz. *Aſſent & Conſent.* The Scripture notion of true Faith, comprizeth both of theſe, the former in reſpect of the Underſtanding, the latter relating to the Will: the latter of theſe is not of our preſent conſideration, but will be conſidered under the Examen of the Nature of Faith, only let it be here remarked, that God is diſcovered to us, that he may be the Object of our truſt, and therefore as ſuch muſt our Faith entertain him in all the Revelations he makes of himſelf.

[2.] *IN the Aſſent of Faith, there are two things to be obſerved diſtinctly, as needful to it.*

(1.) *AN Underderſtanding of the meaning of the Truths that are commended to us.* For without this there can be no rational aſſent; the underſtanding of Men doth not, cannot yield to the truth of a thing that it hath not entertained the notion of: For a Man to ſay that he believes as another believes, & mean while is Ignorant what the other's belief is, is a piece of pure nonſenſe. Aſſent is an act of reaſon, and there is no reaſon in aſſenting to that which we are ſtrangers to; Heb. 11. 6. *But without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe him: for he that cometh to God, muſt believe that he is, & that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him.*

(2.) *A credit that we give to thoſe things upon the Teſtimony of God.* All Faith is a credit of a thing that we receive by report or hear-ſay, & it ariſeth from the good opinion we have of the witneſs that makes the report. Humane Faith is produced by the Authority of humane teſtimony. Divine Faith believes, becauſe God hath ſaid it. There are divers things in Divinity, that are above the Comprehenſion of our reaſon; and for us to aſſent to the Truth of the Scriptures, meerly upon our own reaſonings; or becauſe we ſee into the rational arguments to evince the Truth of them, is not Faith: nor is it Faith of the right ſtamp, to receive them upon the affirmation of any man or men. This was their Commendation, 1 Theſ. 2. 13. *--- When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God ---.* And indeed God's report is to be credited; for he hath all the properties of a credible witneſs tranſcendantly in him: He hath infinite Knowledge, perfect Fidelity, and unprejudiced Charity.

7. *THE matter of this Faith is, what is to be Believed concerning God.* For if God be the only Object of our Faith, then all the matters, or the truths to be believed muſt center in him: Humane Faith extends to other matters; but Divine Faith is reſtrained hither. It is true, there are a great many Articles in Chriſtian Religion, many of which do nextly concern the Creature, as mans integrity, apoſtaſy, and recovery, *&c.* but all are reducible to God, and are to be referred to him, as belonging unto his Government: So that all matters of Faith are to be brought hither, and lead us to this Object, *viz.* the Being of God, his Sufficiency, his Attributes, his Subſiſtences, his Efficiency, his Decree, and Works of Creation and Providence, his Preſerving, and Governing the World, diſpoſing all the affairs of man in particular, ſo that we are to come to the knowledge of ourſelves in the knowing of God; which things will follow afterwards to be look't into.

II. *THE Scriptures do alſo teach us what Duty God requires of Man.* Obſervance or Obedience to God, is the ſecond part of the Chriſtian Religion: God is the firſt cauſe and the laſt end of all things; all things therefore that are from him, are alſo for him, and every ſort of being is to be ſo for him, as the nature that he put into it, is capable. Here then for the opening of this, take theſe Concluſions:

1. *THAT man was made for the active ſerving of God.* He was a Reaſonable Creature, and was therefore to pay to God a reaſonable Service; a moral Creature and therefore he owed to him a moral Obedience: he was to ſhew forth God's praiſe; and this duty being moral, was therefore perpetual: though his fall diſenabled him from doing; yet it did not loſe or diſſolve his Obligation, but it ſtill abides; yea tho' the New-Covenant hath taken off the Curſe of diſobedience from the Believer, and laid it upon Chriſt; and hence he is not now as before, under a ſentence of Death for the leaſt defect in this Duty; yet moral Duty continues to ly upon men as a debt which they owe to God; and indeed, it was ſo accommodated to his nature, that his formal happineſs conſiſts in it: Iſa. 56. 2. *Bleſſed is the man that doeth this, and the ſon of man that layeth hold on it: that keepeth the ſabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.* The Obedience of Chriſt hath not given his people a diſcharge from their perſonal Obedience; but hath made way that their ſincere, though imperfect Obedience, may find acceptance with God; for which reaſon the Goſpel lays the ſtrongeſt ties upon men to ſerve God. 1 Cor. 6. 20. *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your ſpirit, which are God's.*

2. *THAT man muſt have a Rule made known to him, whereby he may be directed to ſerve God.* We have already heard, that the Creature cannot attain it's end, without a Rule to guide it. The reaſonable Creature being to perform a reaſonable Service to God, muſt not

only have a Rule, but be acquainted with it. It is enough for ſuch beings as are to be guided to their end by inſtinct, that he who ſo guides them, do know the Rule according to which they are to be led: but ſuch as are to ſerve God voluntarily, muſt know their Rule; it muſt therefore be ſome way or other publiſhed, or declared to them: There needs not only the Counſel of God's Decree, but of his Law too, to guide them aright; for if their miſſing of their Duty, be chargable upon them for Sin, they muſt needs be advantaged to the knowing of it; ſo that if they are alſo ignorant, that alſo muſt be their own blame. Hence that, Mic. 6. 8. *He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*

3. *THAT this Rule, for the Subſtance of it, was at the firſt written in Tables of fleſh:* When God made man, he engraved upon his heart the Rule of his ſerving him; he wrote it upon his practical Underſtanding or Conſcience, where he was able by reflecting upon himſelf, and looking upon thoſe regiſters, to take right meaſures in all his courſe. For this reaſon in the Renovation of man, God makes ſuch a Promiſe, Jer. 31. 33. *But this ſhall be the covenant that I will make with the houſe of Iſrael, After thoſe days, ſaith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they ſhall be my people.*

4. *THAT a great part of this Rule is obliterated by the fall of man.* This is no little part of the miſchief which befell man by his Apoſtaſy, that he brake thoſe fair Tables of the Law, and defaced that inſcription; ſo as that there are but a few broken fragments that remain: and his underſtanding alſo being darkned, and his heart blinded, (*Eph.* 4. 18.) there is ſcarce one full Sentence, that he can truly ſpell out of all: So that though this Ignorance is befallen him by his own fault; yet it is certain, that if ever he be reſtored to a capacity of ſerving God aright, he muſt be new informed in what is his duty, or elſe he will ly under endleſs miſtakes; and muſt be taught by God, for none can teach as he doth.

5. *THERE are additional duties lying upon man under the Goſpel, which were not expreſſed in the law of the firſt Covenant.* It is true, that the Law carried in it an Obligation to all that God ſhould poſitively command; but yet poſitives are not to be picked out of the law, but depend altogether upon Revelation: ſuch were thoſe about the firſt Sacraments given to *Adam*, and ſuch is every duty that is purely Evangelical; ſuch therefore muſt be otherwiſe declared to him.

6. *THERE are other Conſiderations put upon Moral Obedience in the New-Covenant, which were not in the firſt.* There man was to obey by a Concreated power of his own; here he is to derive all his ſtrength from another, *viz. Jeſus Chriſt*, the head of Influences: there he was to have earned his happineſs by his doing; here he is to reſolve all his hopes for Salvation into the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt; and to ſay of his own works, when he hath done all, that he is unprofitable: there the leaſt defect brought him under Condemnation; here Uprightneſs & Integrity will be accepted of him: and none of theſe things had ſo much as the leaſt hint of diſcovery in the law and light of nature, but are purely poſitive, and of revelation.

7. *THESE are all commended to us in the Scriptures.* The whole concern of Evangelical Obedience is there ſet down. There are both the Duties themſelves. Mic. 6. 8. *He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* And the Way in which they are to be done; and the Fountain, whence ſtrength is to be fetched; and the precious Encouragements to engage us in ſerving of God, to be found. Rom. 10. 6, 7, 8. *But the righteouſneſs which is of faith, ſpeaketh on this wiſe, Say not in thine heart, Who ſhall aſcend into heaven? (that is to bring Chriſt down from above) Or, who ſhall deſcend into the deep? (that is to bring up Chriſt again from the dead) But what ſaith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is the word of faith which we preach.* And thus are they able to make the man of God *perfect*. (2 Tim. 3. 17.) We are therefore directed hither in all Caſes. Iſai. 8. 20. *To the law and to the teſtimony; if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them.*

USE. THESE things well conſidered, will ſerve to *commend to us the excellency of the ſtudy of the Scriptures*, and may be a quickning motive to prevail with all, particularly *Young Perſons* to devote themſelves to the reading, and meditating in thoſe ſacred writings. Oh how precious a thing is the BIBLE, that is filled with ſuch Teachings, as theſe are: Here is the true Wiſdom to be found; here delight and profit do moſt entirely meet together. What ſhould commend any Book to us to be preferred before another, but only the excellency of the matter it contains? And for this, the Book of Scriptures is ſurpaſſing all the Volumns that are in the World. Let me then plead with you for this, from the preſent conſideration. Be perſwaded to be in love with the holy Scriptures; and that love will engage you to be much in converſing with them. Conſider then,

1. *WOULD you know much of God?* Why, here he hath made the moſt glorious diſcoveries of himſelf. There is indeed much of him to be ſeen in the works of Creation & Providence; but in his word he hath more fully made himſelf known. *There* is he to be ſeen as a God of Power, and Wiſdom, and Goodneſs, and Sovereignty; but *here* is he known as a God of Grace, and Salvation. He is here diſcovered in the face of Jeſus Chriſt. And how happy a thing is it ſo to know God, and be acquainted with him! This is the knowledge that leads to Eternal Life; the perfection of this is that which makes the Beatifical Viſion; and *Paul* counts he ſhall then be perfectly happy, when he ſhall come to *know as he is known.* The Scriptures are the cleareſt glaſs, in which he is at preſent to be ſeen.

2. *WOULD*

2. *WOULD you know how to Live*; how you may order your Converſation ſo as to ſee God's Salvation? Here you may be inſtructed about it; here are to be had thoſe unerring directions, by which you may be led in the right way. You want Wiſdom to direct you; you are apt to wander by reaſon of your blindneſs, here is a light and a law; here you may find the true Wiſdom & Underſtanding. Hear what direction the Spirit of God gives to you Young men, Pſal.119.9. *Wherewith ſhall a young man cleanſe his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.* And to you Children, Pſal.34.11. *Come ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord.* The Devil would fain deceive you with his falſe ſuggeſtions; your vain companions would fain cheat you with their crafty inſinuations; your own hearts are ready to impoſe upon you with their fooliſh imaginations. Except you keep to the *Word of God*, you are gone: but keep to that, and it will ſhew you better. Romances and Play-books will but ſtir up your carnal Luſts; but this will help to ſuppreſs them.—— And now, that you may read the word profitably, Beſure to ask of God his Spirit; and apply you minds to enquire of every portion you read, What of God, or what of my own duty doth this diſcover to me? And accordingly improve it; ſo ſhall the Scriptures become ſerviceable to bring you to the enjoyment of Life Eternal. [NOVEMBER 6. 1688.]

SERMON *XII.*

QUESTION IV.

WHAT is GOD?

ANSWER.

GOD is a Spirit, Infinite, Eternal and Unchangeable, in his Being, Wiſdom, Power, Holineſs, Juſtice, Goodneſs and Truth.

GOD being the great & ultimate Object of Religion, and he on whom our faith is to depend, and to whom our Obedience is to return, as being the firſt cauſe and the laſt end, and becauſe faith is the foundation of true Obſervance, the knowledge of him therefore is the *firſt* thing neceſſary to be ſought after. Hence that of our Saviour, Joh 17 3. *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.* Now the great deſign of Scripture is to diſcover God to us: We muſt know him, if ever we truſt in him. No other object can make us happy but He; and therefore our faith can reſt with ſafety on no other. *This then is the preſent enquiry.* It was once a proud enquiry of inſolent *Pharaoh*, *Who is God?* But it ought to be the *humble* inquiſition of all the children of men: and our great requeſt ſhould be, that God would reveal himſelf to us. Before I proceed to the direct explaining of the Anſwer, there are a few things requiſite to be ſpoken to.

I. *THAT there is a God.* And this is ſuppoſed in the Queſtion: for when we ask, What a thing is, we take it for a granted truth, that there is ſuch a thing; and it will be vain for us to go about to deſcribe the Being of God, except we believe him to be. The Apoſtle therefore takes this to be the firſt Article of faith, which if not entertained, there can be no coming to him. Heb.11.6. *But without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe him: for he that cometh to God, muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him.* It may here perhaps ſeem a thing ſuperfluous to go about to prove a truth ſo clear and manifeſt as this, which is the prime dictate of Nature's light, and is written with ſuch Sun-beams, as are ſufficient to convince a meer *Gentile*, and leave him without excuſe, (*Rom.* 1. 19, 20.) Yet, becauſe there is ſo much of *Atheiſm* in men's hearts naturally, as tacitly to deny it; (Pſal.14.1. *The fool hath ſaid in his heart, There is no God.* Pſal 10.4. *The wicked through the pride of his countenance will not ſeek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.* They deſire there were none, and what they deſire they endeavour to believe.) And becauſe it is the *Pillar-truth* of all Religion, give me leave to pick up a few of the many Demonſtrations, by which this Article is confirmed.

(1.) THE works of *Creation* do undeniably prove the Being of a God. The whole frame of ſecond Beings carries the impreſſion of this truth upon it. The things that are made, lead us by the hand to him that made them. For,

1. *THAT the World was not eternal, is evident in the very nature of it*; as will more largely appear hereafter. Here let it only be obſerved, that whatſoever is ſubject to change, is a Creature of time; that which may come to an end had a beginning; and before that beginning, it was not. The ſubjection of the the Creature to corruption, proves its generation. Where there is a term in which the thing centers, there was a term in which it began. Where there is a ſecond, third, & fourth generation, there was a firſt: but I inſiſt not here at preſent.

2. *THE Creature could not be its own Maker.* For a thing, when it had no being, to give being to it ſelf, is unintelligible, yea impoſſible: for nothing to have a power or vertue of Efficiency in it, yea a creating power, which can be nothing leſs than infinite, is a contradiction. Efficiency preſuppoſeth an Exiſtence, which the World had not, when it was not.

3. *HENCE there muſt be ſomething beſides it, and before it, that muſt give being to it.* To

look upon a whole World of Beings, and have ſuch a reflection as this, *viz.* That once all theſe things were not, nor had any Principle of being in nature, but were produced out of nothing, this ſpeaks an Omnipotent power, before & beyond the Creature, that muſt be the Author of this great work; and what can that be but *Divine*? *Created* power can work, if it hath matter ſutable to work upon; but take that away, and the Operation of the Creature ceaſeth. To bring a World out of nothing, commands our acknowledgment of an *Increated* power, and that is God.

4. *THE curiouſneſs of the compoſure, & exquiſiteneſs of the fabrick, declares an exquiſite workman.* As to make a World of nothing, is an evidence of Infinite power; ſo to make ſuch a World, is the diſplay of Infinite wiſdom. Whether we conſider the compoſition of any one Creature, and that the moſt contemptible (ſuppoſe a worm, or a pile of graſs) its nature hath more wonders in it, than the greateſt Naturaliſt that ever was; *Solomon* himſelf, is able to Analyſe. The *Heathen* could ſay, *Preſentemque refert, quælibet Herba Deum.* There are ſome *Inſects* ſo ſmall, that our ſight cannot diſcern them, without the help of a glaſs, and that yet they ſhould have in them all the Organs of ſenſe and motion, is aſtoniſhing. What ſhall we then ſay, to the more ſtupendous pieces of this frame, and the admirable Diſpoſure of them; the vaſt body of this *Earth* hanging amidſt the Air, and lying faſt there, upon its own Center: the great frame of the *Heavens*, to which compared, the Earth is little more than an Atome, and thoſe curious *Lamps* there lighted up & kept burning; eſpecially that glorious *Sun* in the firmament, but for which the lower world muſt ſuffer a perpetual Night. The *Pſalmiſt* aſſures us, that theſe preach a God to us. Pſal. 19. beg. *The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament ſheweth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth ſpeech*, &c. Or if we conſider the *harmony* of the whole in all its parts, or the admirable ſuting of the things that are made one to another, ſo that there is nothing in vain, or uſeleſs, or incapable of being ſerviceable in its place, its nature being every way adapted to the place it bears: every wheel in this curious watch moving aright: and what leſs than Infinite wiſdom, could ſo contrive and compoſe this? This could not poſſibly be chance, but muſt be the work of a curious Artificer; and that can be none but God. Pſal. 104. 24. *O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wiſdom haſt thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.* The Apoſtle therefore aſſures us, that the things made do give us light enough to diſcover God, in ſuch Attributes as are proper to him and no other. Rom. 1. 19, 20. *Becauſe that which may be known of God, is manifeſt in them; for God hath ſhewed it unto them. For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power & Godhead; ſo that they are without excuſe.*

(2.) THAT there is a God is alſo witneſſed by the works of *Providence.* He gives witneſſes of himſelf, no leſs in managing, than he did in making of the world. And this might be convincingly cleared up in many inſtances. A few may be pointed to——.

1. WE need to look no farther than *the common & daily ordering of, and providing for the Creature.* When we ſee the unreaſonable Creatures are guided to attain ſuch ends, that they know not of, in ſuch a certain and conſtant way, as if they acted by counſel: how the *Sun* obſerves his ſeaſons, and all his motions diurnal and annual, as if it had knowledge. Pſal. 104. 19. *He appointeth the moon for ſeaſons; the ſun knoweth his going down.* How other Creatures obſerve their ſeaſons of coming and going. Jer. 8. 7. *Yea, the ſtork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times, and the trutle, and the crane, and the ſwallow obſerve the time of their coming.* How rationally and diſcreetly every Creature acts, which have neither reaſon nor diſcretion in them; may we not, nay *muſt* we not hence infer, that if theſe Creatures act by a Rule they underſtand not, and go to an end which they are ignorant of, they muſt needs be guided by one above them, who knows both their journey's end, and the way to it? And when we conſider the wonderful Proviſion that is made for this great family of the world, daily and ſutably ſupplying all the wants of the ſeveral Creatures, that are in it, it leads us up hither. The Creature cannot provide for it ſelf; it only gathers what is made ready for it. Pſal. 104. 27, 28. *Theſe wait all upon thee: that thou mayſt give them their meat in due ſeaſon. That thou giveſt them, they gather: thou openeſt thine hand, they are filled with good.* And there are ſome Creatures that cannot do that, except it be brought to them. God therefore proves his own Deity, by that one queſtion, Job 38. ult. *Who provideth for the raven his food? when his young ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.* Conſider the lower world, wherein there are ſo many millions of Creatures that muſt be fed every day; and when they ſee they are ſo, muſt we not ſay, There is a great and a wiſe Maſter of this family, who gives them all their meat in due ſeaſon. *David* concludes his meditation of this point, with that, Pſal. 104. 31. *The glory of the Lord ſhall endure for ever: the Lord ſhall rejoice in his works.* What one Creature, nay what one order of Creatures could have undertaken this? But,

2. WHAT ſhall we ſay to thoſe *extraordinary Effects* in Providence, which do ſometimes diſcover themſelves in the world? Such as outdo the laws of nature, or do invert the common order and courſe of things; needs muſt they ſpeak convincingly, that there is one who is above theſe Laws, holds a ſuperintendency over them, and keeps a liberty in his hands of diſpenſing or ſuſpending them at pleaſure. When the *Sun* ſtood ſtill in the firmament, and moved not for the ſpace of a day, (*Joſh.* 10. 12, 13.) When it went ten degrees backward, (*Iſa.* 38. 8.) When the *waters* of the red ſea roſe on heaps, and made a way for *Iſrael* to paſs through,

(*Exod.*

(*Exod.*14.27,28.) when the Sun was Eclipſed for three hours together, at the time of full Moon. (*Mat.*27.45.) what do ſuch things ſpeak, but that there is a God that is above Nature, and rules over it with power? Nature it ſelf doth nothing againſt its own Rules, nor divides it ſelf againſt its ordinary way of working, but keeps the beaten road. There is therefore a God over all, to whoſe word theſe things yield Obedience. And we muſt either deny ſuch things to have been, againſt the evidence of unqueſtionable witneſſes, or we muſt needs infer from them, Certainly there is a God.

3. IF we conſider how the Actions of *Angels* and *Men* are governed and controlled, it will perſwade us of the truth of a Deity. Theſe are the higheſt order of Created Beings, and are Cauſes by counſel of their own Actions, or voluntary agents; nor do they acknowledge any ſecond Being Superiour to themſelves; but it is certain that their wiſdom & power is not the higheſt that is at work in the World; but there is One above them, and that over-rules them. This evidently appears from frequent diſappointments, that befall the ſtrongeſt Policies, and deepeſt deſigns that theſe are managing. There is ſomething that croſſeth them when they have done their utmoſt. They think themſelves their own Carvers; but he makes them ſee and ſay as *Nebuchadnezzar*, Dan.4.34. *And at the end of the days, I Nebuchadnezzar lift up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine underſtanding returned unto me, and I bleſſed the moſt High, and I praiſed and honoured him that liveth for ever, whoſe dominion is an everlaſting dominion, & his kingdom is from generation to generation.* When they have laid in againſt all unforeſeen events, he ſurprizeth them, takes them in their craft, and makes their counſels go head-long. So Eccl 9.11. *I returned and ſaw under the ſun, that the race is not to the ſwift, nor the battle to the ſtrong, neither yet bread to the wiſe, nor yet riches to men of underſtanding, nor yet favour to men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them all.* If men did all, then they that have moſt ſtrength on their ſide, would get the day, *&c.* but it is not ſo: but an unſeeen cauſe comes on things: even their very *hearts* are under his controll. *Laban* purſues, *Eſau* meets *Jacob* with bloody deſigns: yet are they overuled, ſo that one leaves him, the other meets him with a kiſs. The daſhing of the purpoſes of men, extorts from them this Confeſſion, if we will believe the Pſalmiſt, Pſal.58. ult. *Verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.* And that *Devils* themſelves are under ſuch a power, is therein ſufficiently evident, in that the Souls of men are daily taken out of their hands by a powerfull Converſion. There muſt therefore be a ſtronger than they, and this is God.

4. HE that ſhall obſerve how the *Church* hath been preſerved in all ages, muſt confeſs there is a God. If there were no other Argument to evidence it but this, one would think it would ſtop the mouths of all Atheiſts. It is certain, that the Church of God is the Object of the malice of Men & Devils. The wrath and fury of earth and hell have been armed againſt it, and have in all Ages endeavoured the ſubverſion of it: they have combined together, and taken ſecret counſel, there have been mighty aſſociations, and ſtrong confederacies, and all this againſt the flock, that have been in themſelves indefenſible, and have had none to help them in the whole world; and yet all theſe united forces have nothing prevailed. That is proved true, Pſal. 125. 1, 2. *They that truſt in the Lord ſhall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jeruſalem, ſo the Lord is round about his people, from henceforth even for ever.* And muſt they not ſay, as Verſe ult. *As for ſuch as turn aſide unto their crooked ways, the Lord ſhall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity: but peace ſhall be upon Iſrael.* How often have the Enemy been ready to ſay, The day is ours, they are ſwallowed up, there is no hope for them, we ſhall have our will upon them; and yet what ſtrange, ſecret & unforeſeen ways have there been to work their deliverance? How have the waterfloods riſen up high, winds & ſtorms beaten furiouſly upon, and endeavoured to ſink or overturn this little Ark? and yet it hath weathered and outlived them all! Perſecution hath tired it ſelf in oppreſſing the Church, and yet the gates of hell could never prevail to root it out: and how could this poſſibly have been, if it had not had a God to look after it? I am ſure the Church hath abundant reaſon to ſay as they, Pſal. 124. 1, 2, 3. *If it had not been the Lord who was on our ſide, now may Iſrael ſay: If it had not been the Lord who was on our ſide, when men roſe up againſt us: Then they had ſwallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled againſt us.* If there had not been a God, where had we been?

5. THE *ſtupendous Judgments* that have fallen upon ſuch *Proud* and *Atheiſtical* Perſons, as have ſet themſelves againſt God, is a further clear witneſs. The fearful ends of ſuch men ſay, There is a God, who vindicates his own honour againſt ſuch as dare to ſet themſelves in oppoſition to it. That he doth not do ſo *always*, can but declare his wonderful patience; that he doth ſo *ſometimes* is enough to prove his Being by ſo many monuments of it. The very *Heathen* have obſerved it, and made an Argument of it to clear this truth, that ſuch as have diſclaimed or ridiculed a Deity, have been overtaken with unwonted Judgments. Thus *Diagoras* was burnt, *Olympius* was deſtroyed with Thunder, ſcoffing *Lucian* was devoured by Dogs. Look into Scripture and ſee: Here we have proud *Pharoah* inſolently demanding, Who is God, that I ſhould obey him? and what fearful plagues followed him till he was deſtroyed? An Inſolent *Haman* confronting the moſt high, till he is mounted on the Gallows. A daring *Nebuchadnezzar*, challenging God to deliver the Three Children out of his hands, ſent a grazing with Oxen, till he is made to know that the moſt high reigns. A vain glorious *Herod*, aſſuming the Divine honour to himſelf, diveſted

of

of his arrogated Deity, and eaten up with Vermine. And shall men see the Vengeance, and not confess there is a God.

(3.) IF man *tarry at home*, and but *look into himself*, he shall there find enough to tell him there is a God: God hath his witness in every man, and he must shut his eyes if he doth not discern it: and there are two things which bear testimony hereto.

1. THE *Composition of his Being.* If we consider his constituting parts severally, they bespeak it. Look upon his *Body*, it's structure, form, symmetry, and harmonious disposure of every part and particle of it; it is enough to raise us to take notice of a most noble Artificer, whom none of the Creatures are able to imitate. *Galen* after he had made an Anatomy of an Humane Body, and seen the curiosity of all the parts of it, was so ravished at the contemplation of it, that he made an Hymn to God his Maker. And we may see into what a rapture or transport of wonder and praise this Observation put the *Psalmist*, Psal. 139. 14, &c. *I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made, marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret; and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance yet being unperfect,—.* Or, If we consider the *Soul*, how much more will it raise our thoughts? whose frame is such, as it claims kindred with heaven: the vast reach, and large comprehension of it declares from what stock it is derived. Acts 17. 28. *For in him we live and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.* Its great knowledge saith, that he who made it is of Infinite understanding: Its Immortality proclaims, that it derives only from him who hath alone Immortality.——Or, if we consider these two in *Conjunction*, and Operation, we are here also led into Admiration! when we here take as full an account of man as we can, and enquire, Who it was that made such a Being? We must say, he is a Creature; he did it not, could not make himself; no wisdom or power, that is less than Divine could do it.

2. IN the *Impressions* that are made upon the *Natural Consciences* of men. The Name of of God is legibly written & engraved on every mans Conscience, and tho' many have used utmost endeavours to raze it out, yet they could never do it altogether. *The fool* indeed saith *in his heart, There is no God*; but his Conscience gives him the lye. And let it be well pondered; if man was the supream Regulator of his own Actions, it would then be in his own power to dictate such Rules, and prescribe such Laws to regulate himself by, as are most suitable to the approbation of his own fancy; yea, he might be a Rule to himself, and in respect of any compulsive law, live as he list, without being inwardly moved, or possibility of having any inward remorse for what he doth; as having the highest appeal within himself. When therefore there appears in men, relenting and remorse at the committing of sin; and when a Natural man hath gone against the light of his Conscience, and broken a Rule which his own inward Conviction told him he should not have done; and now terrors and amazements sieze upon him, his Conscience tells him he hath done amiss, and deserves punishment for it, and especially when the deed he hath done is an injury to no man, nor will expose him to the danger of humane Laws and Penalties, but (it may be) gain him applause of men; when the evil hath been committed by and against himself alone; yea, and when there is no witness in the world against him, to accuse him, nor any earthly Tribunal he is in danger of——; that yet he should be filled with inward self accusations, and horrid fear: This plainly declares, that there is a supream Surveyor of the Actions of men. For, if there be a law that rules men, which appears from the bruises of Conscience, which men catch by dashing themselves against it, then there is a law given to see it Executed. It is the *Psalmists* observation, Psal 53. 5. *There were they in great fear, where no fear was: for God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee, thou hast put them to shame, because God hath despised them.* And whence could those Pannick fears come, when men are at seeming peace with the world, and no apparent Judgment near them; but from the impressions of a Judgment of God upon them? The witness of Conscience to things lawful and unlawful, the convictions of it upon these very Principles, and the sentence it passeth, and execution it doth upon men accordingly, do plainly say, There is a God, who dispenseth these things.

USE. HOW justly then doth the Scripture call the Atheist, a Fool!

AND how should we all, Young and Old, labour to get the practical impression of this great truth deeply engraven on our hearts, That there is a God!

[DECEMBER 4. 1688.]

SERMON *XIII.*

II. THAT *God as he is in himself, is not to be comprehended by the Creature.* After we have been assured, That *there is a God*, our next inquiry would have been, *Who* he is. But behold, the very entrance into such a Contemplation, the very first glance upon the Deity, amazeth the Understanding, and it must either reflect or break. Though nothing be more knowable than *that* there is a God, yet nothing harder to know than *what* he is. The Heathen *Simonides* acknowledged, that the longer he studied on the question, the harder he found the resolution. Here then we are taken up, and called to the Contemplation of one of his glorious Attributes, *viz.* his *Incomprehensibility*: which tho' it be as a veil drawn

drawn between his face & our eyes,yet it diſcovers to us,that he is therefore moſt excellent, becauſe we cannot comprehend him. And the conſideration of this comes in properly here,to check our Curioſity, and confine our Contemplations to ſobriety, in our ſearching after God. That this is an Attribute of God,or one of his relative Perfections the Scripture aſſures us. See, Exod. 33. 20. *And he ſaid, Thou canſt not ſee my face: for there ſhall no man ſee me, and live.* Job 26. 14. *Lo, theſe are parts of his ways, but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can underſtand?* But for a more full and clear diſcovery of this point,I ſhall firſt lay down a few general Rules introductory, and then proceed to the Confirmation of the Propoſition. In general take theſe Rules.

1. THAT the knowledge of a thing is *by bringing the Object & Faculty together.* A thing is ſo far known, as it is irradiated upon the underſtanding of the perſon knowing. As there is no ſight actual, but by bringing of the thing ſeen, to the thing ſeeing; for which reaſon, the Object is ſaid to be in the eye: ſo it is in reſpect of the Underſtanding, which is the eye of the mind. The Object muſt be, in a ſenſe, in the Faculty, or elſe it is not known by it.

2. THAT the Object known,is in the Faculty *not according to its real Eſſence, but according to its Rational & imaginary Being,* i. e. by the reflection of the rays and beams of it upon the faculty; or conveying the ſimilitude of it into the Underſtanding. The Underſtanding doth not underſtand without the Image of the Object refracted upon it: for to know a thing,is to conceive of the Image of it. Knowledge is made by an aſſimilation between the Knower, and the thing known. He conceives an Idea of it in his mind. In all our underſtanding of things, we repreſent and act upon our minds the Effigies of that which we conceive of, and ſee it there before us. Hence the Underſtanding makes uſe of the Imagination in this affair.

3. THE thing known is in the knower,*according to the manner,& meaſure of him that knows,* and therefore the knowledge of every one is accommodated to the manner of his own Nature, & not according to the manner of theNature of the thing known. *Quicquid recipitur, recipitur ad modum Recipientis.* The Underſtanding can receive nothing but in its own *way*, according to the manner of its being and operation. It is like an Artificer; take him out of his way, and he knows not what he doth. If you go about to carry any thing into the Underſtanding of Man any other way, it will be at a loſs & confounded. It is alſo after its own *meaſure.* The createdUnderſtanding is finite; it hath its *Ultimum Conamen*, its bounds beyond which it cannot paſs; and if you go about to put more into it, it will break it. There is a knowledge that is too high, too hard for it. Prov.30. 3,4. *I neither learned wiſdom,nor have the knowledge of the holy.Who hath aſcended up into heaven,or deſcended? who hath gathered the wind in his fiſt? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath eſtabliſhed all the ends of the earth? What is his name,& what is his Son's name, if thou canſt tell?*

4. TO know a thing *as it is*, is to know it in its *Eſſence*, and comprehend it in its definition. He that hath a through knowledge of a thing, ſees it in its naked eſſence, and is able to define it: he can tell what it is, and what is the whole latitude of its being, for he that doth not ſee through a thing, to the other ſide of its Eſſence and Operation, comes ſhort of knowing it perfectly: he muſt comprehend, in himſelf, all that the Being comprehends in it, and have the entire reflection of it on his Underſtanding.

5. THE *Comprehenſion* of a thing, is the *exact* and *adequate* knowledge of it. It is a word uſed of Bodies, that have quantity in them; and is when one body graſps another within it ſelf, ſo that nothing is left out. One thing then is comprehended by another, when it is adequately contained in it, ſo that nothing of the thing contained be without the thing containing. The word is hence Metaphorically tranſlated to the underſtanding; and it is, when the whole Object is ſo contained in the mind,that nothing, in the thing comprehended, is beyond its knowledge: all of it is ſo ſeen, as nothing eſcapes the eye of the mind. In a word,that is comprehended which is perfectly known, which is known ſo far as it is obſervable: and this knowledge doth imply an Adequation, or perfect equality of the Underſtanding to the thing underſtood.

6. THE *Knowledge, Comprehenſion*,and *Apprehenſion* of GOD, are not really *diſtinct* things. The apprehenſion of God eſſentially, or as he is in himſelf, is a comprehenſive knowledge of him. To comprehend, apprehend,perceive,and throughly to know God, are all one. TheApprehenſion of God'sEſſence, is the knowledge of his whole Eſſence; and he that knows it all, comprehends it: he that knows the eſſence,contains the whole eſſence in his knowledge; for there is nothing in the Divine Eſſence beſides it ſelf: there is nothing contained in God, but what is abſolutely God. Compound beings may be apprehended, when they are not comprehended; but ſo cannot the uncompounded being of God.

FROM theſe conſiderations, we may proceed to the particular confirmation of the *Propoſition*, viz. That *the firſt Being is not knowable by us, as he is in himſelf.* And there are two heads, to which the demonſtration may be referred.

(1.) *THAT our* Reaſon *is not able to graſp in the knowledge of him.* It cannot entertain the *quidditative* conception of him. It is certain, that man knows nothing, but by ſome Rule of reaſon,which is the carrier between God & man: all things which are conveyed into our underſtandings, are handed to them in a Logical way: and we come to know them,by ſeeing into the reaſons of them. But our reaſon is not able to apprehend God eſſentially. And that,

1. BECAUSE there is no equal *proportion* between the *faculty* & the *Object*. We heard,that the Object known muſt be (ſome way) in the faculty knowing: and hence it follows of neceſſity, that there muſt be a due proportion between theſe two. But now there is an infinitely vaſt diſtance between God & the creature: the moſt extendedly vaſt created underſtanding, is ſtill

a finite underſtanding; but God is Infinite, and between Finite & Infinite, there is no proportion: the faculty is bounded, but the Object is boundleſs. Pſal 147. 5. *Great is our Lord, and of great power: his underſtanding is infinite.* How then ſhould this eggſhell comprehend the Ocean?

2. BECAUSE if he were comprehenſible by our knowledge, than *our* knowledge of him would be *equal* to *his own* knowledge of himſelf. Divine knowledge is adequate to the Divine Eſſence: the Nature of God is the proportionable Object of his Underſtanding, he knows not any thing above or below himſelf. If therefore we could know him eſſentially, our weak and finite underſtanding would be equal to his Divine, Infinite and Supream knowledge: for the perfection of his Underſtanding, is to know himſelf, *i. e.* the latitude and glory of his own being. But, Oh! the vaſt diſtance that the Creature ſtands at from God! Shall the upſtarts of time, equal themſelves in Underſtanding with Eternity it ſelf? Shall they that are of Yeſterday, and know nothing, compare with him that is from Everlaſting? Shall our purblind eyes challenge as much as he, who is light it ſelf?

3. BECAUSE *he is without Cauſes.* Humane knowledge comes to diſcern into things, by reaching the Cauſes of them, and in that way it pries into the Nature or Eſſence of them. He that apprehends the firſt being, is able to ſay what he is, to trace his Original, to give a true and proper definition of him, to find out and diſcover the Nature of his eſſential & conſtituting principles; but this no Creature can do; and that becauſe there is no Eſſence, nor Nature that (in propriety of ſpeech) can be attributed to God: for Nature and Eſſence beſpeak a thing ariſing out of ſome fore-going Principles; but there is no Principle of God, for there is nothing before him. Iſai. 44. 6. *Thus ſaith the Lord, the King of Iſrael, and his Redeemer the Lord of hoſts, I am the firſt, and I am the laſt, and beſides me there is no God.*

4. BECAUSE, being *a ſimple Nature*, there can be *no judgment* framed concerning him. Such is the Nature of an Humane judgment that it cannot judge of any thing but by framing and compounding ſome ſentences concerning it: for Humane knowledge is nothing elſe, but the judgment of a neceſſary Axiome, and there is no axiome or ſentence, that can be truely and properly formed concerning God: for in every ſentence there is an Antecedent and a Conſequent, or a Subject and a Predicate, ſomething going before, and ſomething following after. Whereas in God, there is neither priority, nor poſteriority; but whatſoever is in the Divine Eſſence, is moſt properly the Divine Eſſence.

5. BECAUSE he is a moſt *glorious* & *illuſtrious* Object. Though it be, by the means of light, that we are capable of ſeeing a thing, yet a too bright and ſhining light puts out our eyes; and thus doth this great light, the eye of the mind. All Reaſon is too finite to comprehend the infinite; too ſhallow to contain the deep, the bottomleſs; too narrow to graſp the boundleſs; too little comprehenſive to include this incomprehenſible Object. God is a moſt eminently glorious Object; the ſhining brightneſs *that is in him*, our ſore eyes cannot be able to look upon. 1 Tim. 6. 16. *Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath ſeen, nor can ſee: to whom be honour and power everlaſting. Amen.* God therefore, not for want of good will to us, but in compaſſion to our frail and horrow capacities, will make no ſuch diſcoveries of himſelf to us: He will for this reaſon put *Moſes* into the cleft of the rock, and lay his hand upon him, whiles his glory paſſeth by him, *Exod.* 33. *latter end.*

(2.) *THAT our* Words *are not capable of uttering his being, or declaring his Name.* Names are the ſigns of things; and the impoſition of Names ſuppoſeth him, that gives them, to know there Natures. *Adam* knew the Natures of the Creatures, and accordingly he put Names upon them, and the proper *end* of Names is, that the thing ſignified by a Name, may by it be underſtood, but no man can give ſuch a Name unto God, as can ſignificantly expreſs his Nature; neither indeed can we ſay any thing concerning him, *as he is.* Whatever title was put upon God, or whatſoever we aſſert concerning him, it is all improper; becauſe the firſt being is ineffable. Prov. 30. 4. *What is his name? and what is his ſons name, if thou canſt tell?* This appears,

1. *BECAUSE no man can frame in his mind a proper conception of God.* Names are the repreſentation of the Conception, which the Underſtanding hath of things; and therefore of that thing, of which we can conceive nothing proper in our minds, we never can expreſs any thing properly. The conception may outbid the expreſſion; but this can never go beyond that. Impoſſible it is for our ignorance to ſpeak of God with ſuch words as can demonſtrate his being properly.

2. *BECAUSE God cannot reveal and make known to the Creature his innate perfection, ſo as to make it to Underſtand what he is in himſelf,* and hence to be able to *Name* him properly. God cannot make a Creature of ſuch a Capacity as to know him in the latitude of his being; and hence flows the impoſſibility for a man, or any other ſecond being, to put an adequate Name upon him. That God cannot thus do, is not by reaſon of any imperfection in him, but becauſe of his great perfection. For,

[1] IF God ſhould reveal himſelf to any ſecond being fully, and make his name perfectly known, it muſt be to a Creature that *is able to receive this revelation*, and apprehend what he declares concerning himſelf: but there cannot be a Creature capable of this; it is inconſiſtent with a Created Nature: to fit a ſecond being for this, God muſt make ſuch another as himſelf not only in his Image and likeneſs, but equality; Infinitely wiſe, Eternally knowing, which would imply a contradiction: for he ſhould not make a Creature, but a God.

[2] IF he ſhould reveal himſelf fully to the Creature, it muſt be either *in one word and moment*, or *in a ſpeech and ſpace of time*: but not in a word and moment, becauſe there can be no one word formed, which can draw forth & comprehend

prehend the whole ſum of the perfection of the Firſt Being; not in a ſpeech, or many words & ſpace of time; becauſe if God ſhould ſpeak concerning himſelf throughout all Eternity, it would not explain to us all the perfection that is in him. Eternity would not compleat the diſcourſe, but there would be ſomething yet behind: eſpecially if we add to this,

[3] THAT if God diſcourſe to us of himſelf, it muſt be either in *his own* Language, or *in ours*. If in his own Language, it would not inform us; we ſhould not be any whit acquainted by it. We can hardly underſtand heavenly things tho' cloathed in earthly language, how then ſhould we if ſpoken of in heavenly? Joh. 3. 12. *If I have told you earthly things, & ye believe not, how ſhall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?* If he ſpeak to us in our own language, that hath no words in it to expreſs Divine things properly, much leſs adequately, his Nature being above us.

3. BECAUSE *his Name is wonderful & ſecret*, and therefore God would not have us inquire after it; as, when *Moſes* deſired to ſee his face, God gave him a Check, (fore-cited, *Exod.* 33. 20) giving him to underſtand, that he ask'd his own bane and deſtruction, in that demand. So, when *Jacob* inquired for his Name, he rebukes him for his boldneſs, *Gen.* 32. 29. And the like to *Manoah* upon a like inquiry, (*Judg.* 13. 17, 18.) and gives him the reaſon, Becauſe *his Name is ſecret* or *wonderful*. That which is wonderful, is a thing ſequeſtred from knowledge and reaſon; which excels humane Capacity; which out-bids the reach of a created underſtanding. Such is his Name, *Iſai.* 9. 6. *His name ſhall be called Wonderful*. How then ſhould the Creature know him as he is?

THERE are two CASES, which would here offer themſelves. (1.) Whether we ſhall know the naked Eſſence of God in our glorified State? (2.) What hope then of happineſs, becauſe we read. Joh. 17 3. *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent*. But the former of theſe may be conſidered under the head of Glorification; the latter will be taken up in the next Propoſition. I ſhall here then only leave theſe words of *Exhortation*.

1. *BEWARE of diving too deep into the Myſteries of the Divinity*. Quaint curioſity here is but diſtraction: faithful ignorance is better than temerarious knowledge. Know for certain, that when your Underſtanding hath fluttered as high as the wings of Reaſon can carry it, you will find ſuch riddles in the Deity, as you will never be able to unfold.

2. *LET us be much in meditating upon this God*. The more God's People ſee of him, the more they diſcover how little they know of him; and knowing, that they can never know too much, it puts them upon the Apoſtle's Practice, Phil. 3. 13. *Brethren, I count not my ſelf to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting thoſe things which are behind, & reaching forth unto thoſe things which are before*, &c. And their prayer is after him, Eph. 3. 16, to 20. *That* God *would grant* them *according to the riches of his glory, to be ſtrengthned with might, by his Spirit in the inner man; That Chriſt may dwell in* their *hearts by faith; that* they *being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Chriſt, which paſſeth knowledge, that* they *might be filled with all the fulneſs of God*.

3. *LET us be ſober in the Conceptions, that we entertain in our minds concerning God*. Beware of rude, fooliſh, and abſurd thoughts of him. Let his incomprehenſible greatneſs make us afraid: when we have thought our higheſt and beſt of him, ſtill remember that all this comes infinitely ſhort of his glorious Perfections.

4. *LET us therefore admire and adore this incomprehenſible Being*. Here we have a proper ſubject for our Admiration to work upon. Then is our Admiration called for, when we ſee a Being into whoſe Nature and Cauſes, we have not, nor can have any inſight: ſuch a One is God. Where then we cannot reſolve, let us contemplate; and what we cannot comprehend, let us wonder at: where our reaſon is non-pluſt, let it be our work to gaze our ſelves into aſtoniſhment. And here is matter of Eternal Admiration. The glorious Angels cover their faces, and ſpend Eternity in crying *Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Hoſts!* And let us, in imitation, ſit down, and cry with the Apoſtle, *Oh the depth!*

JANUARY 2. 1688.

SERMON *XIV.*

III. THIS *Incomprehenſible Being hath made ſuch diſcoveries of himſelf in his Back-Parts, as preſent him a ſuitable Object for Faith to reſt upon*. There are ſome precious rays of the Divinity, that irradiate us by way of reflection; by which we may ſo far acquaint our ſelves with God, as may make us happy. God is called a *Sun*, (*Pſal.* 84. 11.) Now if we fix our eyes directly on the body of the Sun, it will wholly dazzle us; but if we look on the reflected light or beams of it, we are ſafe, and it is comfortable; and ſo it is here. The Divine perfections are irradiated upon our Underſtanding through a dark glaſs; they are held forth Ænigmatically: which diſplays of himſelf to his Creatures, God is pleaſed to call *his back parts*, which he promiſed he would eminently make known to *Moſes*, Exod. 33. *ult*. Now they are ſo called,

1. *BECAUSE they fall ſhort of the plenary diſcovery of his Native Excellency, in the immediate unreflected manifeſtations of it*. As when we ſee only the backparts of a man, we ſee but very little of his beauty, and comlineſs, whereof his face is the principal ſeat. They are but *part* of his ways, yea, *a very little portion* of him, that is thus underſtood by us. (*Job* 26. 14.) His knowledge of himſelf, and that knowledge of him which he imparts to us, are infinitely diſproportionable.

2. *BECAUSE they are but dark repreſentations of him, in compariſon with the glory which he poſſeſſeth in the light unapproachable.* They are but as the refracted or broken rays of the bright Sun, or like the ruddineſs which its beams leave behind it, when the Body of it is gone below our Horizon; but as the ſparks of a great fire; glimpſes, and glimmerings in reſpect of that tranſcendent glory, which he enjoys in himſelf everlaſtingly.

3. *BECAUSE they are, as it were Garments, which cloud, hide, or obſcure his Oriental Brightneſs.* They are as a vail, which the great God puts upon him, thereby to diſcover himſelf in a more obſcure way; that ſo theſe manifeſtations do not over-power the faculties of our Nature: as a man's backparts are cloathed, and we know him by and through his garment, which hath not that clearneſs in it, which may be diſcerned in his face.

IN the further purſuit of this Propoſition, we may conſider, (1.) What is this diſcovery? (2.) Wherein it preſents him as a ſuitable Object of our Faith?

Q. I. *WHAT is the* Diſcovery, *which the firſt Being makes of himſelf, in his Backparts?*

A. IN ſum, It is that whereby he reveals his communicable glory unto us, according to our manner and meaſure of receiving it. It is his ſpeaking to us about himſelf in our own language, & according to our capacity of receiving and apprehending any thing of him. Here two things are conſiderable, *viz.* What he reveals of himſelf, and the way in which he reveals it.

1. *THAT which God reveals to us, is his communicable Glory.* The diſtinction of the Incommunicable & Communicable Perfections of God is known and received among Chriſtians. What this communicable glory is, in particular, will afterwards be conſidered. In general, it is that which (in other terms) we call his *Declarative* glory, as the former is called his *Eſſential* glory: and it contains in it all thoſe divine perfections, which God doth intereſt the creature in, and influence it withal; of which he hath given us the intimations in his word & works: whatſoever of God we may be any ways partakers in, or whereby he may have glory by or from us, belongs to this head; and this is that which the Apoſtle calls, *That which may be known of God*, (Rom. 1. 19.) and is called his *Name*, (Exod. 33. 19.) intimating that there is ſomething that may not be known of him; nor yet could this, if he had not revealed it, either by the impreſſion of it upon the creature, or by the Teſtimony he hath given of it by his holy Spirit?

2. *THE way, in which God reveals himſelf to us*, comes under a double Conſideration.

1. *HE doth it according to our* manner *of receiving it.* Becauſe Heaven's mode and way is not known unto us, therefore he ſpeaks to us in the language or manner of Earth; (*Job* 3. 12.) and that is in the way of created humane Reaſon. God's face is only knowable by divine & increated reaſon, which infinitely exceeds our capacity; but his backparts are the accommodation of the diſcoveries of himſelf to our reaſon. It is impoſſible for us to know or underſtand things, but by ſome rule of reaſon or other. Reaſon is nothing elſe but the manner of a Being, whereby it is acted upon our Underſtanding. We know nothing of God but by putting ſome Logical Notion upon him. All things are conveyed to us in a Logical way, and bear ſome ſtamp of reaſon upon them, or elſe we ſhould know nothing of them. Hence God, to fit his diſcovery of himſelf to our manner of entertaining it, takes the Rational or Logical Arguments upon himſelf, admits of a Diſtinction or a Deſcription, utters Sentences or Actions about himſelf, ſpeaks of himſelf as if he were an Effect & had Cauſes; a Subject, and had Adjuncts: and by ſuch a way we come to ſee ſomething concerning him, who is in himſelf inviſible: and this tells us how uſeful & neceſſary reaſon is to Faith; it being an inſtrument which is uſed to convey the diſcoveries of God unto it; and therefore Faith doth not relinquiſh or caſt off reaſon; for there is nothing in Religion contrary to it, tho' there are many things that do tranſcend, and muſt captivate it. Religion is the wiſdom of God, which cannot croſs it ſelf, & reaſon liſps out ſomething to Faith, though this entertains more than reaſon is able to expreſs

2. *HE doth it alſo according to our* meaſure *of receiving it*, i. e. according to the latitude of our Underſtanding it. As our apprehenſion hath its proper way, ſo it hath its circumſcribed limits: it is a finite thing: ours are created faculties, and they are narrow & ſhallow, and can take in but a little. They are but a few drops of this great Ocean, that our little veſſels can take into them. God's diſcoveries of himſelf to us are therefore ſome ſmall part of his great excellencies, and when we have ſaid all that we can to ſet him forth, how little will it be in compariſon of himſelf! It will not bear the proportion that one drop doth to the Sea. And the reaſon of it is, becauſe our limited knowledge, the ſtraitned faculty of our Underſtanding, can entertain no more. It may be ſwallowed up in the glory of God: it may ſwim in the Ocean of Everlaſting bliſs: it may be contained, but it can contain no more than its own meaſure. A veſſel that is full, cannot be more full. The great things of God are able to ſwallow up the Underſtandings of men & Angels: but God is ſo condeſcending to us, as to accommodate his revelations to our Capacities.

Q. II. *WHEREIN doth this diſcovery preſent God to us, as a* ſuitable *Object of our Faith?*

A. THERE are two Aſſertions, which Divines do uſually reſolve this Caſe withal, *viz.*

1. *WE cannot know more of God, and live.* It is impoſſible that the created faculty ſhould receive more into it. It was in kindneſs to *Moſes*, that God refuſed to gratify him in his requeſt; and he gives this reaſon for it, Exod. 33. 20. *And he ſaid, Thou canſt not ſee my face: for there ſhall no man ſee me, and live.* If *Moſes* had ſeen God's face, it muſt have been with the eye of his Underſtanding; but that being finite, and God infinite, it muſt have been extended beyond its capacity, and ſo have been broken and de-

deſtroyed, and ſo the Object would have been ſo far from being an Happifying Object, that it would have been altogether Deſtructive to him. It is true, there are different Degrees of the Knowlege of God, that Men attain unto in this life. Some know but a little: others a great deal comparatively: and there is a growth inKnowlege as well as inGrace incumbent on us as a Duty. 2 Pet. 3. 18. *But grow in grace, and in the kmowlege of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.* And thoſe that have the higheſt attainments in this Life, do know *but in part*; have but *Childiſh* apprehenſions, and do ſee but *through a glaſs darkly* (1 Cor. 13, 9, &c) There is therefore a more full & perfect knowlege that we ſhall have in Heaven, when we ſhall be grown Men, and ſee without a glaſs, know as we are known; and in his light ſhall ſee light: but ſtill all this is limited and circumſcibed to the manner and meaſure of a created underſtanding. It differs not from the other in nature, but in degree: it is God in his Backparts ſtill; God as revealed in the face of Chriſt.

2. *WE need to know no more of God, that we may Live.* There is happineſs enough for a Creature comprized in this diſcovery. Here is that which is ſufficient to fill up and ſatisfy the moſt extended deſires, and make the man Bleſſed forever. To ſee and enjoy God in his Backparts, is enough to bound the vaſteſt reachings of Men or Angels. For,

1. *THESE are all that is revealed of God.* This is as much as his Infinite Wiſdom judgeth meet to diſcover to the Creature: hence it is all that we have to ſeek or enquire after. Deut. 29. 29. *The ſecret things belong unto the Lord our God: but thoſe things which are revealed, belong unto us, and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.* Out of doubt, God hath manifeſted himſelf ſufficiently for the Bleſſedneſs of his people, whom he hath his heart upon, and whom he intends to make Bleſſed in communion with, and fruition of himſelf. *Moſes* was a bleſſed man, and yet he might ſee no more. And our *Saviour* declares this knowlege to be *life eternal*, (Joh. 17. 3.) and what can we need more for ourſelves, than Life eternal! He that hath that, is ſufficiently laid in, and may triumph.

2. *THESE are the portion of God's Children.* Jehovah, *i. e.* God in his Backparts, is the Believers Inheritance. Lam. 3. 24. *The Lord is my Portion.* God in His Face cannot be ſeen; and therefore not inherited or poſſeſſed: for what fruition can we have of that which we know not? But God hath given or made over to every Believer an happifying Portion. It is his intereſt in this God, thus diſcovered, that *David* makes that boaſt of, Pſal. 16. 5, &c. *The Lord is the portion of mine Inheritance, and of my cup: thou maintaineſt my lot. The lines are fallen unto me in pleaſant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage. I will bleſs the Lord, &c.* If there were any thing wanting to full felicity in the Saints Portion, God were not ſo good as his Word. When he had called *Abraham* to forſake all for him, he gives him that encouragement, Gen. 17. 1, 7. *I am the Almighty God; — I will eſtabliſh my Covenant between me and thee, to be a God unto thee.*

3. *IN theſe Backparts is contained all that we can ſtand in need of.* Let us but read over all thoſe Glorious Golden Letters, in which the Name of God is diſplayed, in his Word and Works, and lay by them the ſtate of the Believer, lay all of his wants open, take the full account of all that can be thought of, requiſite to his everlaſting Beatitude, & we ſhall find that nothing is here wanting to anſwer it to the outſide, and beyond that: Pſal. 34. 9, 10. *O fear the Lord, ye his ſaints: for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack and ſuffer hunger: but they that ſeek the Lord ſhall not want any good thing.* Pſal. 84. 11. *For the Lord God is a ſun and ſhield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.* Pſal. 63. 5. *My ſoul ſhall be ſatisfied as with marrow and fatneſs; and my mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyful lips.* See how God did diſplay his Backparts to *Moſes*, Exod. 34 6, 7. *And the Lord paſſed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord, God, merciful and gracious, long ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and truth. Keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, & tranſgreſſion, & ſin; and that will by no means clear the guilty; viſiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the childrens children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.* And what cannot all this do for us? But this will be better ſeen in the ſequel.

USE 1. THE conſideration of this Concluſion, will afford us *Direction*, how to regulate our *Conceptions*, and *Expreſſions* about GOD; and how to expound them. It tells us that all is to be underſtood after the manner of men, according to our conception, and not according to the Nature of God properly. Though the things concerning God, which are revealed in the Scriptures, are not falſe, but true, yet they are infinitely ſhort of expreſſing his ſublimity, and they are very improper. We muſt always remember that God is inconceivably more, and better, than all that is or can be ſaid of him. And it may alſo teach us to have a care how far we ſtrein the humane expreſſions of Scripture, in drawing of Concluſions from them, concerning theNature of God. Our vain minds will ſoon grow wanton here, and caſt reproach upon the glorious Firſt Being, and provoke his juſt diſpleaſure. It is good to be cautious how we approach too near to him that is a conſuming Fire.

USE 2. WE are here taught, what is the infinite *Diſpropertion* between the happineſs of *GOD*, and that of his *People*. God as he is in himſelf, his Eſſence, his Face, his Light unapproachable, is his own portion and felicity; But God in his Backparts, his Attributes, his Communicable glory, is the heritage and happineſs of his Children. He is happy in himſelf, and therefore called God bleſſed for ever. He knows,

knows, loves, embraceth, enjoys himself, and that in his glory. The *beams* of his perfections are enough to fill us with good; whereas the *fountain* of it is but Adequate for him. It should then invite us all to get a sure interest in this God; and having obtained it, let it satisfy us; say, It is enough. Let it bound the reachings of our Souls, and let us be able to say in truth as the *Psalmist*, Psal. 73. 25,26. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.*

USE 3. LEARN hence what is the great *Duty* of Christians. Hath God condescended to make himself thus known to us; it is then our interest to make it our business to contemplate him in these glorious excellencies, which he hath so displayed to us: these are the things that belong to us and our Children. Leaving then the abstruse secrets, that are above our reach, to him who alone can comprehend them, let us set our selves in search after these manifestations of himself, which he hath made in his word and works: and think not, because you are here stinted, that you may therefore be remiss in this search. Here is enough, to fill up Time and Eternity, in the Contemplation of: here are Mysteries that the very Angels of light are still Students in. And remember it is your life, your happiness. This is the knowledge which points directly to eternal blessedness. A little of this knowledge, though obscure, yet if saving, is better than all the skill that can be gotten in the most abstruse points of Humane Arts & Sciences. We know all that can be worth the knowing, if we know God in those excellent perfections of his. Let it then put *Young Ones* upon this study, and perswade you to begin early in this Inquiry. It will never repent you that you sought after acquainting your selves with God betimes. This is the Knowledge, that will make you truly *Wise*; all other without it will not advance you above Fools, and this only will be able to make you *happy*; you see nothing at all that will truly do you any good, till you see God in those revelations of himself to you. — And let us all bless God for this wonderful condescension of his to us, that he will make known the great Mysteries & sacred Riddles of his Deity to us, in a way that is so accommodated to our capacity, which must else have lain hid from us for ever.. And let us therein testify our thankfulness, in studying every day more to know; and knowing to love; and loving to serve him: so shall we be made Everlastingly happy in our acquaintance with him.

JANUARY 29. 1688.

SERMON *XV.*

IV. THOSE *Back Parts of God, in which he discovers himself to us, are his Sufficiency, and his Efficiency.* The small Portion of him that may be known by the Creature, may be referred to these two heads; What he *is*, and what he *doth*: what he is *able* to do, and what he is *pleased* to do; that he *is* all, and that he *doth* all. These two are the main pillars, on which the weight of our Faith lies, and by the which it is supported. The latter bids us to trust in him alone; the former encourageth us to trust in him at all times, and in all cases.

V. *GOD's Sufficiency (or his Alsufficiency) is his Divine Fulness, by vertue whereof he hath enough in himself, to answer all his own ends.* A man is then said to be self-sufficient, when he hath not only enough for himself personally, but for all them too that have their dependence upon him; when he is able to live upon his own, without being beholding to others, and maintain his post, and do all that belongs to him, and his estate will bear it out without impairing the principal. Hence we make our guesses at God's Alsufficiency, by conceiving him to be such a Being, but after a more transcendent manner. In the description two things may be observed,

(1.) *THE general nature of it*, viz. it is his *fulness*, or his *perfection*. For the fulness of a thing is its perfection, by vertue whereof there is nothing wanting to it: and it is opposed to emptiness or vanity, which is a defect. Now there is a double fulness or perfection considerable, the one belongs to the Creature; the other is proper to the Creator.

1. THERE is an *inferiour* and *limitted* fulness, or perfection: and it is when there is nothing wanting to the thing, which properly belongs to such a Species, or is due to such a kind of Being. There are other perfections which it hath not, but all that belongs to its Existence, Integrity, and Ornament of Nature, it hath that fully. A Beast having all things suitable for a sensitive life, is perfect in its kind, tho' it hath not attained to the perfection of a man; and still the higher rank or order of being, the Creature is placed in, the more is requisite to denominate it perfect.

2. THERE is a *simple* & *absolute* perfection, which comprehends in it the whole and universal fulness of all perfection to the utmost latitude of possibility: and this is the fulness of God. He hath in him, all kinds of goodness in the highest degree, without defect or possibility of it: hence is he said to be *all in all*, (1 Cor. 15.28.) And we read of *the fulness of the Godhead.* (Col. 2. 9.) Here are steps by which we may ascend in our Conceptions of this fulness which there is in God.

1. THE *chief* perfections of the Creature are, in a *most perfect* manner and measure, in God. If we speak of Justice, Wisdom, Power, Goodness, *&c.* there seems to be some Analogy between God and Man in respect unto these. Hence, we give them the same name, and have Analogous formal conceptions of them in our minds. Hence that, Mat. 5.48. *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven*

ven is perfect. But we muſt remember, there is but *little* of this in the Creature; but they are *infinite* in God. They have them ſeparably, he inſeparably: he therefore hath them in a more ſublime & ſuperminent manner, than either is or can be in a Creature. Hence we add the Epithet of Tranſcendency to them, when we aſcribe them to him, *moſt* wiſe, *moſt* holy, *&c.*

2 GOD contains in him *all* theſe kinds of perfection in the higheſt degree. There is a perfection in the ſeveral Creatures, according to their kind. There is one glory & perfection in the Sun; another in the Moon; but there are others, which they can lay no claim to Whereas in this moſt noble Firſt Being, there is a concourſe or confluence of *all* theſe Perfections. 1 Chron. 29. 11, 12. *Thine, O LORD, is the greatneſs, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majeſty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth, is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head over all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reigneſt over all, and in thine hand is power & might, and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give ſtrength unto all.* Every ſeveral Creature is, as it were, a ſmall ſpring or rivulet of goodneſs; but he is the vaſt and boundleſs Ocean of univerſal Perfection.

3 GOD comprizeth in him ſuch Perfections, as there are *no footſteps* of them in the *Creature.* He hath all that ſecond Beings have, and ſuch alſo as they have not. There are that are called his *Incommunicable* Perfections; which are aſcribed to him negatively, becauſe they are not in the Creature, but the contrary: on which account we call him Infinite, Immutable, Incomprehenſible, *&c.*

4. GOD comprehends all theſe Perfections within himſelf, *without any defect*: He is wholly void of imperfection: He is incapable not only of privative, but alſo negative imperfection. *He is light and there is no darkneſs at all in him.* There is no Creature, not ſo much as a Seraphim, but hath ſome negative defect attending it; *i. e.* the perfection of the higheſt Creature is contained within ſome degrees & limits. The Sun *hath* light, but it is not light *it ſelf*, as God is. He is Light without Darkneſs, Power without Weakneſs, Knowledge without Ignorance, Beauty without Deformity.

5. GOD containeth perfections in Him, without any *capacity of imperfection*, or poſſibility of defect. His fulneſs can admit of no diminution. A Creature, which is perfect (in its kind and degree) actually, is capable of loſing it. He that ſees, may be blind, *&c.* It is not ſo with him: for he hath all his fullneſs of and from himſelf; and depends not for it, or its continuance, on any other being, as all ſecond beings do on him. All theirs is borrowed; but his is *his own.* Rom. 11. 35, 36. *Or who hath firſt given to him, and it ſhall be recompenſed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.* Others cannot deprive him, for he dwells in the light unapproachable; he cannot deprive himſelf, for his perfection is inſeparable from his being. In Creatures, their being is one thing, and their perfection another. In God they are one & the ſame: He is Light, Love, Wiſdom, *&c.*

(2.) *THE ſpecial nature, or diſcovery of it* is, that by vertue of this fulneſs, he hath *enough in himſelf to anſwer his own ends.* The notion of ſufficiency, amongſt men, is a reſpect, which the means bear to the end; and ſo we conceive of God after our manner. Hence Alſufficiency muſt extend to all the ends or deſigns that one hath. Which ſufficiency of God, is wont to be expreſſed by Divines, in two particulars, that may be a little opened and cleared.

[1.] HE hath *enough* in himſelf *for himſelf*, or for his own happineſs. He is throughly furniſhed with all that is needful or requiſite for a Divine life. We may take up this in theſe Aſſertions.

1. GOD doth *poſſeſs* a Divine happineſs. Hence the title of *Bleſſed* is ſo often aſcribed to him in Scripture; yea, he is ſaid to be God bleſſed for ever. And Happineſs, in our notion, ariſeth from the affluence of all ſutable and ſufficient good; that which is fitted to the nature of the Being, and of which there is enough.

2. HE hath all this in himſelf *independently* upon the Creature: and hitherto belongs the Attribute of his Independency. He hath no need to fetch in any ſupply from abroad: He wanted nothing in thoſe eternal Ages, when he was alone, and there was no being beſide him: his own Being ſatisfyeth him abundantly Earthly Monarchs are not ſelf-ſufficient. Eccl. 5. 9. *Moreover, the profit of the earth is for all: the king himſelf is ſerved by the field.* But the Firſt Being derives nothing from the ſecond; for that hath nothing but what is received from the Firſt. 1 Cor. 4. 7. *For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what haſt thou that thou didſt not receive?* Heathen *Lucreſius*, ſpeaking of the Divine Nature, could ſay, *Ipſa ſuis valens Opibus, non indigna noſtri.* We ſtand in need of Meat, Drink, Clothing, and all from Abroad, to ſupport this life of ours: but God hath his life in and of himſelf. Joh. 5. 26. *For as the Father hath life in himſelf; ſo hath he given to the Son to have life in himſelf.* And in this regard he ſaith, That his Name is, I AM THAT I AM, *Exod.* 3. 14.

3 AS he needs not, ſo neither doth he, nor can he, *deſire any more*, than what he hath and is in himſelf. His Infinite Will compleatly acquieſceth in himſelf. It is impoſſible that he ſhould enquire after any farther degree of happineſs, than what he enjoys at home. When he was alone by himſelf, and no other with him, then he *rejoyced in himſelf*, and the poſſeſſion of his own glory: he never craved any thing from the Creature to mend himſelf by. Hence that, Pſal. 50, 9 &c. *I will take no bullock out of thy houſe, nor he-goats out of thy folds. For every beaſt of the foreſt is mine, and the cattel upon a thouſand hills. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world is mine, and the fulneſs thereof.*

4. HIS perfection is ſo full, that it is *incapable* of receiving any *addition.* He can receive in nothing

nothing from without: His vertues, faculties and perfections cannot be augmented. For, ---

(1.) HE is *infinitely* full: and to that which is infinite, there can nothing be added. His perfection is absolute; and that it were not, if it could receive any thing in it. Hence that challenge, fore-cited, Rom. 11. 35. *Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?* He is not only happy, but *Happiness* in the abstract; & abstracts cannot be increased at all.

(2.) *WHENCE* should he receive it? It must be from the Creature, if at all; but that cannot be; for all, which that hath, it had of him. Acts 17.25. *Neither is worshipped with mens hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.* They can give him nothing but what is his own: He spared it out of his fulness, or they had never had it.

5. HIS happiness *cannot be impaired*: There can be no diminution of his fulness: He is out of the reach of any violence, as the Creature cannot add to, so it cannot take away from, his felicity. As our *Goodness* reacheth not to him, to benefit him; so our *Sin* cannot touch his happiness, to impair it. Job 35. 6,7,8. *If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him? Or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand? Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art, and thy righteousness may profit the son of man.*

[2.] HE hath *more* than enough in him, *for his Creatures.* He only is sufficient in himself, that is able to maintain all his dependents, for whom by any right he stands engaged to provide. God is sufficient, as for himself, so for all beings that derive from, and wait upon him. Hence he assumes that title, Gen. 17.1. *I am the Almighty God.* Which word is thought to be derived of a root, that signifies a *Breast.* Especially he is sufficient for the happiness of his People; and that renders him an Object Adequate for our Faith. Here two things;

1. HE hath *enough* for them: sufficient to answer all their ends. He intends to make them happy, and he can do it throughly. There are two Metaphorical expressions, under which this truth is declared and evidenced. Psal. 84. 11. *The Lord God is a sun and shield.*

(1.) HE is a *Shield.* His People are exposed to many Combats & Dangers; which, notwithstanding their own strength, would be too hard for them: but he is able continually to defend and preserve them, that no evil shall befal them: a shield big enough to cover them, strong enough to secure them: it was never shot through. They enjoy perfect safety & security, that are sheltred under it. Psal. 91. 1. *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.*

(2.) HE is a *Sun.* As the rising Sun, with its light, drives away the darkness, imparts heat, and vivifies the world; and, with its sweet beams, cherisheth man & beast; so are God's People recreated, cherished, and refreshed with the serene face of God: And what can they need more? He is a shield, because he can deliver them from all evil. From the evils of this life: Psal. 91. 9. *Because thou hast made the Lord which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation: There shall no evil befall thee,* &c. From the miseries of the second death; Rev. 2.11. *He that overcometh, shall not be hurt of the second death.* Yea, from the *Fear* of all evil; Isai. 41.10,13,14. *Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not, I will help thee. Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel: I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the holy One of Israel.* Nay, from the *possibility* of evils approaching them: Psal. 91. 10. *Neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.* He is a Sun, because he can bestow all kinds of good upon them, can supply all their wants; Phil. 4.19. *My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus.* Fill all their desires; Psal. 81 10. *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.* Fully satisfy their Souls; Psal. 63.5. *They are not in trouble as other men: neither are they plagued like other men.* And is not this enough?

2. HE hath *more* than enough for them; can give them, not only what will satisfy, but what is *abundant.* He hath so much overflowing goodness, that their shallow & narrow vessels are not able to contain it all. His affluence is superfluity: it goes beyond, not only their occasions, but their hopes, desires, and thoughts. Eph. 3. 20. *He is able to do exceedingly above all that we ask or think.* There is in him an Infinite Redundancy. There is more for his People than they can improve; Psal. 36.8 *They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house: and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.* It is true; we stand in need of a *Deity,* as we are Reasonable *Creatures*: no created thing can satisfy the reachings of men's will. And as *Sinners* and Debtors, we stand in need of a *Trinity,* to bring us again into God's favour: but there is more in the fulness of the Godhead, and these Divine Persons, than ever we are able to hold.

USE 1. LEARN hence what a *glorious Portion every believer is possessed of.* Every Godly man may say as *David,* Psal. 16.5. *The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.* And as the *Church,* Lam. 3. 24. *The LORD is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in him.* And if so, well might *Paul* say, He had learnt to be self-sufficient, Phil. 4.11. *Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.* For he had taken possession of the Alsufficient God, and God's Self-sufficiency was become his: he had no want, because he knew where to have all made up; was in no fear of danger, because he had a secure shelter against all. And this is the common interest of all Believers. God hath said to every one of them, *I am thine.* God's Children may live Royally, because they can never be impoverished.

Here

Here is Grace, and Glory, and every good; and it is their own fault, if they be ſcanted in any thing.

2. HENCE *they make a bad choice*, who *leave God*, and *take up* with any *other* things. There are two Evils contained in it, and they are very great ones. Jer.2.13. *For my people have committed two evils: they have forſaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out ciſterns, broken ciſterns that can hold no water.* They imbrace lying vanities, and forſake their own mercies: they chuſe emptineſs, and reject fulneſs it ſelf:--and no wonder, if they never arrive at ſatisfaction. And yet ſuch fools are all they, who will not part with their Sins, for a Saviour; that ſay to God, *Depart from us*; and tell him, *They deſire not the knowledge of his ways*; that have the *world ſet in their hearts*; that prefer the light of their own fire, before the light of God's countenance:---- Theſe have that doom read unto them, Iſai.50.11. *This ſhall ye have of mine hand, ye ſhall lie down in ſorrow.*

USE 3. LET this ſerve to commend it as our *higheſt wiſdom*, to ſeek & ſecure an *Intereſt* in this God: And it ſpeaks to *Young Ones* in ſpecial, who are enquiring what courſe to take to be happy. *Get God to be yours, and you have all: miſs of him, and every thing elſe is nothing at all.* If you ask me, What you ſhall get by forſaking all, for him? I anſwer, (1 Cor.2.9.) *As it is written, Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* But if you ſeek your Portion elſewhere, you ſpend your Money for that which is not Bread, and your Labour for that which ſatisfyeth not ----. All time is loſt, that is ſpent in any other deſign: to ſeek God early, is to redeem time indeed. God offers himſelf to you in the New Covenant; accept him on his own terms. Whatſoever he calls you to forſake for him, he will infinitely ſupply in Himſelf; and it will never give you occaſion for ſuch a thing, as Repentance, that you have ſo done.

USE 4. LET this *Comfort* us, in reſpect of the preſent *Difficulties* and *Diſtreſſes*, that are upon the *Church* of God. It is at this day low enough to appearance; and we ought not to forget *Jeruſalem*; yet here is conſolation in reſpect of the *Iſrael of God*, that *Iſrael's* GOD is Alſufficient. What tho' the hand of Pride may ſeem to ſtain the glory of God's People for a while! Yet neither *faint*, nor *fear*, as long as they have ſuch a God. What tho' their enemies be many and mighty! yet read, Iſai.40.15,17. *Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the ſmall duſt of the ballance: behold, he taketh up the iſles as a very little thing. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him leſs than nothing, and vanity.* And ſay, Is not their condition ſtill ſafe? Wait but a while, He is but making way, to be ſeen & known in his glorious ſufficiency, by giving his enemies all ſeeming Advantages on their ſide; and then will he ariſe, and bring them down from their greateſt confidences; then ſhall *Edom* be a deſolation, and *Ægypt* a deſolate wilderneſs: but *Judah* ſhall dwell for ever, and *Jeruſalem* from Generation to Generation.

FEBRUARY 26. 1688.

SERMON *XVI.*

VI. GOD *diſcovers his Alſufficiency to us, in his Eſſence, and in his Subſiſtences.* It is in this way of his manifeſting himſelf to us, that our Faith is guided to trade with him for life. Our Salvation depends on One God, in Three Perſons. Man, as he is a *Reaſonable* Creature, ſtands in need of a *Deity* to make him happy; and as he is a *Sinner*, he wants a *Trinity*, to ſave him: and we have both theſe fully diſplayed to us in Scripture. The Eſſence is firſt in order to be conſidered of; and that becauſe the Godhead is the Ultimate Object of our Faith; it muſt aſcend thither, and reſt there. The Abſolute Being of God is the ſubject of all his relations, and we believe in all the Divine Perſons, becauſe they are God. Joh. 14.1. *Ye believe in God, believe alſo in me.*

VII. *THE Divine Eſſence is God, the moſt Abſolute Firſt Being.* I might here treat of the *Unity* of the Eſſence, but becauſe our Catechiſm gives us a particular queſtion for that, I wave it till we come thither. We may briefly take the opening of the Deſcription given in a few Concluſions.

1. *BECAUSE Being is better than not being, we hence aſcribe Being to God*; as if he had ſomething in common with other Beings, or as tho' there were a general Nature, in which there were an agreement or participation between him, and the Creature; and it is a notion, without which we can entertain no Conceptions of God at all. God himſelf therefore tells us his Name is, I AM: and the Apoſtle tells us, that here is the foundation of our Faith, Heb 11. 6. *He that cometh to God, muſt believe that He is.*

2. THAT *in the order of Beings, God is the Firſt.* This therefore is a diſtinguiſhing Epithet we put upon him, and by it we know him from the Creature. All other Beings are ſecondary, derived, originated: He is before them all; He therefore aſſumes this title, Iſai.44.6. *Thus ſaith the Lord the King of Iſrael, and his redeemer the Lord of hoſts, I am the Firſt.* And on this account, He is called, The *Ancient of Days*, Dan.7.9. Here obſerve two things.

1. THAT *there is a Firſt Being.* This is neceſſary, for it is impoſſible, that all things ſhould ſucceed & follow one after another. Where there is a ſucceſſion, there muſt be a beginning; where there is a ſecond & third, there was a firſt, from which, they are ſo denominated. All Beings cannot be originated, and therefore there muſt be an Original. We muſt firmly believe this Principle, as the bottom of our Faith; for faith runs up to the higheſt, and reſolves it ſelf there. Faith can never trade for life, with thoſe that have borrowed their own being & life from a-

nother; but it goes to the *Sun* for light. (*Psal.* 84. 11.) It depends upon the *Fountain*, Jer. 2. 13.

2. *GOD is this First Being.* It is to such a Being, and no other, that we acknowledge a Deity; and when we say he is the First, two things are intended.

(1.) THAT *no other* Being is *before* him, or *Co-æval* with him: but that he is before all other Beings. If he be the first, then there is no other that can anticipate his being: He acknowledgeth none elder than himself. Isai. 43. 10. *Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know & believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.* Nay there was none *with* him, or his Contemporary; for then he could not be the first. He that is first, goes before all other. When no other thing had any existence, when there was none but he, then he was. Psal. 90. 2. *Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth & the world,——Thou art God.*

(2) THAT *all other* Beings are derived *from* him. He is therefore called the *Alpha*, the *beginning*; (Rev. 1. 8.) He is the Father of all Creatures; all other beings have their being in him; they derive from him by participation, and without his influence their being would vanish into nothing. Act. 17. 25. *He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things*: v. 28. *For in him we live, and move, and have our being.* They are vain & empty, yea meer *Cyphers* without him, *less than nothing*. See, *Isai.* 40. 15, 17. His word is the spring of their being, & for that reason is he called JEHOVAH, because he gives being to his word, he speaks not words but things. Rom. 4. 17. *God who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not, as though they were.* All the great & wondrous beings that are in the world, came out of his mouth. Psal. 33. 9. *For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.*

3. HENCE it follows that God is a *most Absolute Being.* For, if he be the first, then he cannot be a Being by participation; for such presume one before them, from which they participate. The first Being must of necessity be Being *it self*: all other things have but some shreads of Being derived from him, who is an Universal Sea & Ocean of Being, the engrosser of all Being in the latitude of it. And this is also intimated in that Name, I AM; because it is his only prerogative Royal, *to be.* Creatures are shadows of Being, have no Entity in comparison with him, (Forecited, *Isai.* 40. 17.) and this also is intimated in his Name JEHOVAH, which implies, both that he is himself, and that he gives Being to all Creatures; that he is, was, and will be; that he hath such a Being, which, as it was before all, so it remains in entity, and will do, in spite of all adverse powers that seek to raze it out. Psal. 90. 2. *Even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.*

VIII. *GOD is pleased to reveal his Essence to his people by diverse Attributes, which he assumes to himself.* The Divine Essence, (we have heard) is in it self not to be comprehended by us; and yet God is well pleased to let us know enough of him to make us happy: which that he may, he takes such Attributes upon him. And here let me (first) tell you, what the Divine Attributes are, and (then) give some general Rules about them.

1. *THE Attributes of God are his* Essence, *which is in it self a pure* Act, *diversly apprehended by us.* It is a necessary consectary, from God's being the most absolute first being, that he is a meer act; that his Nature is simple, and altogether void of any sort of composition; and hence it follows, that in his being there can be no division. Now because this act cannot be known by us altogether, at one sight of our Understanding; but we must needs have a diversified representation of it, it being too big for our single comprehension; Hereupon God hath taken Attributes to himself, which are so many several expressions of the same Essence and Act: and these are more properly said to be assumed by him, than to be so many several Perfections of him. An Attribute is the consequent of an Axiome. Every Axiome, or sentence in a speech, consists of an Antecedent, expressing the subject, and a Consequent expressing the Attribute, which is predicated of it; and this is our Humane way to conceive of things; and therefore they are due to God from us. Psal. 29 2. *Give unto the Lord the glory due to his Name.* For it is by them that we come to know any thing at all of him.

NOW the reason, why this pure act must be diversly apprehended by us, is, because tho' God be to be seen by an eye of Faith, yet he must be seen by an eye of Reason too: for tho' Faith sees things above Reason, yet it sees nothing but in a way of Reason, which discerns all things by Arguments, which are conceived as distinct from the thing, and among themselves. Attributes are the arguments of a thing. Now an argument is that whereby a thing is asserted to evidence another thing, either as Cause or Effect, Subject or Adjunct, *&c. E. Gr.* When we say, *God is Great, Wise*, &c. our reason looks upon God as the subject, and his greatness as one Adjunct, *&c.* and so we joyn these two together: and our manner of conception and expression, makes a distinction between his Being, and his Holiness, Wisdom, *&c.* Yea, and it conceives a difference among the Attributes themselves: it distinguisheth between his Wisdom, and his Holiness, between his Justice and his Mercy. So that the Essence comes into our Understanding, under a various representation; through which, as through so many several glasses, we have so many discoveries made to us, of this glorious Essence; and therefore this discovery is called the *manifold wisdom of God*, Eph. 3. 10.

2. *FOR our help to improve these Attributes for our acquaintance with God*, it will be profitable to lay down some general Rules for the guiding of our Conceptions of them, *viz.*

1. THAT these Attributes are in God, but one most *pure & simple act.* They are therefore called Attributes, because they may more properly be said to be ascribed to him, than to be

really

really in him: for in him, who is the first Being, & void of composition, & by consequence a most Pure act, there can be no division or proper distinction in his Being! And hence the Attributes do but convey to us what is to be known of God according to our manner & measure; and when we have said all of God that can be, we must look at all in him to be but One God, without division in Essence or Faculties. Hence,

2. ALL the Divine Attributes are to be conceived in God in the *Abstract*, as well as in the Concrete. Thus we do not only say, God is wise, but God is wisdom: He is *Love*, 1 Joh. 4 5. *Light*, 1 Joh. 1. 5. and the reason is, because whatsoever is in God, is God himself; which follows from his being void of any composition; and otherwise there were in him succession & division; something in him which is not absolutely first; and so something that is not himself, which were a contradiction.

3. THE Divine Attributes are *altogether* in God, in the same Eternity, tho' they appear not so to us. He was in all his perfections, before the foundations of the World, in which Eternity there is no distinction of Priority or Posteriority. Joh 8.58. *Jesus said unto them, Verily verily I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.* Tho' some appear to us earlier, others later. Wisdom, Power and Goodness appeared in the Creation; Revenging Justice, not till the Fall; nor special Grace till afterwards. Tit. 3.4 *But after that the kindness & love of God our Saviour toward man appeared.* God manifested his perfections, as man had need of them; but they were in him really before, and that because he is eternally Unchangeable, never assumes any thing anew, but is the same for ever.

4. THE Divine Attributes are always in him in *the highest degree*, tho' in execution there is a different application. Extensively, as to Divine dispensations, in Providential Effects, God proceeds gradually in his dealings with men; as in dispensing Justice, he doth not at once give men the full of their deserts; and hence flows his Patience and Long-suffering: so in his dispensing of Mercy, whence there is a difference between Grace and Glory.

5. THE Divine Attributes in God are *not contrary one to another*. There is no clashing between them; but they do perfectly agree in their Essence. God cannot disagree with himself; His Attributes are but the same Essence; and therefore cannot dissent. Dissent ariseth from contrary Principles, and declares such a Being to be changeable and corruptible; but God is all Justice, and yet he is all Mercy too; neither doth his being all just, hinder his being all merciful, or contrarily.

6. THE Attributes as they are in God, are not *distinct from the Essence*, nor *one from another*. For they are all God himself, whose proper Name is, I AM, (Exod. 3.14.) His Mercy is God, and his Justice is God; and they are both one and the same undivided God. As the Sun by one and the same light, enlightens, warms, hardens, softens, nourisheth & dries up things; as all lines meet in their Center, in one individual point; as all waters are one in the Sea.

7. IN *our Conception* there is some foundation of a distinction of these Attributes in God, and that both in regard to our understanding, and to the things themselves. For,

(1.) IN Reason *Reasoning*, or in *our Understanding*, we conceive of God, and of his Holiness, and of his Justice, *&c.* by a *compound* act, which first conceives of God, and then of his Holiness, as of an adjunct to the subject; and these two our reason lays together, and frames a speech of him, and says, God is holy; for without distinction & composition, our reason knows nothing: and this God allows us.

(2.) IN Reason *Reasoned*, or in the *things themselves*, from whence our Understanding draws arguments extrinsecally, God's Attributes do shine forth after a distinct manner. When God punisheth, then he declares his wrath: when he saves, then he makes known his mercy; (*Rom.* 9. 22, 23.) so that we may say, God doth not punish by his pity, nor doth he save by his anger, or destroy by his love.

8. OF his Attributes, some are said to be *Incommunicable*; others to be *Communicable*. The former are the Divine properties, which so belong to God, as there is no shadow of them in the Creature, and it is blasphemy to ascribe them unto it: such as Immensity, Eternity, Immutability. The latter are such as something *like* them in our conception is in the Creature, as wisdom, justice, pity, *&c.* but yet vastly differing. Of which difference take these few Rules.

1. THEY are in the Creature only by way of *Analogy*, or similitude. Their is a likeness, Mat. 5. ult. *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.* But there is as vast a disproportion between them, as there is between Finite, and Infinite: An Angel's wisdom is folly when it is laid by his.

2. THEY are attributed to the Creature only in the *Concrete*: not in the abstract. For they are truely & properly Adjuncts to the Creature; but in him they are his Essence. We may therefore say of such an one, he is wise; but of God only, that he is Wisdom. To say so of any second being, is a strain of Rhetorick, which savours of Blasphemy.

3. THEY are chiefly in God, and but *scantily* in the Creature. We indeed translate them from the Creature to him, when we see a perfection in that, we ascribe it to him in an eminent manner; we discover the footsteps of Wisdom, Holiness, *&c.* in men; and because they are noble perfections, we acknowledge them to God: but they are indeed *primarily* in him; for the Creature derived them from the Creator. He therefore had them, else he could not have imparted them. They were first in him, else they had not been in us. Creature-perfection is but a draught, or imperfect copy of His which is the Prototype or Pattern: His is the Original, theirs is but a translation, *Mat.* 5. *ult.*

4. THESE Perfections are in God, *void* of all that *imperfection*, which accompanies them in the Creature. There is no good quality in the Creature, but it is there in a limited manner; it is restrained to its degrees, because it is a created goodness; and therefore it must have

its measure. Hence there is none so wise, but hath some ignorance; none so holy, but hath something of impurity, if not positive, yet comparative. Job 4. 18. *Behold, he puts no trust in his servants; and his angels he charged with folly*: So Chap. 15. 15. *Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.* But there is no gradation in the Divine Attributes; they are superlative; and hence there can be no imperfection. So that we must remove all this from his perfection. 1 Joh. 1. 5. *This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.* His Attributes do not only contain all the degrees to which they arrive in Creatures, but they infinitely transcend them. Hence we add a name to them.

USE 1. *WE here see the way how to come to the right knowledge of God.* i. e. by viewing his *Essence* in his *Attributes*: This is his Name; and every several Attribute is one letter of it; and by putting of them together, we may come to spell what he is, so far as is for our safety, and sufficiently for our satisfaction. By gazing upon the naked Essence, we destroy our selves, and come to no knowledge at all; but are altogether confounded: but by a careful eying him in his Attributes we may come to the discovery of that which is illuminating, delightful, and saving. We must see him as he is to be seen. The bold eye, that will dare to gaze upon the splendid Meridian Light of the Sun, is dazled & put out, & sees nothing at all; but he that looks upon it in its beams, sees clearly, and it it is a pleasant thing. Let us Mortals content our selves with *these* speculations; he that experimentally knows thus much of God, is happy enough. Hence,

USE 2. *LET it humble us, that when God hath so gloriously discovered himself to us, we should know no more of him.* That, when he hath written his Name to us in such legible Characters, we are able to spell so little out of them. If it was an inexcusable thing for the *Heathen*, that they learnt no more of God out of the Book of Nature, (*Rom.* 1. 20.) needs must it be far more so for *us*, who live under the light of the word of God, in which he hath written all these Attributes of his in Capital Letters. For shame then let us lay aside this sloth, & put off all unhappy diversions, & bend our minds more intensely to the study of Gods Perfections. Let us know, it is our life; and if we will thus do, pains must be taken, and there must be a running to & fro; and to all we must add Prayer earnest & fervent, that God will give us such a discovery of himself, as may engage our hearts to him, to chuse him for our Portion. Theoretical knowledge is not to be neglected, being the first step to true Wisdom; but it is not to be rested in, because it is not that knowledge which is eternal Life; but if our Children be not taught that, there is little hopes they will reach after the other. But when once we so know God, as to be able upon knowledge, to put the title of propriety to every Attribute, and call it *ours*, that is a knowledge to be prized above Rubies.

MARCH 26. 1689.

SERMON *XVII.*

IT would be advantagious, for our better enquiry into the Divine Attributes, to fix upon a suitable *Distribution* of them. Here diverse *Divines* have several Methods: some divide them into *Negative*, removing all imperfection from God: *Relative*, discovered by some relation that he bears to the Creature: *Positive*, ascribing of several perfections to him. Others not differing from the former but in terms, ascribe them to him, by way of *Causality*, *Remotion*, and *Eminency*. Others divide them into *Goodness* & *Greatness*: Others into the Attributes which shine forth *by themselves*, considering God as the absolute first Being, or such as appear in his *Works* of Efficiency: To which I would chuse to adhere, but that the method of the Catechism leads me to another. I shall therefore take up the Attributes in the Description, and assign them their proper notion, as I pass, with respect hereto; and for others not here named, they may be afterwards taken notice of, in their proper places. In this Description we may observe three sorts of Attributes. 1. A *Genus* is analogically ascribed to him, a *Spirit*. 2. Divine *Qualities* negatively expresst, which are three, *Infinite*, &c. 3. Divine *Powers* and *Vertues*, which are six; of each whereof the Divine Qualities are expressed. These may be spoken to in order,

I. HERE is a *Genus*, analogically ascribed to God; He is called a SPIRIT: not that God and any Creature do really participate in one common Nature, so as to be properly reduced to one head of distribution. The Nature of GOD and the Nature of *Angels* are Infinitely different one from the other: but because he is the first being, he assumes to himself such a title for the help of our Understanding: hence He is called a Spirit, *Joh.* 4. 24. Which is the most excellent Being among all second Beings, and hath in it some of the neerest shadows and resemblances of the first Being. The word *Spirit* hath various acceptations in Scripture; among which it is concluded that the Glorious *Angels* are referred unto, when God is called a Spirit: who are so called. *Psal.* 104. 4. *Heb.* 1. 14. It will therefore help us to something of God, to consider some respects in which he is resembled by those Spirits.

1. SPIRITS are *Invisible* Substances, *i. e.* they cannot be seen by our bodily Eyes. Angels indeed have made themselves visible by assuming a body, or some grosser parts of the Elements in Figure of an Humane Body: so have they appeared to *Abraham*, to *Lot*, to *Manoah*, & many others. That a thing be made Visible, it must be more gross then either the Medium

dium through which it is ſeen, or the viſive Spirits by the help whereof we diſcern things: but Angels are more fine and ſubtile Beings then either of theſe, and muſt therefore needs eſcape our ſight, and be Inviſible to us. Thus is God an Inviſible Being; theſe bodily eyes of ours are not able to diſcern him: hence that Attribute, 1 Tim. 1. 17. *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, inviſible.* He is therefore ſaid to *dwell in Secret (Mat. 6. 6.)* not only hath he *never been ſeen, (Joh. 1. 18)* but he *cannot* poſſibly *be ſeen*, 1. Tim. 6. 16. *Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath ſeen, nor can ſee.* Some have been ſo fooliſh as to think there are no *Angels*, becauſe we ſee them not: and on the ſame groundleſs arguing, have ſome concluded that there is no *God*; but this belongs to his Nature, that he cannot be ſeen by a Created eye.

2. SPIRITS are *impalpable.* As they cannot be ſeen, ſo they cannot be felt; and this upon the ſame reaſon with the former; for that which is felt, muſt be more groſs than the Spirits, with which we feel it. Now our ſenſitive Spirits are made of the *Elements*, which are of a coarſer matter, and not ſo fine as *Angelical* ſubſtances are, and hence they eſcape our touch or feeling. Therefore our Saviour by the argument of *ſenſe* convinced his Diſciples, that he was no *Spirit.* Luk. 24. 39. *Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I my ſelf: handle me, and ſee, for a ſpirit hath not fleſh and bones, as ye ſee me have.* And God is much more ſo; he cannot be *approached*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 16. In ſum, all the ſenſes are incapable of apprehending Spirits. Angels may be with us, and we have no manner of ſenſe of it: nor do men apprehend ſenſibly the Preſence of God, though *in him we live, move, and have our being.*

3. SPIRITS are the moſt *Agile*, *Active*, or *Nimble* beings among Creatures. An Angel is very ſpeedy in his journeying: they are God's ſwift Meſſengers to do his will, and go poſt on all errands that he hath to employ them about. The ſwifteſt things among Elementary & corporeal ſubſtances are ſlow and dull compared with them. The Lightning is one of the nimbleſt things we diſcern by our ſenſes. The motion of the *Primum Mobile* is ſuch as ſome have conceived is very rapid; but all ſhort of Angelical Agility. One of them can travel from the Third Heaven to the Earth in a few hours. (*Dan.* 9. 21, 22.) And God muſt needs be the moſt agile being, becauſe he is a *pure Act.* This is metaphorically expreſſed. Pſal. 18. 10. *And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.* And to this agility belongs *unweariedneſs*: Angels are never tired, no nor is God, Iſa. 40. 28. *Haſt thou not known? haſt thou not heard, that the everlaſting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?*

4. SPIRITS are the *ſtrongeſt* among created beings; they are mighty beings; Pſal. 103. 20 *Bleſs the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in ſtrength.* The more Spirit, the more ſtrength; to which is oppoſed the weakneis of *fleſh.* (Iſa. 31. 3.) There is no other ſort of Creature, that is able to incounter and grapple with an Angel. One Angel hath ſtrength enough to bicker with a World of men, for which reaſon they are called *Powers*: and it belongs to their Nature; for even *Devils*, becauſe they have not loſt the Nature of Angels, are ſo called. *Eph.* 6. 12. But GOD is *moſt* ſtrong: Power and Dominion are his, none ever reſiſted him and proſpered; none can ſtand before him. (*Job* 41. 9, 10.) we may take a little proſpect of his wonderful Power, by obſerving how inferior, ſmall, and contemptible, he looks upon all the power of all the beings in the Creation put together, to be. Iſa. 40. 15, 17. *Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the ſmall duſt of the balance: behold, he taketh up the iſles as a very little thing. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him leſs than nothing, and vanity.*

5. SPIRITS are the moſt *Incorruptible* of Created beings: for being of ſo ſubtle and ſtrong a Nature, as we have heard, they have not the ſubjection to change and Corruption, which our beings have; becauſe they are not ſo paſſive: they cannot receive impreſſion from inferior beings, and therefore are only ſubject to a poſſibility of *Annihilation*, by him who made them. So is God moſt incorruptible; he is lyable to no ſort of change. Mal. 3. 6. *For I am the Lord, I change not: therefore ye ſons of Jacob are not conſumed.* Now that is one, when a Being may by corruption change from what it is at preſent.

6. SPIRITS are *Rational* ſubſtances, endowed with the nobleſt faculties of *underſtanding* and *will.* For this reaſon Philoſophers call them *Intelligences*, becauſe they have clear knowlege, and a noble liberty which they do enjoy; they would not elſe be capable of thoſe Offices and Services, which they are employed in, which is to be Miniſters attending upon God, and ready to do his will in the managing of the great Affairs of the World; for which they muſt have a ready underſtanding, not lyable to miſtakes, and a prompt will haſtening them to their work. But God is the moſt Reaſonable Being; he hath an Underſtanding, that is *Infinite*, and a Will which is *Irreſiſtible.*

THESE are ſome of the ſhades, which we draw of him, from the Attribute of a Spirit; but every like is alſo unlike; and though God reſembleth himſelf to thoſe choiſe beings or natures, yet we muſt conceive him to be Infinitely more Glorious then they, and tranſcendently to exceed them. We may look on the moſt noble Perfections of the moſt noble Beings, and ſay them of God, but when we have ſo ſaid, we muſt remember that his Glory Incomparably exceeds them. Pſal. 148. 13. *Let them praiſe the name of the Lord: for his name alone is excellent, his glory is above the earth and heaven.* And reſpecting the preſent Attribute, let theſe things be obſerved,

1. SPIRITS

1. SPIRITS are *Creatures*, but God is *Increated*: let us say as much as we can of the Angelical Perfections, we must still remember that they are but created Perfections, which they enjoy: and created Spirits had a beginning, but God is without beginning: they are the Children of time, but he is the Father of Eternity: they are indeed the sons of the morning, and the morning stars; time and they began in the same instant, but He was before all time, is from Everlasting: they had their being from another; it was given them: but he had His from no other, His Being is His own.

2. HENCE Spirits have a *passive* power in them, whereas God is a *pure Act*. It is a dispute among *Pneumatists*, whether Angels have any material Principles, or are pure Forms; it will not profit the Audience generally to debate it here, it is enough, their being Creatures assures us of their *Passivity*, or *Potentiality* in them; they did once pass from not being into being, & they are capable of returning to nonentity again: yea, are capable of the impressions of happiness & misery; are mutable Creatures; some of them did fall; all which things result from their passivity. None of which are compatible with God: He is one and the same, and cannot be touched or any ways altered: He *is* happy, but cannot be *made* happy, nor can he ever be made miserable: Hence called *God blessed for ever*.

3. ANGELS are *limited* by their own Essence. That they are limited beings is beyond dispute, for to be a Creature, and to be finite is reciprocal: how they are so limited, is a debate, which the curiosity of wits may exercise their reason in, but can form no Article of faith about: whether by any spiritual matter, or otherways, it is sure they are Essence, and their own Essence limits their being within the confines of finiteness; so that one Angel fills not all places at once, nor is in Heaven & Earth at the same instant: but the Divine Essence is *unlimited*, and Infinite.

4. ANGELS are under the *Dominion* of *Another*; they owe subjection to him who made them; the very name of Angel which they bear upon them carries this intimation in it; for this reason they are called *Ministring Spirits*, Heb. 1. 14. But God is above all Dominion, it belongs to him as his Prerogative; he is supream, and Angels themselves are at his command in all things.

5. IN Spirits their *Essence* and their *Act* are *two* things, they are distinct the one from the other: but in God his Essence & his Act are one and the same thing: hence we say, Whatsoever is in God, is God; but we cannot so say of a created Spirit or Angel: hence they are capable of several distinct principles & powers in them, and not only in our Conception, which cannot be affirmed of God.

IN a word, God and Angels are expressed by one and the same general Name, viz. *Spirits*, only to help us with something which may guide our Conceptions, in the notion which we take up of him; but when we have said all that we can about it, we must remember that he is a thousand times more glorious than all Spirits, or second Beings tho' never so excellent, that can be named: but because *Rational* Beings are more noble than Irrational, and because *Spiritual* Beings have a peculiar excellency above Corporeal, and the highest created perfections are to be found in the *Heavenly Angels*, and we are to give the *best* of our thoughts and conceptions to God, we are pointed, by such a comparison, to see something of his praise worthy excellence, but still remembring that he is *above* all glory & praise.

USE 1. *THIS tells us how* suitable *an Object God is for our* Spirits *to close withal.* It is requisite for joy & delight, that the Object and Faculty be suitable one to the other, for without an adequate or suting Object, there can be no satisfaction; but such is God; being a Spirit, altho' infinitely above us, yet *suitable* for these Souls of ours to close withal. And herein the happiness of Believers above other men appears, because their *Spirits* have communion with this uncreated Spirit; his better part therefore is fully provided for, & there is no other man that enjoys this advantage. All other things are in Scripture, by way of opposition, called *Flesh*, and for that very reason are they incapable of affording Felicity to such as rely upon them; Isa. 31. 3. *Now the Egyptians are men and not God, and their horses flesh and not spirit; when the Lord shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fall together.* That is the reason why there can be no true confidence put in these things; but how beyond conception happy are they, whose *Spirits* are united with him, who is the Father of Spirits.

USE 2. *HENCE how very unsuitable is it to represent the Divine Nature by any* Corporeal *similitude*: I mean in Pictures or Images, of any visible & bodily substance, and that whether it be for civility or devotion, *i. e.* either meerly as Ornamental, or as some pretend, to encrease devout Affections in any; how is it possible rightly to shadow a Spirit? who ever was able rightly to decypher the form or shape of a being which is invisible! it is folly to pretend to afford us the Portraicture of an Angel, but it is a madness & wickedness to offer at any Image or Representation of God: How many solemn cautions did God give his people against this by *Moses*, besides the express forbidding of it in the second Command; and God declares it to be a thing *Idolatrous*. For any to entertain or fancy any other Image of God, but those reverend impressions of his glorious Perfections that are engraven upon his heart, is highly to dishonour him, and provoke him to Jealousy.

USE 3. *HENCE learn that* spiritual Service *must needs be most acceptable to God.* This is to pay him a service suitable to his nature, and must needs therefore be the most grateful to him; Christ himself draws this inference, Joh. 4.24. *God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.* The heart and spirit in man are the same thing in Scripture sense; and this is it that God requires, Prov. 23.26. *My son, give me thine Heart.* It is not all the specious & outside shew of duty, that he

he takes any content in at all, where the ſpirit is wanting; if the heart be gone ſomewhere elſe, all the reſt is a burden to him; we ſee what eſtimate he makes of it, Ezek.33.31. *And they come unto thee as the people cometh, & they ſit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they ſhew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetouſneſs.* And was not this the reaſon why he blows ſo upon their ſervices, Iſai. 1.11 *To what purpoſe is the multitude of your ſacrifices unto me? ſaith the Lord: I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beaſts, and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats.* Nor is it poſſible to cheat or put him off with any ſuch trifling things, tho' never ſo modeſtly attended; for, being ſuch a Spirit, he cannot but be intimately acquainted with our Spirits. He challengeth it as a Prerogative belonging to him, to *try the Spirits*, to ſearch the hearts of men. This therefore ſhews us,

1. *THE extream folly of all Hypocrites.* They take a great deal of pains to dreſs up duties with a very fair out-ſide, and give much attendance to the ſeveral performances of Religion, who read, hear, & make long prayers, keep Faſts frequently, and give many Alms. but all theſe Sacrifices are without an heart, they have no ſpirit in them; God finds dead mens bones, rottenneſs & ſtench under all this paint and varniſh, and it is unſavoury to him. Iſai.66.2,3. *To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite ſpirit, and trembleth at my word. He that killeth an ox, is as if he ſlew a man; he that ſacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck*, &c. See, Pſal.51.17. *The ſacrifices of God are a broken ſpirit: a broken & a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not deſpiſe.*

2. *THE extream danger of formal Worſhip.* Whatever elſe may be ſaid to the unlawfulneſs of impoſing upon men ſtinted forms of prayer and publick ſervice to God, becauſe indeed it is not to God, but againſt him; there is this one thing that would perſwade a ſerious Chriſtian that deſires to hold Communion with God in all his ſacred duties, to be afraid of it, *viz.* That of its own Nature it hazards his being formal in it, and the reducing him to a ſpiritleſs frame in his attendance upon it. and thereby, inſtead of pleaſing God, to provoke him to anger againſt him, and ſerving him in vain: a man may be heartleſs and perfunctory in the other, but in this way he can hardly be otherwiſe.

2. *THE great care, which is incumbent on God's Children, to* watch *their hearts in all their duties to God.* They, whiles on earth, have too much of *fleſh* in them, and thro' Satan's Subtlety, and the carnality of their own minds, are too ready to let their hearts go, and be without ſpirit in what they do; either to be dead & wandring in their performances: let it then counſel and quicken us to look to our ſelves, and whatſoever frailties there may be attending of our duties, make ſure of this one thing, to pay God our *Spirits* in them: and to excite us here-unto Conſider,

1. *HE who is ſuch a Spirit*, deſerves *our ſpirits*: He is the God of the Spirits of all fleſh; we owe to him our hearty ſervice; for he made our hearts; He is a ſpirit from whom all other ſpirits do Originally proceed, (*Eccl.*12.7.) and he hath a right to them by Redemption. Jeſus Chriſt hath bought our Souls with a price, and therefore we ſhould glorify him with them. 1 Cor.6.20. *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorifie God in your body, and in your ſpirit, which are God's.*

2. *HE* knows *our ſpirits.* Heb 4.13. *Neither is there any creature that is not manifeſt in his ſight: but all things are naked, and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.* He hath an inſight into the bottom of our ſouls and he ſees all the corners thereof, and therefore there is no deceiving of him: as he accepts no other but ſpiritual Services, rejecting all others, ſo he knows when they are ſo, and can tell us when we come before him with a lie in our right hand.

3. *SPIRITLESS Services are both* falſe & fruitleſs; (Spiritual ones are only true, & have a great *reward*;) he counts thoſe to *compaſs him about with lies*, and they ſhall reap the *Eaſt wind*; Chriſt puts *Spirit* & *Truth* together as inſeparable, (*Joh.*4.24.) and becauſe all his rewards are of *Grace*, we can expect none without his *acceptance* of us Let us then conſecrate our ſpirits to him, and devote them to his Service, always ſet our ſelves in his Preſence, as a God, who *ſearcheth our hearts*; and knowing the wofull *Carnality*, which is remaining in us, let us be conſtantly praying to him, that he would fill us with his own Spirit, and ſo make and keep us ſpiritual in our whole Converſation.

[APRIL 23. 1689.]

SERMON *XVIII.*

II. WE have God deſcribed by his *Negative Qualities*; three of which are here offered to us, and do now come to be a little explained to us. And,

1. GOD is *Infinite*: This is one difference between him and created Spirits, to whom he is reſembled; and this, with the two following, is expreſſed Negatively, becauſe the Divine perfections are ſuch as ſo far exceed our comprehenſion, that we can better tell what he is *not*, than what he *is*; and by removing of Creature-Imperfections from him, we put our ſelves into a way of admiring at his unſearchable glory. That God is Infinite, the Scripture fully aſſerts. And in our contemplation of this Attribute, we may enquire into three things. 1. *What it is* to be Infinite? 2. The *evidence* that God is ſo. 3. What *other* Attributes do diſcover themſelves in this?

(1.) *WHAT it is to be Infinite?*

A. INFINITE is *GOD of unlimited & unſearchable perfections.* Such a Deſcription is given of God, in regard to this Attribute of his. Pſal.145.3. *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praiſed: and his greatneſs is unſearchable.* Here,

1. INFINITENESS is GOD: it is one of thoſe perfections, which ſhine out in the *Eſſence*, con-

conſidering God as the moſt abſolute firſt Being. Now his Eſſence & Attributes are the ſame, only differenced in our Conceptions· It is therefore an *Incommunicable* perfection of God ; it is his alone Prerogative to be Infinite. Some have thought the third Heaven to be ſo, becauſe it hath nothing to circumſcribe it, and hence to be in no place properly ; but it is a great miſtake, for it is limited by its own Eſſence, and ſo is a finite being : the World cannot be of an Infinite Magnitude ; for then it would have no parts, nor meaſures : God therefore alone challengeth it as his Propriety, and a flower of his Diadem.

2. BY vertue of this Attribute, God is *of unlimited and unſearchable Perfections* : or he is without all limits or bounds of his Eſſence : all created beings are bounded by their Eſſences ; the form acting upon the matter, limits it within its own confines ; but God is unconfined. There can be no *ſearching him out to perfection*, Job 11.7, *&c* and this unlimitedneſs is applicable to all that can be ſaid of him. Hence the Pſalmiſt attributes it to his *Underſtanding*, (Pſal. 147.5.) and our Anſwer before us, predicates it of all his other Attributes ; for which we have ſufficient footſteps in the Scripture.

(2.) FOR the *Evidence*, or to diſcover *wherein* God appears to be Infinite, let us conſider,

1. GOD's Perfection is the *higheſt* perfection, and for that reaſon it muſt needs be Infinite. He is called the *moſt high*, Pſal 18 10. Luk. 1.32. And what is *Supream* is neceſſarily *Infinite*. For let us conceive any thing tho' never ſo high, yet if it be within *any degrees*, there may be ſomething conceived higher than that, but God is ſo high, as to be above all glory and praiſe.

2. GOD's Perfection is ſuch as is *not capable* of receiving any *addition* : it cannot be augmented, or be greater than it is. Rom. 11. 35. *Or who hath firſt given to him, and it ſhall be recompenſed unto him again* ? It then muſt of neceſſity be Infinite : for we are capable of thinking, from degree to degree, and there may be an addition in our conception to every finite thing : there can be no ſtep till we come to infinite, and there we are loſt, for nothing can go beyond that, or be more infinite ; for here are no degrees or ſteps at all.

3. GOD is *Being it ſelf*, and that moſt *abſolutely* ; his Infiniteneſs is radicated in his Eſſence. Abſtracts are Infinite ; Concretes are Finite. A Being from another muſt needs be finite, but Being it ſelf is Infinite ; ſuch is God ; He is the firſt ; had not his Being from any ; is *from Everlaſting* ; and what bounds can be aſcribed to ſuch a Being : if his Being were limited, it were not abſolute ; Beings are therefore finite, becauſe they are derived ; Hence an underived being is Infinite : ſuch is his.

4. ALL *created* perfections are *derived from him*, and therefore his muſt be Infinite : He that is the Fountain from whence all flows to the whole Creation, muſt be without banks or bottom : he that gives, is undoubtedly greater than they that receive : there are uncountable perfections of the ſeveral Creatures in their kind ; and ſome of theſe are alſo vaſtly great, as thoſe of the *Angels* but this muſt be greater, from whom every one of theſe derives, and is ſupplied & upheld continually : what can it be leſs than Infinite, and ſuch is God : ſo we read in, Rom. 11.35,36. *Or who hath firſt given to him, and it ſhall be recompenſed unto him again ? For of him, and through him, and to him are all things : to whom be glory for ever. Amen.*

5. GOD's Perfections are *incomprehenſible* ; this hath been already proved, that he cannot be known as he is in himſelf ; and whence is it, but becauſe the underſtandings of men and Angels are finite ! and that a finite faculty cannot comprehend the knowledge of the Being of God, muſt needs be becauſe (being Infinite) he is too vaſt a Being for their Capacity. *Vorſtius* diſputes againſt the Infiniteneſs of God, becauſe he may be *defined*, and therefore is this *Individual* ; but we have heard that all our Logical notions are improperly aſcribed to him, and that he is not a Being properly, as we conceive of a Being ; much leſs a portion of Being, as a thing which may be defined is ; but he is above being, and all beings are nothing to him, *Iſai.* 40.17. and why nothing, but becauſe there is an infinite diſtance between the firſt being, and all others ; and therefore there is as great a diſtance as between him and nothing. Ten thouſand Worlds are nothing to him, and therefore all the Nations of the World are *leſs than nothing*.

(3.) THERE are two *other* precious *Attributes* of God, which ſhine out and ſhew themſelves in God's *Infinity*.

1. THERE is Divine *Immenſity* ; which is God, without all Dimenſions, or not to be meaſured by the conceived meaſures, by which other beings may, ſuch as Length, Breadth, Heighth, Depth. This is excellently expreſs'd by *Zophar*, in Job 11.7,8,9. *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God ? canſt thou find out the Almighty unto perfection ? It is as high as heaven, what canſt thou do ? deeper than hell, what canſt thou know ? The meaſure thereof is longer than the earth, broader than the ſea.* Becauſe God's Eſſence & Perfection is unlimited, therefore he hath no proper *quantity*, nor is he the ſubject of any Mathematical notion : and this Attribute farther appears to belong to him,

(1.) BECAUSE he is *without any matter* or *parts*, and ſo he muſt be without any *extenſion*. Hence when the Scripture aſſigns to him, *Eyes, Ears, Hands, Feet*, &c. they are not proper, but metaphorical expreſſions, to ſignify thoſe eminent vertues in him, which are ſhadowed by ſuch things in the Creature. And being without matter, he is alſo without *form* ; which belongs to matter, and ſets bounds to it, and ſpins it out into length, breadth, and thickneſs. Theſe things he is a ſtranger to.

(2) BECAUSE God is not a Being by *Participation*, but Being *in the Abſtract*. Concrete beings have dimenſions, but thoſe that are Abſtract exceed all. Sweet things have their degrees, but *ſweetneſs* it ſelf is above all degrees ; and hence this Conſectary ariſeth, viz. *That God's Perfections can neither increaſe, nor be diminiſhed* ; they can be neither greater nor leſs, but are the ſame ever-

everlaſtingly; and what he hath ever been to his People he is ſo ſtill. Augmentation, and Diminution, are notions proper to quantity; and therefore inconſiſtent with theBeing of God. He is as great, and as good now, as he was of old; and his people may confidently conclude from what he hath in times paſt diſcovered of himſelf to his Church, that he is accordingly to be truſted in now.

2. THERE is alſo his *Incomprehenſible Omnipreſence* appears in that he is Infinite; which isGod without all limits of place,being no where ſhut up, nor any where ſhut out. Place is properly the limitation of a Creature, within the bounds of quantity: but if God be Infinite, he is not then capable of any ſuch limitation: and this will appear,

1. BECAUSE that which can be contained in place, is *finite*, and *hath quantity*: all place is finite, becauſe it bounds and limits the thing contained in it; that therefore which is Infinite, is incapable of place, it being contradictory to the Nature of a being that hath no bounds, to be bounded.

2. BECAUSE that which may be comprized in place,may be *meaſured*,and is *figured*, or hath ſome external form or ſhape: for place is properly a meaſure to what is in it; and nothing can be meaſured, but what hath ſome figure or other: but if God be Infinite, and ſo without any dimenſions, then he can have no figure; which is nothing elſe but the diſpoſition of the dimenſions of a thing into ſuch a mode: and hence appears his *Ubiquity*, or Omnipreſence, in regard whereof he is unconfined. For,

1. IF he were not Omnipreſent, he might be in one place and not in another: and then his Being would not be Incomprehenſible but limited.

2. HE muſt be Omnipreſent, becauſe all places arecontained in him; and every other Being in the world. In reſpect of *places*, we have that of the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 139. 7,---10. *Whither ſhall I go from thy ſpirit? or whither ſhall I flee from thy preſence? If I aſcend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermoſt parts of the ſea: Even there ſhall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand ſhall hold me.* For we are not to conceive him to be in any of theſe *as in a place*, or as comprehending him in it. And for *Being*, that of *Paul* is clear, Acts 17. 28. *For in him we live, and move, and have our Being.*

NOW this *Ubiquity* or Omnipreſence of God, is wont to be expreſſed by Divines, according to the Scriptures in theſe particulars,

1. THAT he is *no where excluded*, but wholly within, and together with every place; ſo that there is no place where he is not. The light of Nature diſcovers this, and therefore the *Poet* could ſay, *Jovis omnia plena.* He is nearer to, and more intimate with us, than we are with ourſelves. Acts 17.27. *That they ſhould ſeek after the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us.* And for this reaſon he knows us better than we do our ſelves. 1 Joh. 3: 20. *For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.* He is not *partly* in Heaven, and partly in Earth, as ſome, but his whole entire Eſſence influenceth all places; and tho' he ſhews *more* of his glory in *Heaven*, yet he is no more there eſſentially, than he is on Earth, and in Hell.

2. THAT he is *no where included* or ſhut up; for becauſe he contains all place in him, and is placed no where, but is preſent every where without relation to place, as his Subject; therefore no place can poſſibly include him Acts 17. 24. *God that made the world, and all things therein, ſeeing that he is Lord of heaven & earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands.* If there were *ten thouſand* worlds, he would be entirely preſent with them all.

3. THAT he is altogether *without any motion*, or local mutation: becauſe of his Infinite preſence, his eſſence is not placed more in heaven, than here below; nor doth he leave one place to go to another; but tho' he be every where, yet he reſts unmovable forever: ſo that when the Scripture ſpeaks of his *rending the heaven, and coming down*; of his *looking from heaven the* habitation of his holineſs, of his *riding upon a Cherub and the wings of the wind*, and ſuch like expreſſions; they are modes of Speech accommodated to *our* conceptions, and are to be interpreted of his ſpecial manifeſtations of himſelf in the works of Providence.

4. THAT he is preſent every where, *without filling of any place*: for if he be without quantity, and dimenſions, and have no body, he doth not then fill up any place, *i. e.* his being there doth not exclude the Creature; two created beings cannot occupy the ſame place in the ſame inſtant, but one muſt give way to the other: but God is as much where the Creature is, as where it is not, for that indeed is in him.

5. THAT his Being is *beyond* all place. Place indeed is nothing elſe but a limit of created beings: hence the utmoſt bounds of place reach not beyond the *Convex* of the third Heaven, which tho' it be wonderfully vaſt, yet it is circumſcribed: but we are aſſured that this large room, which graſps all ſecond Beings in its *Concave*, doth not engroſs the whole Eſſence of God, nor is it able to contain it; ſo he acknowledgeth, 1 Kings 8. 27. *But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee,how much leſs this houſe that I have builded?* And theſe are ſome ſtammering notions about the Infiniteneſs of the great GOD.

USE 1. *THIS tells us what a glorious Object for* faith, JEHOVAH *is.* How ſutable an one he is for the Souls of men to place their affiance upon. He that is Infinite in his Eſſence, and unlimited in his perfections,that is Immenſe and Omnipreſent, muſt needs infinitely outdo every other Object whatſoever: whatſoever vain men put their truſt in is a finite good; but he is Infinite; a meaſurable good,but he is Immenſe; can be but in one place at once to help him; but he is Omnipreſent. Who then would not

make choice of God to be his portion, and relinquish all others for him; how happy are they who have so done. Psal. 144. ult. *Happy is that people that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord* Unlimited goodness is the portion of all those: others may measure & sum up their estate, but these never can.

Use 2. *HENCE God is* greatly to be praised *for this Attribute by all his People*: It is the Psalmists inference from this Observation, Psal. 145. 3. *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable.* We should dwell upon the contemplation & acknowledgment of God's greatness. Great *Princes* use to have *Panegyrick Orations* made in commendation of their greatness; who are but poor inconsiderable things to him: and so doth the Prophet of him, Isa. 40. 15, 16, 17. *Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering. All nations before him are as nothing*, &c. One glosseth thus on the text, *Were this great* GOD *sacrificed to proportionably, all the Beasts in* Lebanon *would not suffice for a burnt offering, nor all the Wood thereof for a fire to offer it on, nor all the Men in the world for a* Priest! And it is good food for our faith to insist much in contemplation of God's infinite greatness, and our interest in it.

Use 3. *HENCE we ought to be very fearfull of commiting* secret *Sins.* The Infinite God is *Omnipresent.* When a *Heathen Philosopher* asked of a *Christian*, Where *is your God?* His Answer was, *Let me first understand from you where he is not.* He is not only by his Power and Providence, but also by his Essence Omnipresent. It must therefore be a secret principle of *Atheism* in men, that makes them dare to commit that in secret, which they dare not do openly. Heathen have cautioned against it, because Conscience stands by; but here is that which may serve to put a greater awe upon our hearts, 1 Joh. 3. 20. *For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.* If Conscience be as much as a *thousand* Witnesses, God is more than *ten thousand* Consciences: and God warns us against thinking him afar off, Jer. 23 23,24. *Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord: do not I fill heaven & earth? saith the Lord.* Let every place we are in be a *Bethel* to us: think, *God is in this place of a very truth!* And let that make us very wary to our selves, what we think, speak, or do, it all stands *in the light of his Countenance*, and he can bring it into open light, and lay it forth before the Sun.

Use 4. *THIS also should encourage secret duties.* They cannot be lost, the Infinite God being every where present, he stands by you when you pray in secret, hears every groan, registers every sigh, bottles every tear: never fear being so private & retired as to be sequestred from him: did we more credit, or more think of this Attribute of God, it would make us more active & cheerfull, in most close and retired Services of God, and out of doubt this would be a blessed way wonderfully to promote intimate Communion between him and us.

Use 5. *HENCE their misery must needs be great, who have this God for their Enemy.* As the man is, so is his strength; to have the Infinite and Omnipresent God engaged against a man for his ruin, is an infelicity that cannot be computed: as Infinite Mercy is the portion of those that love him; so Infinite Wrath must fall upon all those that hate him. And this should be a loud and awakening call to all, and you *young ones* in particular, to *make haste*, and get as far as you can out of this danger, by seeking an Interest in Christ, and shrouding your selves under his shadow: till when, you ly open every moment to this wofull hazard, being by nature Children of wrath. Think then solemnly and frequently, what it is *to fall into the hands of the Infinite* GOD, Infinite in presence, and Infinite in power, and Infinite in revenging Justice; and can the danger you go in be less than Infinite?

Use 6. *GOD's People ought then to expect to receive great things from him.* Isa. 45. 11. *Thus saith the Lord, the holy One of Israel, and his maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.* God loves to do all things like himself, to display his Infinite greatness in all his works for his People. Have you this God for your God? Be not afraid to put up great Petitions, to ask great deliverances; and having so done, to expect and wait for great Salvations. Be not afraid of exhausting his treasures, or putting him beyond his ability: None ever could poze an Infinite God; be wary then of limiting the great GOD, do not set bounds to him, his People have sometimes done so, and it hath provoked him; Psal. 78. 41. *Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the holy One of Israel.* They set him bounds who hath none, and that offended him: when *Satan*, or your own misgiving hearts offer to undermine your faith, and make you to call in question the possibility of the performance of any good word, that he hath given you to hope in, silence all again with this consideration, *It is not a finite Creature*, but an *Infinite God*, that I have placed my hope upon.

[MAY 21. 1689.]

SERMON *XIX.*

2. GOD is *Eternal.* This is another Divine Quality attributed to him, and is also his Propriety. In cleering up which Attribute, we may first inquire *what* Eternity is, and then make it *evident*, that God is Eternal.

[1.] WE may take up the notion of this Attribute in this Description; *Eternity is God, without possibility of beginning, succession, or ending of time.* The word is supposed to signify,

beyond

beyond any term. This is alſo an Attribute appearing from the *Eſſence* of God, conſidered as the moſt abſolute firſt being. This alſo is a *Negative* Attribute, aſcribing a perfection to God, by removing an imperfection from him. The difference between the perfections of God, and thoſe of the Creature, which are the moſt noble, is in one reſpect diſcerned, in that his are *immenſurate*, whereas theirs may be meaſured. Now there are two ſorts of meaſures that may be applied to Creatures, and by which they may be comprehended, viz. *Quantity* and *Duration*: the former whereof is meaſured by *place*, the latter by *time*. Both of theſe are to be removed from, or denied to God; and becauſe we cannot graſp in our narrow and ſhort underſtanding theſe perfections poſitively, hence we are neceſſitated to aſcribe them to him negatively. In regard to the former of theſe we ſay he is Infinite, of which already; of the latter we declare him to be Eternal, which is now under conſideration: and becauſe the Attribute is negative, it will help to our right Contemplation of it, to conſider the nature of *Time*, the contrary negative to what is Eternity, and is beſt known by denying all the notions of time to it. *Time* then, is properly *the meaſure or limit of the Creatures Duration.* It is not eaſy to expreſs the true notion of time; it hath not any Eſſence or Exiſtence of it's own, but is an *adjunct*, or in ſome ſenſe a quality that belongs to all ſecond beings: it is therefore no where to be found by it ſelf, but always adhering to the thing as it's ſubject: it is, as it were, the regiſter of the Creatures Age: it tells us how long it hath been, and when it ceaſeth to be. There are *three* things in which the nature of Time is conceived of by us: or there are two *Terms*, and a *Medium*, which appertain unto it; and all bear a reſpect to the Creature, as the ſubject of them: *viz.*

1. IT hath a *Beginning.* Time is that which meets the Creature at its Origination; that which was not, muſt have a date ſet to its riſe and entity: and that is the firſt Article of time; hence, when we read of a Creation, we alſo read of a beginning, (*Gen.* 1. 1.) which proves them to be the offspring of time.

2. IT hath a *Succeſſion.* Time is a meaſured duration; hence the Creatures duration is meaſured by it ſucceſſively; time is not all at once, but it flows by degrees: time is not a ſtanding, but a moving thing, and it is always in motion, without any ceſſation: on this account we have thoſe partly natural, and partly civil Months, Years, which ſerve to compute how long it is ſince the beginning of ſuch things exiſtence, or action, or by which we keep its Annals.

3. IT hath an *Ending* too. This is the Periodicall term of time, in reſpect to the Creature, when it hath gone thro' the ſtage of Action, and puts off its being again, then its time is at an end, and when there is no more of the thing, it lays off this reſpect too. Time keeps the Creature company, as long as it keeps its being, and then it leaves it.

NOW from the conſideration of theſe revolutions of time, we obſerve a threefold reſpect with which it looks upon the thing: from whence it is diſtinguiſhed into *paſt*, *preſent* and *to come.* Time *paſt* is all the time which the thing hath run thro' ſince it firſt had its Exiſtence till the point in which it now is; it hath paſt thro', and left it behind it. Time *preſent* is the ſeaſon juſt before the Creature, or that Individual moment of Exiſtence, which is juſt now in being. Time *to come* is that which remains of the allotted duration of it, till the laſt ſand be run out, and it ſhall have no more to do with this being or exiſtence. In theſe reſpects we ſay of the Creature, that yeſterday is gone, to day is preſent, to morrow is to come; and we can in no ſenſe bring yeſterday and to morrow to commence with to day. Hence alſo things are ſaid to be either young or old, according to the number of days or years that have gone over them ſince they entred upon the ſtage. Theſe are the more obſervable conſiderations about time; the negation of theſe things will tell us what *Eternity* is, or at leaſt what it is not; and when we apply them to any ſubject, we therein declare it to be Eternal. In the Deſcription therefore of God's Eternity, we remove from him all thoſe notions that are applicable to time. Hence there are three things in the Deſcription, which will engroſs all that hath been ſaid, by way of remotion.

(1) THAT *he is without Beginning, Succeſſion, or Ending of Time.* His duration admits of none of theſe limitations, but excludes them *all.*

1. HE *had no Beginning.* As there never was a time when he was not, ſo neither could it ever be ſaid, that he began to be. He is without Original; he never was a poſſible being, but was ever *in Act*: he never was in a ſtate of non-being, from whence he was to paſs into exiſtence, and for this reaſon is he called *the Ancient of Days.*

2. HE *hath no Succeſſion.* There have no times paſſed over him, but he enjoys himſelf in an everlaſting *NOW.* Years, Months, Days and Hours cannot be aſcribed to him; it cannot be truly ſaid of Him, that he *was*; but that he IS: hence his name, *I AM*, and that of *Chriſt*, Joh. 8. 58. *Jeſus ſaid unto them, verily verily I ſay unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.* He hath lived as many thouſand Years as he hath Days; for which reaſon the Scripture tells us, that with him there is no difference between one *day* and a thouſand years Pſal. 90. 4. *For a thouſand years in thy ſight are but as yeſterday, when it is paſt, and as a watch in the night.* 2 Pet. 3. 8. *But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thouſand years, and a thouſand years as one day.* He hath in himſelf a full and perfect poſſeſſion of Everlaſting and interminable life, *all at once*, and hath no ſucceſſion of thoughts, notions, or viſions, but drinks up all his felicity at once and eternally.

3. HE *hath no Ending.* There never will come a time when his being will ceaſe; but he will be the ſame after Infinite Ages; hence he is ſaid to be *from Everlaſting to Everlaſting*, Pſal. 90. 2.

AND from hence it follows further,

1 *THAT there is nothing in him, that is paſt, preſent, or to come.* For theſe are only the *Aſpects of time* upon the ſubjects of it; all things are therefore ſaid to be *preſent before him.* Eternity admits of no diviſions; it is a ſtanding thing: things fleet in reſpect of themſelves, but in reſpect to him, he ſees them in the ſame Everlaſting Inſtant; he looks neither backward nor forward; things paſt are preſent with him, and ſo are things to come; and therefore, as the notion of preſent hath regard to Succeſſion, it is not compatible to him.

2. THAT *he is before, after, and in all time.* I confeſs theſe notions are improper, but they ſerve to hint ſomething of his Eternity to us: he is *before* time, for he made it; hence he is called *the King of Ages*, 1 Tim. 1. 17. He is *in* all time; not as a ſubject of it, becauſe he co-exiſts with it; tho' it makes no Parentheſis in his Eternity; his being having no dependence upon it. Hence thoſe things are improperly aſcribed to him, Rev. 1. 4. *Which is, which was, and which is to come.* And is *after* it, Iſai. 44. 6. *Thus ſaith the Lord,---- I am the* LAST.

3 THAT *he cannot wax old.* For what is it that denominates a thing old, but that it hath continued for a great tract of time? But God is never more ancient than himſelf, nor is he otherwiſe, than he was when he made the world; for he had then been from Eternity. The Scripture indeed ſometimes calls him *the ancient of Days*, and ſaith, *there is no end of his years*; but it is to ſute our Conceptions, which are incapable of thinking of Eternity, but only under the notion of an Infinite Time; but he who is not a ſubject of time cannot be old, becauſe age is meaſured by time.

(2.) THAT *he is without* poſſibility *of Beginning, Succeſſion, or Ending of Time.* And this is ſomething more than to be ſo: he not only lives forever; but he cannot dy: he is without any *potentiality*, or paſſive power; and ſo Chriſt came under the revolutions of time: which will be fully exhibited in the next particular.

3. ETERNITY is *GOD*, i. e. It is his alone *Prerogative* to be Eternal. It is a title which belongs to none but the Firſt Being: all other things are the offspring of time. But for our right underſtanding of this, we muſt a little diſtinguiſh of the different uſage of the word [*Eternity*] in Scripture. Sometimes it is uſed for a *ſet period* of time, which is of *long* continuance, but yet hath its date: ſo the word forever, and everlaſting, are uſed often in the *Old Teſtament*. He that ſerved till the Year of *Jubilee*, is ſaid to ſerve *forever*, (Exod. 21. 6.) the *Ceremonial* ſtatutes are ſaid to be *forever*, (Numb 10. 8.) and therefore, ſometimes a proper Eternity is diſtinguiſhed by the reduplication of theſe words, as *forever & ever, and from Everlaſting to Everlaſting.* Again, There are ſome Creatures, which are made for *endleſs continuance*, and are accordingly made without any ſeeds of Corruption in their Conſtitution: ſuch are all conſtant natures, as the *Third Heaven, Angels*, and the *Souls* of men; which, becauſe they ſhall actually abide forever, and have natures incapable of decaying, either by outward Created force, or any inward inclination to diſſolutions, are therefore in a ſenſe ſaid to be Eternal, as being indeed actually Everlaſting. Yet there is a vaſt difference between the Everlaſtingneſs of theſe, and the Eternity of God. For,

1. *THEY all of them had a beginning:* They received their being by Creation. (*Gen.* 1. 1.) of all ſecond beings it may be ſaid, that once they *were not: Angels* themſelves, as glorious as they now are, once were nothing, they are indeed full as old as time; time and they began at the ſame inſtant: hence they are called *Sons of the morning*: but follow them up by the meaſures of time, and you ſhall come to that moment when they firſt brake out of the womb of non-entity, and ſo are not properly eternal, which denies any Original.

2. *THEY have a Succeſſion in their being.* Their duration hath it's meaſures; they do not, cannot enjoy an *Eternal now*; but it muſt be a continuing now. Being finite beings, all their adjuncts or qualities muſt have their meaſures, and conſequently their duration: hence ſome *Divines* have diſtinguiſhed of *Eternity*, and *Evi-ternity*; aſcribing the former to God, and the latter to theſe ever enduring Creatures; different from the former, in that it hath a Succeſſion, which the other hath not: for tho' the *Sun* ſhall ceaſe to be, by whoſe revolutions we are won't to count up the preſent Ages, yet the continuance of the Creatures duration not ceaſing, it's everlaſtingneſs muſt needs be progreſſive.

3. *THEY have a paſſive power*, rendring them capable alſo of an *End*: for tho' they have no tendency to mortality in their Natures, nor can the whole force of the Creation make any ſuch impreſſion on them, as to deſtroy their being; yet they are ſubject to him, who made them; and that God who created them, can alſo annihilate them; they are dependent Beings, and continue at the meer pleaſure of their Creator: who, as he ſpake the word, and they were made, ſo can ſpeak them back into nothing: yea, that they do not return to their nothing, is becauſe they are upheld by the word of his power. (*Heb.* 1. 3.) And in this reſpect it is ſaid that *he only hath Immortality.* (1 Tim. 1. 16.) they live on his Courteſy.

[2.] FOR the *evidencing* of this Attribute, or making it appear *that God is Eternal.* Tho' *Scripture-Teſtimony* is enough to eſtabliſh an Article of Faith, (in which beſides, *Pſal.* 90. 2. 92. 8. 102. 27. *Joh.* 8. 58. there are many more) yet there are other *Cogent Arguments*, to evince it. God muſt needs be Eternal,

1. *BECAUSE God is an abſolute and neceſſary Being, and without all Cauſes.* Abſolute Being is Eternal: that which once was not, & now is, muſt have an Efficient to give being to it, it could not be its own Author; and hence all timed beings are *Cauſate.* Hence Chriſt proves his Eternity from his Abſolute being. Joh. 8. 58. *Jeſus ſaid unto them, Verily verily I ſay unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.* 2.

2. BECAUSE *he was before time*, and there was nothing before that but Eternity. If He was when no Created being was, He was before time; for this as we heard, is the meaſure of the Creatures duration, and is therefore inſeparable from it. God was before the *World* was, yea before that *nothing* or privation which was before it. Pſal. 139. 16. *Thine eyes did ſee my ſubſtance yet being unperfect, and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were faſhioned, when as yet there was none of them.* He ſaw the Creation in its non-entity, Prov. 8. 23, 25, 26. *I was ſet up from everlaſting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. Before the mountains were ſettled; before the hills was I brought forth: While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the higheſt part of the duſt of the world.* And ſhould it return to its nothingneſs again, he would be after it.

3. BECAUSE *God made Time*, and all the things that are the ſubjects of it. The Creator muſt needs be Eternal; for in Creating things, he created time; which is but an Adjunct of them, and the maker is before the thing that is made: all times are therefore ſaid to be *in his hand*, Pſal. 31. 15.

4. IF *He be Infinite*, he muſt be Eternal, that he is ſo hath been already proved. That an Infinite being ſhou'd be of a finite duration is a contradiction; for what is Eternity but (if I may ſo ſay) an *Infinite Time*, or a continuance without Bounds.

5. *IF he be Unchangeable*, he muſt be Eternal. That he is ſo, will come nextly to be made good. This he cannot be except he be Eternal; for what greater change can there be, than that which is from not being, to being: which he muſt have undergone, if he were not Eternal?

6. IF God were not Eternal, *then muſt he be Originated*, and that muſt be either by *Creation* or *Generation*: in either of theſe ways he muſt have an *Efficient*, or ſome Author that muſt give him his being: but he is beholden to none. Rom. 11. 35. *Or who hath firſt given to him, and it ſhall be recompenſed unto him again?* Yea THAT would be God, and not HE: Yea, ſo he would be a ſubject capable either of *Annihilation*, or *Corruption*, which is the Imperfection of things created or generated; but God is neither way expoſed, but is a ſtanding Being: for his Name is, I AM. *Gen.* 3. 14.

USE 1. *HERE we ſee what a vaſt* diſproportion *there is between God and the Creature.* Of him, and him only can it be ſaid, *From everlaſting to everlaſting thou art God!* He gave beginning to all things; himſelf alone is without beginning: The beſt of Men are but *of Yeſterday*, and know not where they ſhall be to morrow, (*Job* 8. 9.) all Creatures had an Original: all but ſome few ſhall have a diſſolution: and how infinitely diſtant muſt he, who is the *Father of Eternity*, be from them that are the Children of Time?

USE 2. *SEE here the reaſon why the Church of God ſtands in all Ages.* It is becauſe they have a God who is Eternal, who hath undertaken for them: This therefore is declared to be the happy Priviledge of his People in Deut. 33. 27. *The eternal God is thy refuge* —. For, becauſe he is, therefore all his Perfections are Eternal, *Iſa.* 59. 1. their refuge therefore abides, and as long as their *rock* lives, how can they be miſerable? becauſe their God can never ceaſe to be, they can never want a refuge.

USE 3. LEARN hence how *fearful a thing it muſt be for any to have this God for their Enemy.* When the Apoſtle would ſet forth their woful infelicity, he mentions him under the title of the living God, Heb 10. 31. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* Living intends his Eternity When God himſelf ſpeaks of taking Vengeance on Sinners, to make the threatning the more amazing. He puts them in mind of this Attribute, *Deut.* 32. 40. For if he be eternal, then muſt their Plagues be endleſs. For as long as he and they abide, they muſt expect to have him for their Enemy; And this may well put Sinners into Conſternation, and make them to ſay as Iſa. 33. 14. —— *Who among us ſhall dwell with everlaſting burnings?* And let this be a loud and awakening call to ſuch as are in their natural ſtate, to make haſt to get their Peace made with this God, leſt you fall under the Impreſſions of his Wrath, which when once it is kindled into a fire againſt you, will never go out again, but being blown up by the breath of an Everlaſting God, will burn without end; beware of falling into his hands, except you would have eternal Miſery to be your portion.

USE 4. THIS may teach us *whither to go for Eternal Life*, and ſhew us *the great folly of all thoſe who go for it elſewhere.* Here is an Object eternally good, and eternally great. Well might the Diſciples ſtay with Chriſt for this reaſon, when others went away from him, *Joh* 6 All other Objects of truſt are temporary, and for that very cauſe muſt ſooner or later fail to crown the expectations of thoſe that rely upon them; they are the product of time, and can give no title to Eternity: how then can they be ſuitable and ſufficient for the felicity of the children of Men. Remember, you have an Immortal Subſtance in you, and were made for an Everlaſting duration; and if you have not an Object that will abide forever, your hope and happineſs muſt expire, & endleſs Miſeries abide you: Make haſt then to get a title to the Love and Favour of this God; and remember it muſt be done now. Young ones, you ſtand on the brink of Eternity, the leaſt touch will put you over into it; make ſure then before it be too late, that he is yours, ſo ſhall everlaſting mercies be your Inheritance.

USE 5. LET me here *Congratulate the Admirable happineſs of all thoſe who have made this God their truſt.* It is a poor felicity that is ſpun out no farther then the thread of a frail life, and greater is not to be had among all creatures; for they cannot beſtow that which they have

not;

not: but they whose faith is built upon *Jehovah*, have eternal happiness: He will save you with an everlasting Salvation; he hath everlasting strength to perform it for you, Isa. 26.4 --- *In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.* And he hath everlasting love to bestow upon you, Jer. 31. 3. —— *I have loved thee with an everlasting love.* And he hath everlasting mercies to conferr, Psal. 103. 17. -- *The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him* ——. Rejoice then in your portion, because being infinite you can feel no want in the fruition of it, so being everlasting, you can never be deserted by it, nor will it ever fail, how then can you chose but be blessed by it forever, even world without end!

[June 18. 1689.]

SERMON XX.

3. GOD is *Unchangeable.* This is the last of the Divine qualities mentioned in the Description: In clearing up of this Attribute, we may first enquire into the Nature of it, and then give the evidence that God is Immutable. Of God's Unchangableness take this Description: *It is God without any possibility of any kind of change:* It is that whereby God is ever the same that he ever was. Things may be said to be mutable in diverse respects: and all these are to be removed from our con eptions of God: Mutable things are so either in outward or inward respects, Extrinsecally, or Intrinsecally.

1. *EXTRINSECALLY*; And here the more observable Changes, are either in relation to *time* or *place*; those things that have time go over them are changed, for time it self makes an outward change in them; and a motion from place to place is a change external, neither of those can be ascribed to God; and therefore upon the former account he is Eternal, on the latter he is Infinite; these belong to the Attribute already considered.

2. *INTRINSECALLY*; And that is referrible to the Being, and essential perfections of the thing; in which it is more properly said to change, and these are the things that this Attribute is peculiarly predicated of which now come under our consideration.

1. *UNCHANGABLENESS is God*; This also is one of those Incommunicable properties, which the Creatures share not with him in; a title which is a Prerogative belonging alone to the first being, it is a flower of his Crown: Examine all second beings, and they are the subjects of Change; not to mention the Creatures here below, which are every day changing faces and habits; the very Cœlestial bodies, the heavens and those great lights there, time & change do rule them: Heathen Philosophers thought them Immutable, as being Incorruptible; but the Scripture contradicts them, and herein makes it appear that they are not God; Psal. 102. 25, 26. *Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure.* Absolute Immutability cannot truly & properly be predicated of any other being whatsoever, but appertains to him alone.

2. IT is God without any *possibility of Change*: He not only actually changeth not; but it is impossible that he should. It may in a sense be said of the third Heavens, that they do not actually change, tho' they have changed, and have a succession, yet being constant natures, they are the same they were in the first moment of their Creation, essentially; yet there is a passive power in them, they may receive impressions from his hand who made them: but there is no such thing in God, Psal. 102. 27. *Thou art the same.*—— This Attribute is fully asserted, Jam. 1. 17. ---*The Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.* There are two expressions used to illustrate it: no *variation*, the word is used to express the Sun's variation or change of place, every day, in passing thro' the Signs in the Zodiack; God is called a Sun in *Psal.* 84. 11. But he keeps the same place, never varies: and no *shadow of turning*; the first lines of a Picture are called it's shadow, by shadows we understand the least appearance or rude draught of such a thing: the word *turning* also alludes to the Sun, and either points at his turning about every day, passing out of one Hemisphere into another, and so constantly rolling about the earth; or to his Summer and Winter Tropicks; it is sometimes going to one, and then back again to the other: the Father of lights hath no such turning, nor so much as a resemblance of it, but is stedfastly immutable.

NOW whatsoever is in God, is God, and hence he is all Essence: yet for our more distinct apprehensions of him; we may consider him, either as to his being, or his faculties, and take notice how he is unchangable in each of them.

1. *IN his Being or Essence he is Immutable*: In his being he is God, and thence he argues his own Unchangableness, Mal. 3. 6. *I am the Lord, I change not.* To be God, and to be changable is a contradiction: If the being of God were capable of a Change, it must be either, from not being to being, and then there must have been a time when he was not, which his Eternity contradicts, and is inconsistent with his absolute being; or from being to not being, by way of annihilation, which cannot stand with his Eternity, which is as much without end as beginning; and must also be supposed to be either from himself, or from some other Agent; not from himself, because he wills his own being & glory; not from another, for it must be a more powerfull than he; whereas all second beings are to him nothing and less than nothing and vanity; or from this sort of being to another, which is equally impossible; for it must be either to a more

more perfect being, and that he cannot, becauſe his being is abſolutely perfect, it compriseth all ſorts of perfections moſt perfectly & eminently in it; or to a more imperfect, and then he would ceaſe to be God, for to be God, and to be imperfect, is a contradiction: or by ſome alteration in ſome properties, or qualities, which alſo cannot be, by reaſon of his ſimplicity, for being without any compoſition, there can be no potentiality in him of being other than he is: Change in the Eſſence of a thing implies a paſſive power; but it is contrary to Divine ſimplicity to have ſuch a power: His name, *I am what I am*, clearly teacheth his Immutability; all Eſſential Changes are reduced to the heads, either of Creation & Annihilation, or Generation and Corruption, or Augmentation & Diminution, or Alteration of Qualities: and becauſe none of theſe do or can touch the firſt being, he muſt therefore needs be eſſentially Unchangable.

2. *IN his Faculties*: For tho' the Divine Simplicity aſſures us that there is no faculty in God really diſtinct from his Eſſence; yet in our Conception we muſt diſtinguiſh: God therefore is pleaſed to ſpeak of himſelf to us, as having an Underſtanding, a Will, and Affections now, becauſe theſe are all himſelf; hence this Immutability is ſo predicated of them, and may be evidenced concerning each of them.

(1.) *IN his Underſtanding.* This is ſaid to be Infinite, (*Pſal.* 147. 5.) and if ſo it muſt needs be Unchangable: there are no degrees in that which is infinite, more it cannot be, for nothing can be greater; nor leſs, for then it ſhould not be infinite: Infiniteneſs is an abſolute perfection, beyond which there are none. If God's Underſtanding were changable, it muſt be either by encreaſe or loſs; but by neither, not by *loſs* for what can poſſibly impair that glorious faculty of his, or blot out, and make him to forget thoſe eternal Ideas! not by *encreaſe*, for that muſt be either by a knowledge of more things, or a better knowledge of the ſame things; but neither; for this muſt be either referring to himſelf and his own Nature & Perfections, or to other things relating to the Creature; both of which are impoſſible: For,

1. IN reſpect of *himſelf*, there have no Changes paſt upon his Eſſence, but it is the ſame it was: and how ſhould not he who hath known himſelf from all Eternity, be throughly acquainted with all his Perfections: and if his knowledge be himſelf, as hath been evidenced, how could it ever graſp in any thing leſs than the whole latitude of his Infinite Being?

2. IN reſpect of *other things*: The Scripture aſcribes to him a foreknowledge, Rom. 8. 29. ---*Whom he did foreknow.*---Acts 2 23. This is, in our Conception, that Idea which God had in his vaſt Underſtanding from Eternity of all ſecond beings, and all that did concern them, or of the whole Affair of Creation and Providence, to the very death of a poor *Sparrow*, and numbering of the hairs of our heads, according to which, without the leaſt variation, all things do come to paſs in their appointed time and manner, ſo that there is nothing new or caſual to him; all things muſt be as he will: His *Science* comprehends all *poſſibilities*, and as well what are not, nor ever ſhall be, as what have a being in their Seaſon: his *Preſcience* underſtands his own *Purpoſes* which cut the hair between meer poſſibilities & futurities, for he doth all things, and that according to the Counſel of his Will, *Eph.* 1. 11. So that either he muſt alter his intentions, or ſome things muſt fall out otherwiſe than ever he thought of, or his knowledge of them muſt be fixt and full: for he is no ſtranger to his own thoughts, (*Jer.* 29.11.) the latter of theſe cannot be, becauſe of the Creatures abſolute dependency, Acts 17. 28. *For in him we live, and move, and have our being.* Nor the former, For,

(2.) *IN his Will he is alſo Unchangable*: The Will in Man is a faculty, whereby he doth freely make his own choice, and determine of his own Actions: accordingly the Scripture aſſigns a Will to God, by which he hath conſulted, reſolved & decreed about all his works of Efficiency, under which are comprized all things that come to paſs in time; that there is ſuch a Will of his that hath ſo decreed, is fully aſſerted in his word, and neceſſary from the conſideration of his nature. That this Will of his is Unchangable, appears not only becauſe it is himſelf, and differs in our conceptions, only modally from his Eſſence; but if we conſider, that God is the higheſt Cauſe by Counſel of his own Actions: hence this Will of his determines nothing, but upon a ſure and unalterable Principle: all the reaſons why men alter their purpoſes at any time, are incompatible to him, as may be exemplified; that which makes a man to change his reſolves, is either unſtableneſs, conviction or compulſion, but there is nothing of theſe influential upon God.

1. *NOT inſtability in himſelf.* That which makes men to be off and on, now for a thing, and preſently againſt it, is a fluctuating, unſtable mind, and proceeds partly from a great deal of ignorance of the mind, partly from the mobility of the Affections, neither of which can be imputed to him: the irreſolute man doth not know his own mind, but God doth his, Jer. 29. 11. *I know the thoughts that I think towards you*——.

2. *NOT conviction of any thing not foreſeen*, which ſhould give him reaſon to alter his mind: for God had at one ſight the intuition of all that could concern the matter; his ends were the moſt eligible, the means the moſt wiſe; there was no precipitancy, no overſight or error in any of them; there is no intervening accident that can alter theſe reaſons, which he did not underſtand and caution againſt, when he thus determined.

3. *NOT Compulſion.* His hand can never be ſo weak, as not to be able to bring about what his Will hath decreed: he can never be put upon it to take new meaſures, for want of ability to carry any thing through, which ſuited his pleaſure; for he can do any manner of thing, and doth always what pleaſeth him, Pſal. 115.3. *But our God is in the heavens, he hath done whatſoever*

soever he pleased. As he hath no dependance on any Instruments to fulfill his purposes, so much less can he be put by, or obstructed in any thing that he doth so intend, Isa. 14. 26, 27.----*For the Lord of hosts, hath purposed, and who shall disanul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?*

3. *IN his Affections.* God is pleased to assume to himself Affections, as love, hatred, desire, loathing, delight, anger, *&c.* these also so far as we conceive them to belong to God are Unchangable; and for this reason we find that God cannot repent, (*Numb.* 23. 19) 1 Sam. 15. 29. *And also the strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man that he should repent.* Now Repentance in propriety of speech, is a change upon the Affections: hence when *Christ* loveth one, he loves to the end. Rational Affections are postures of the will to an Object: *Affections in God are nothing else but the respect of his decreeing Will to the Creature,* and because his Will is unalterable, therefore these change not. Nor doth this Unchangableness in God's Will destroy the freedom or liberty of it; it is no contradiction to say that God is free to do as he will, and yet is Immutable in his Decrees; for God willed all these things from Eternity, because all pleased him, and having so willed he can never be again dissatisfied at his own Will, because the reasons upon which he so determined stand forever; he is therefore said to be of *one mind,* Job. 23. 13. Nor doth it argue a change in his Will, because he hath commended one thing and proposed another; his command saith what *should* be, his purpose what *shall* be; God's willing the act of *Adam's* eating the forbidden fruit, & his willing it to be *Adam's* duty not to eat it, shew nothing of two wills, for both of these are concurring media to the same end. And whereas God seems to promise and not perform, to threaten and not execute; this rightly understood makes no Argument to prove him Changable: he himself gives us a Clue through this Labyrinth, Jer. 18. 7,---11. *At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it: If that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.*—— God dispenseth his absolute purposes to his Creatures, under conditionate promises and threatnings. Finally, when God is said in Scripture, *to Repent,* it is accommodated to humane language, it intends only a *Change* in his *Providences,* not in *his Will*; in the Creature, and not in God: He decreed Unchangably, all the Changes that go over the World: And this tells us, that an Unchangable God, can, without any alteration in himself, *bring* about all the Vicissitudes that pass upon the mutable Creature: when men alter their carriages, it is because they do repent, and therefore God is said to repent, when he doth so, tho' he doth in it what he eternally intended to do.

USE 1. *THIS shews us what a glorious Object GOD is, for the Souls of Men to confide in*: what a *happiness* it is for any to have this God for their portion; the vast difference between God and the Creature in point of trust. The very first reason which the wise Man gives, why the Creature is a vain Object, and not to be confided in, is because of it's *Changablenes,* Eccl. 1. 4. This casts disparagement upon the best of them: if we confide in riches, they have Eagle's wings, *&c.* if in honours, they are slippery places; if in pleasures, that which is delightsome to day, is tedious to morrow; if in friends, they love and hate upon every turn; but God is ever the same, and that Unchangably: his other Attributes will tell us how great a portion, and how full of good he is: this added to them, saith he is a safe portion; there is no danger in trusting in him; none ever did so that were put to shame: many have come away ashamed from other Objects, none ever from him.

USE 2. HENCE it must needs be a *fearfull thing to fall under the wrath of this God.* This Attribute speaks sadly to all those, that neglecting to improve the day of his Grace, do pull upon themselves the day of his Vengeance. God hath declared to us in his word, that he will certainly destroy all such as accept not of his offered grace in the day of it; and wo to them that run the adventure of this hazard. God adds the consideration of this Attribute, as well to confirm his Menaces as his Promises, 1 *Sam.* 15. 29. God hath resolved that all such shall perish, and he will never be of another mind; prayers, tears, supplications, intercessions, will not profit, or move him at all, who is inexorable: The plagues therefore of impenitent Sinners must needs be Everlasting.

USE 3. WE here see the *ground of the Saints Perseverance*; or the Reason why God's People can never fall from Grace, or lose the title to Glory bestowed on them in the New-Covenant: It is because the Unchangable God hath undertaken for them, and stands engaged to them: His Unchangable *love* is set upon them; his Unchangable *word* is past unto them: his sure & stedfast *Covenant* is plighted with them. They are Creatures, and so mutable, their grace in it self might cease, their resolutions alter; but his Immutable Assistance can never fail. He hath said, he will never leave nor forsake them: there might be reason eno' in them for him so to do; but there is this reason grounded in his Nature, which forbids him; He hath sworn in truth, and he cannot go from it, (*Mal.* 3. 6.) if they do not believe, yet he is faithful, if they do not pray, yet he cannot forget them. Till it can be made appear that God is Changable, it will never be proved that a Beleever can fall away so as to lose the Inheritance.

USE 4. LET this then be the *encouragement of God's People in a world of Change*: Live upon this Attribute; it is enough to keep up your spirits, and strengthen you with patience to run that weary and difficult race that you are called unto. It is true, you meet with many Changes among Creatures; yea, there is nothing here, but what is Changable; you

are

are toſſed up and down from one change to another, changes of eſtates, changes of affections, changes of troubles, mutation in all; and if here were all you had to truſt to, you were very unhappy: but yet faint not, nor be weary, for in all theſe you have an Unchangable God to ſtand by you: get your faith then well eſtabliſhed on this Attribute, beleeve God to be ſuch an one. One great reaſon why God's People are ſo turmoiled & toſt in their minds, and cannot ſettle as they ought, in their truſting upon God, is, becauſe they ſee all other things rolling in their Viciſſitudes, and ſuſpect that he will do ſo too. *Habakkuk*'s triumphant faith was built upon this Attribute, which made him take that Heroick reſolve, Chap. 3. 17, 18. *Although the fig-tree ſhall not bloſſom, neither ſhall fruit be in the vines, the labour of the olive ſhall fail, and the fields ſhall yield no meat, the flock ſhall be cut off from the fold, and there ſhall be no herd in the ſtalls: Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my ſalvation.* And could you thus do; tho' the Seas roar, and the waves riſe and roll, and Mountains themſelves come tumbling down, yet the *Rock* on which you are built being unmovable, you might ſit ſtill and clap your hands, and ſay, this God is our God forever; and he will be our guide unto Death, and our portion in Eternity.

[JULY 16. 1689.]

SERMON *XXI.*

WE have been conſidering of the *Divine Qualities*; what next and laſtly follows in the Deſcription, is the *Vertues of God*: concerning which in general, we are to obſerve that all the Divine Qualities are to be aſcribed to each of them, as well as to his Being; and indeed they are all of them but his Being, variouſly apprehended by us: and by theſe Qualities it is, that theſe Vertues of his are diſtinguiſhed from thoſe in Angels & Men, which bear the like denomination: We aſcribe as *Being*, ſo *Wiſdom*, &c. to ſome Creatures; but we do not put the Epithet of *Infinite*, &c. upon them; add theſe to any one of them, and that ſpeaks them to be Divine. As to the Being or Eſſence of God, it hath already been ſpoken to; and how theſe properties belong to it, hath been diſcovered in aſſerting and proving them to be God; for indeed they are ſuch Attributes, as reſult from the conſideration of God, as the moſt abſolute firſt Being. How we may aſcribe them to theſe Vertues is plain, if we conſider what it is to be *Infinite*, &c. and then put the titles to his *Wiſdom*, &c. and that, if his Being be ſo, theſe muſt be ſo, is plain; becauſe whatſoever is *in God, is God*: it would be a diſparagement to his Divine Nature to aſcribe any thing to him, that is not like himſelf. It remains therefore only to ſpeak of theſe Vertues of God ſeverally; and there are *Six* of them here aſſerted concerning him, as more eminently diſplaying of him.

1. THE *firſt* of theſe is *Wiſdom*: of which take this Deſcription, *It is God, by one Simple and Eternal Act, both knowing of himſelf, and all poſſible beings; and contriving & ordering all future things after the beſt manner.* The word *Wiſdom* is ſometimes taken in a reſtrained ſenſe, and then it intends properly a skill of chuſing & applying means ſuitably to the end: ſometimes in a more large, and then it comprehends all knowledge univerſally; in which reſpect we call a Man of great knowledge and skill, a *wiſe Man*: thus, after our manner, we may apply it to God. In Man we take notice of ſeveral faculties, which are ſo many principles in him, or powers; and in theſe we obſerve ſeveral Vertues that do adorn them. The principal faculties in the rational Soul are the Underſtanding & Will; and in theſe are the Intellectual & Moral Vertues: among the Intellectual Vertues, *Wiſdom* is the chief; and taken in its latitude, it comprehends them all: and becauſe God is the moſt Intelligent Being, we aſcribe ſuch Vertues to him, as are found in ſuch Agents; yea, he aſſumes them to himſelf. This Attribute of Wiſdom is therefore given to him in Scripture frequently, yea, it is appropriated to him in 1 Tim. 1.17. —*The only wiſe God* ---. Becauſe there is none wiſe as he is. He is Wiſdom, and the fountain of it; the Ocean of it is in him originally; there are but ſome little rivulets of it that are derived from him to Angels & Men; we are therefore directed to him for it, *Jam.* 1. 5. And becauſe there is no other Intellectual Vertue mentioned in the Deſcription, we may therefore take it in the largeſt ſenſe, according as it is deſcribed; ſo that we here take the Wiſdom & Knowledge of God for the ſame thing; which is alſo ſometimes called his Underſtanding; ſee, *Prov.* 8. 14. which are the words of the Son of God, who is God. To this Attribute therefore, in deſcribing of it, I have referred both that Knowledge which is called *Theoreticall*, which is more generally; and that which is counted *Practical*, which is more ſpecially denominated Wiſdom; and I ſhall a little explain each of them.

[1.] WE aſcribe to God a *Theoretical Wiſdom*, which is by Divines called, *Scientia ſimplicis Intelligentiæ*; and to this there are two things attributed in the Deſcription.

1. THAT he hath a thorough & perfect *Knowledge of himſelf*, or his own Being, and glorious Perfections. It is one thing which belongs to Wiſdom, that it is of a very large reach, or vaſt comprehenſion. Wiſe Men do know more than others do; now there is nothing that ſets forth God's Underſtanding more largely, than that he *knows himſelf*, graſps in his intuition the whole latitude of his own Infinite and Incomprehenſible Being; for this reaſon it is ſaid to be Infinite, *Pſal.* 147. 5. God only knows himſelf as he is: It is but a little portion that Men or Angels do know of him. He knows his *own* thoughts, and his

thoughts are himself; yea, *He is Understanding*, Prov. 8. 14. If this Wisdom then be God, then it must be of an equal extension with God, else it could not be himself.

2. THAT he also perfectly knows *all possible Beings*. He not only understands what hath been, and what shall be, but also what might be, or what is capable of being. When God past that Eternal Decree of his, which is hereafter to be spoken of, he did not intend to do all that he was able: when he made the works of Creation, there was the *residue of the spirit with him*, Mal. 2. 15. and he knew what that was. God knows his own power, which is the subject of all these possibilities. God could have made more Worlds, and innumerable more kinds of Creatures: and God hath a sight of these in his vast Understanding; how else could there be a Consultation, and an Election in and about his works of Efficiency, which is fully ascribed unto him; Eph. 1.11. ——*Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own Will.* God's *Omnipotency* in which he hath the Idea of possible things, is himself, if therefore he knoweth himself, he must needs know both that and them. Hence the Scripture is frequently telling us of things which God can do, tho' he never intends to give being to them. Now this Wisdom of God properly belongs to the consideration of his Divine Essence; for, because he is the most absolute First Being, he must needs be the most Understanding Being; if God, he must be most Wise.

[2.] WE also ascribe to God a *Practical Wisdom*: and that appears in his contriving and ordering all future things after the best manner: and this is that which Divines call *Scientiam Visionis*. As the appointing of all things belongs to his Will, (as we shall hear afterwards,) so the contrivance & ordering thereof properly belongs to his Wisdom. The Scripture speaks of the *manifold wisdom of God*, (Eph. 3. 10) which is not intended of it, as it is in God; but as it appears in the various discoveries which are made of it in the things themselves: in discoursing of which, I might be endless; but I shall only point at a few comprehensive kinds of it, *viz.*

1. IN his *Assigning* of all things to their *several ends*. A Wise Agent always propounds to himself some end for which he works; he doth nothing in vain: and then discovers his Wisdom in his orderly alotting of the means with respect hereto. There is one common end to which all things have an ultimate respect, and that is *the Glory of God*. Prov. 16. 4. *The Lord hath made all things for himself.* And in order to this, are many subordinate ends to which these & those are appointed. Now the setting of these in order, the connecting of their subordination, and the setting them so as to have their due respect to the last; is an eminent discovery of this Wisdom; we read of such a Connexion, Hos. 2. 21, 22. —— *I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth. And the earth shall bear the corn, and the wine, and the oyl, and they shall hear Jezreel.*

2. IN *the suiting of an Idea in his mind, exactly harmonious to the best advancing of these ends.* A Wise workman forecasts his work, and draws out the whole plat in his mind, in which every piece & part in his work is contrived, and designed where it is to be, how it is to be framed to fall in with the other; and the more harmonious and regular this imaginary mold or frame is, the more is the wisdom of the Agent: Contrivance therefore belongs to the Master-workman, as having the greatest curiosity in it. Such a frame had God in his mind from all Eternity, laid in his own head, with best counsel; and therefore we read in Acts 15. 18. *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.* And we are given to understand, that all things are done according to this Contrivance, *Eph.* 1. 11.

3. HENCE this Wisdom farther breaks out, and evidently appears in the *Workmanship it self*; the making of this frame, the whole World, and every thing in it. We read, Psal. 104. 24.---*In wisdom hast thou made them all.*--- The Creation hath on it, not only the impressions of his Almighty Power, in producing such a World out of nothing; and of Goodness, in giving a being to so many Creatures, and a usefullness; but his wondrous Wisdom too, such as is admirably astonishing; whether we look upon it in the whole, or in the parts: if we take any one little piece of it, take a *pile* of *grass*, which we trample upon, and it hath more mysteries in it, than the learnedest Philosopher is able to Analyse: A poor *Fly*, yea a *Mite* is a subject of unaccountable Problems, that will not only puzzle, but set down the most curious Naturalist, to be able to tell how the *Organs* of life, sense, nutriment and motion are contrived in so small a Character: but if we look upon *Man*, the master-piece of the visible Creation, and what is he else but an heap of Riddles? his very *Body* is strangely made; Psal. 139. 14. --- *I am fearfully & wonderfully made* ---. The Heathen Anatomist read a God in it, and was transported to sing his praise. And if we consider the setting together of this great *Machine*, the harmonious placing of every piece of it, and that among so many uncountable parts, there is none displaced or useless. The truth is, here is matter for endless contemplation, and we must needs say that he was infinitely Wise who did all this.

4. IN the *Providential management* of the World, and all the Affairs of it; the keeping of all things in order; conducting of them to their ends, so as to bring them to attain them actually; the keeping of so many wheels, which are in motion, to go regularly, and none of them to miss, is a curious piece of infinite Wisdom. It would have declared him to be God, if all had been right as it was when he made it; but it more admirably appears since the *fall of Man*; the Apostasy of one of the principal pieces of this frame, by which he hath so far put himself out. It is the Wisdom

of

of God which diſplays it ſelf, in that the *Sun* knows his riſing & going down; the uncountable *Stars* attend their ſeveral motions; that the *ſenſitive* and *ſenſeleſs* Creatures, know their times, and obſerve them accurately: but that when man revolted from his Rule, and ſought to bring confuſion upon the whole, turned himſelf from Deſigning his great end, and abuſed the Creatures that were under him, to ſtrengthen him in his Revolt; God for all this teacheth, and miſſeth not of his own glorious ends, but makes them ſervicable thereto, is glorified upon them, and recovers the glory of his abuſed mercies: ſomething of this is now and then ſeen at preſent, which extorts confeſſions from his very Enemies; but the full of it ſhall be made known in the day of revelation, when that Scripture ſhall have full accompliſhment, Pſal. 76. 10. *Surely the wrath of man ſhall praiſe thee: the remainder of wrath ſhalt thou reſtrain.* And needs muſt he be a wiſe *Pilot*, that can ſteer ſteadily in ſuch a *Storm*.

5. IN the happy *contrivance* of *Man's Redemption*. In this *Paul* tells us the *manifold Wiſdom* of God is known, *Eph.* 4. 10. Divine Wiſdom, as well as Power was requiſite to be exerted in the breaking the head plot of the Devil, who had ſo ſubtily contrived the ruin of Man, by bringing him under a ſentence of Death, in which the Juſtice of God, and his Holineſs too, were deeply concerned & engaged; to find out, and bring about a way, wherein Sin might be puniſhed, and the Sinner pardoned; *Juſtice* might triumph, and yet *Mercy* be exalted; God's *Holineſs* appear in his not enduring Sin, and his *Grace* ſhine forth in his unexpreſſible love to the Sinner: this is called a *great Myſtery*, and Angels themſelves are Students in it; and ſo great is the depth of Wiſdom that is herein contained, that CHRIST, who is the Subject in whom it centers, is for this reaſon entituled by the name of *Wonderfull*, Iſa. 9. 6.

THUS we have conſidered the *Object* of this Wiſdom. But beſides that, we have in the Deſcription, a farther account of it, in reſpect of the *Act*, *viz.* That he doth all this by *one Simple & Eternal Act*. He doth it not ſucceſſively as Men do, not by multiplied Acts, but *all at once*: nor is this one a compound Act, conſiſting of many parts, as the actions of Creatures are; but wholly uncompounded. The things ſeen and contrived are *many*, but the contrivance is *individual*; and all this from Eternity, as in the forecited, *Acts* 15. 18. And there needs no more be ſaid for the evidencing this Aſſertion, but the conſideration, that all God's Attributes are himſelf: if therefore he be a Simple & Eternal Being, his Wiſdom muſt be ſo too; and becauſe he is Infinite, therefore muſt his Wiſdom be of ſo vaſt a comprehenſion, as to be able to graſp in all this at once and together. And if we are not able to diſcern or give an account how theſe things can be, it is not to be wondred at, if we conſider the narrowneſs of our underſtanding, and the ſhallowneſs of our wiſdom; it may ſuffice to ſatisfy us, that it is ſo with him, becauſe he is God, and not Man.

USE 1. LEARN hence, How *worthy the Works of God are of our Contemplation & Admiration*. Wiſdom is that which commends any that have it, to others: it gains their applauſe and wonderment. And indeed, it hath ſo much radiancy & ſplendour in it, that it cannot but ſurprize ſuch as behold it. *Solomon* tells us, Eccl. 8. 1. *Who is as the wiſe man? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? a man's wiſdom maketh his face to ſhine, and the boldneſs of his face ſhall be changed.* The *Wiſdom of God* then is a fit Object for the reaſonable Creature to employ his thoughts & obſervation upon. This is not to be ſeen eſſentially & *directly* by us, the light of it is too dazzling for our weak eyes; but the *reflections* of it that are made by the works of Creation & Providence, in which it is ſo admirably imprinted, will lead us by the hand to make precious diſcoveries of it, and moſt aſtoniſhing. It is the Pſalmiſts remark, Pſal. 111. 2. *The works of the Lord are great, ſought out of all them that have pleaſure therein.* And certainly one thing that ſo engageth them is the admirable Curioſity of them; the accurate and aſtoniſhing ſtroaks of Divine Wiſdom that are there to be diſcovered. The ſpeculation of theſe things would mightily help us to honour and adore this God; to love him, and to truſt in him. Man's *Sabbath* was at firſt appointed him, to ſequeſter himſelf to this employment: it will coſt us time and labour, but the profit will recompenſe us for all. And there is no Day paſſeth, which gives us not occaſion to make remarks upon it. And if our hearts be right, we ſhall ſee ſo much of it, as will abundantly ſatisfy us in the Wiſdom of that which we cannot penetrate into; and make us acknowledge the Reaſon, not to be the want of Wiſdom in the thing, but the darkneſs that is upon our underſtandings; and ſay as he, Job 37. 19. *Teach us what we ſhall ſay unto him, for we cannot order our ſpeech by reaſon of darkneſs.*

USE 2. THIS ſhould teach us, both to *commend the management of all our concerns to God*, and to *adore his Wiſdom in all the Changes which befall us*. It is not of Man in himſelf to direct his own way; we are not wiſe enough to know what is beſt for us; and if left to our own choice, would ſoon undo our ſelves. Here then is encouragement to make free reſignation of our ſelves into the hands of God, and leave our all to his diſpoſe; becauſe he is infinitely Wiſe, and knows how to ſteer all to his glory, and our beſt good: and there can be no Caſe ſo intricate and perplexed, but he doth eaſily ſee the way thro' it, and how to bring us ſafe to the farther end of it; Prov. 16. 3 *Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts ſhall be eſtabliſhed.* This alſo may quiet our minds under the *dark Providences* which paſs over us at any time, to remember that all the Affairs of the whole Creation are managed by him, according to his prudent Counſel, in which he hath laid out all in the beſt way to bring about his moſt holy purpoſes; and tho' we cannot ſee the leading of them, yet he doth. And as nothing falls out beſide his purpoſe, ſo he doth nothing raſhly,

but upon mature deliberation: and how ſhould this ſilence & quiet us! We never begin to find fault with any Providence which befalls us, but in ſo doing we make injurious reflections upon the Infinite Wiſdom of God: and let him that contends with his Maker, look to anſwer it.

USE 3. HERE alſo are we adviſed, *Whither to go for Wiſdom*, to guide us in our whole way. Whom ſhould we repair to, but the All-wiſe God; hitherto we are directed by the Spirit of God, Jam. 1. 5. *If any of you lack wiſdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it ſhall be given him.* And there are three Arguments couched in theſe words to urge the Advice upon us,

1. *Conſider*, YOU *want Wiſdom*: you cannot do without it. To ſerve God, to do the duties of Chriſtians, to carry it right in all the relations you bear, to know how to order your Converſation in all things as becomes the Goſpel, and to live among Men ſo as to honour God and adorn your Profeſſion, requires a great deal of Wiſdom; and you have none of the true Wiſdom in your ſelves naturally: Man indeed would be thought Wiſe, but he is born as the *wild Aſſes Colt*. The title which the Scripture puts on a natural Man is a *Fool*: and tho' there are ſome Principles of Wiſdom in the *Regenerate*, yet there is much folly remaining in them.

2. GOD hath *Wiſdom enough* to impart to ſuch as do want it. He is not only infinitely Wiſe in himſelf, but he can make them ſo, that come to him for it, in ſenſe of their need: He is called the *Father of lights*: He is the fountain which can ſend forth it's ſtreams: He can irradiate your Underſtandings, and fill them with the light of ſpiritual knowledge; and convey into them every good & perfect gift: all the Wiſdom that hath eminently appeared in any, was derived from him; he made them Wiſe.

3. HE is a *free giver* to *ſenſible Petitioners*. A fountain is not more communicative of its waters, than God is of Wiſdom to them that ask it of him: He was exceedingly well pleaſed with *Solomon*, that he asked *this* of him rather than any other thing, and he gave it him very liberally. There is none wants it, but for want of asking, or becauſe they do not ask in faith. Let us then covet herein to be like God, long for and ſeek after heavenly Wiſdom. And to that end, let us be always waiting at his Poſts, attending on his Counſels, opening of our hearts to receive his influences: Thus ſhall we have a Wiſdom which the world are ſtrangers to; even ſuch a Wiſdom as will make us *wiſe to Salvation*.

[AUGUST 13. 1689.]

SERMON *XXII.*

2. THE next of the *Divine Vertues* to be conſidered of, is *Power*; of which take this Deſcription: *It is God able to do whatſoever he doth or can Will.* For our right taking up the notion of this Attribute, let theſe things be conſidered,

1. THAT *Power* conſidered in the moſt general & comprehenſive ſenſe of it, is nothing elſe but *God's Alſufficiency*; and hath been already conſidered, in the firſt general Head, to which the *Knowledge of God* in his *Back parts* is referred; and ſo it comprehends all the Attributes under it, as being in our conception, a *Genus* both to his Eſſence & Subſiſtence; and ſo the word *Power* is uſed in Scripture ſometimes, for God's *ſufficiency*; ſo, Gen 17. 1. --- *I am the Almighty God*---. This, in our mode & method of expreſſing things, is the *prima potentia* of God, antecedent, and leading to our conſideration of his Knowledge & Will.

2. THERE is an *executive Power* which we aſcribe unto God, or a *Power of Operation*, which diſcovers it ſelf in his works of Efficiency; and therefore the Doctrine of it properly belongs to that Head in general; for when we ſee what God hath done, we are thereby led to conclude his *Omnipotency*; and this is conſequent upon, and flows from his *Alſufficiency*; and is one of the Perfections in which it is manifeſted. Of this Power mention is made, *Pſal.* 115. 3. and we conceive of it in this order: We *firſt* look upon God as *able*, (Eph. 3 20.) that is his Alſufficiency; *then* by his Wiſdom & Will *determining* what to do, (*Eph.* 1. 11.) and then powerfully to *effect* or *bring about*, what he hath ſo propounded; Pſal. 135. 5,6. *Whatſoever the Lord pleaſed, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the ſeas, and all deep places.*

3. THAT this *executive Omnipotency* of God, is nothing elſe but his *effective Will*: for the Will of God, as it is an effective Principle, or efficient Cauſe of things, hath the conſideration of an *unreſiſtible Omnipotency* in it; ſee *Rom.* 9. 19. Pſal. 33. 9. *For he ſpake, and it was done; he commanded, and it ſtood faſt.* And therefore it cannot be properly ſaid that God wills to do any thing, which yet by his Omnipotency he effects not; for it is his *Will*, which doth but in our notion differ from his *Power*; or it is his *Omnipotent Will*, which doth all things.

4. POWER is attributed to God *Actively*. God is a *pure Act*, and therefore he hath not in him a *paſſive power*. We muſt not conceive that God hath ſometimes been out of Act; and that he did afterwards by this Power of his, ſet himſelf to work: but yet our conception is neceſſitated to look upon him as having the vertue of a Cauſe, or of communicating Efficacy or Efficiency to Effects. But there is no Power in God, really diſtinct from his Eſſence; for his Eſſence is that Power by which he is Omnipotent; as it is that mercy, by which he is merciſull. God's Active Power is therefore beſt conceived of by us, as it relates to the Creature, which is capable of receiving the impreſſion which it had not upon it before. Hence this Power of God is ſaid not to be in reſpect of himſelf, but with reference to the things that are Effected, Matth. 19. 26. ---*With God all things are poſſible.*

THESE things thus premiſed, I come now to conſider this Attribute as is expreſſed in the Deſcription, viz. *That it is God able to do whatſoever he doth or can Will.* And here I ſhall only

only point you, to the account which the Scripture gives us of it; which we may take in theſe particulars,

1. THERE is none *ſtronger* than God. Among all the beings from the firſt, there is none whoſe Power equals, much leſs goes beyond his. There are many ſtrong beings in the Creation; *Angels* are mighty beings and that whether good or bad; *Satan* is called the *ſtrong man*, Luk. 11. 21. and the *Prince of the power of the air*, Eph. 2. 2. One Angel is able to cope with all the powers of fleſh & blood: where Satan hath erected his throne, all the world cannot turn him out. But put all the ſtrength of the Creation together, and it will not exceed his; 1 Cor. 10 22. *Do we provoke the Lord to jealouſy? are we ſtronger than he?*

2. GOD is *mightier* than all Created beings. He is not only equal to them, but Infinitely above them in Power; Job 40. 9. & 41. 10. *Haſt thou an arm like God? or canſt thou thunder with a voice like him?* He hath an Arm like to which there is none. Men's ſtrength is in their Arms, at leaſt is ſhewed by them: hence Arms are aſcribed to God, and ſuch Arms as are incomparable, *Pſal.* 89. 19.

3. THOSE things that are *weak* in us, *when they are attributed to him, are ſtronger* than the greateſt ſtrength of all Creatures: ſuch things as in the Creatures are *feeble*, when ſpoken of him, have more *ſtrength* than all the World; 1 Cor. 1. 25. —— *And the weakneſs of God is ſtronger than men.* It is but little ſtrength that we have in one of our fingers; yet he with his finger *made the Heavens*, Pſal. 8. 3. *Caſts out Devils*, Luke 11. 20. What can we do with a breath, or by a word, ſee *Pſal.* 33.9. *Gen.* 1. A frown or an angry look from a mortal man is no great matter; but he ſends a world of men to perdition by it; Pſal. 80. 16. ---*They periſh at the rebuke of thy countenance.* And theſe expreſſions are uſed purpoſely to recommend his Omnipotency to us.

4. HIS Power is *irreſiſtible*; there is no withſtanding of it. It is a vain thing for the whole World to combine againſt it, or ſet themſelves in Oppoſition unto it; Job. 23. 13. *But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his ſoul deſireth, even that he doeth.* If he hath a mind to a thing, he dares to challenge the whole World to hinder him if they can, *Iſa.* 14. 27. & 43. 13 He declares what is in his tho'ts to do; and ſounds a challenge to all the Powers of Earth & Hell to defeat him if they are able.

5. ALL Created Power is *nothing*, and leſs than that, when it is compared with his. There are Powers among Creatures, and they can do much if he permits them; we ſee many effects thereof in the World; but caſt them into the ſcale againſt his, and they will not weigh the light duſt, Iſa 40. 17. *All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him leſs than nothing, and vanity.* If there were a thouſand times more power in Creatures, than there is, it would be all nothing; that therefore that is, is leſs than nothing; it ſtands for a Cypher. In a word, the Power of God exceeds the Creatures knowledge, *Pſal.* 50. 11.

6. HENCE there are two things in which the *extent* of this Power is expreſſed, *viz.*

1. THAT he *can do* all things that he *Wills.* Whatſoever his holy pleaſure ſaith ſhall be, that he doth always powerfully and uncontrolably effect, *Pſal.* 115. 3. He never had a mind or deſire to do or effect any thing which he could not effect; he never did affect any project, but what he brought about, let it be never ſo great, *Job* 23 14.

2. THAT he *can do* all things, which he *can Will.* Hence his Power reacheth not only to the things that are, but to all poſſibilities. There is not only a World made according to his Counſel, but thouſands of beings which he could have wrought; for when God made the World, he did not put forth all his Power; but had the *reſidue of the ſpirit*, (Mal. 2. 15. Matth. 3. 8.) Nor is all the Capacity of the Creation able to comprehend the vaſt extent of this Omnipotency of God.

3. THERE are *clear & convincing diſcoveries* of this Divine Omnipotency, in the *works* that he hath done. If God *doth* work all, it is thence evident that he *can* work all. He that is the Cauſe of all Cauſes; he hath the vertue and efficacy of all Cauſes in him. Hence the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 86. 5, 10. *For thou art great and doeſt wondrous things: thou art God alone.* And there are particularly theſe three clear diſcoveries of God's Omnipotency in his Efficiency.

1. *IN the production of the World*; and ſuch a World, in which there are ſo many Beings & Creatures; a World ſo vaſt for bigneſs; ſo curious a fabrick, having ſo many admirable pieces of workmanſhip in it: and that all theſe were produced from no Pre-exiſting matter; that he hath nothing to lay the foundation of all this work upon. To make ſomething out of nothing, and then out of this ſomething to make all things, is a glorious demonſtration of his Power. He that could give being to ſuch, ſo great, and ſo many beings, that once were not at all, what is it that he is not able to do? God therefore uſeth this Argument to ſtrengthen the faith of his People on him, in the times of ſoreſt diſtreſs, when they were ready to ſink under diſcouragement; Iſa. 40. 27, 28. & 45. 11, 12. *Thus ſaith the Lord, the holy One of Iſrael, and his maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my ſons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me. I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands have ſtretched out the heavens, and all their hoſt have I commanded.*

2. *THE fulfilling of all his gracious Promiſes to his People.* He never ſpake the word to them but he did it; and that in every point, circumſtance of time, perſons, accidents; and all this notwithſtanding all the blocks, ſeeming impoſſibilities, powerfull contrivances & aſſociations that have been made againſt them, they have been all daſht & broken, utterly defeated & come to nought: and all his Promiſes have come to paſs in deſpite of all: inſtances for this we have in *Pharoah*, *Benhadad*, *Senacherib*, and many other upon Scripture record; yea, for this reaſon hath he been wont to ſuffer his People to be reduced

duced to the utmost extremity, till they had nothing left them but the Promise to rely upon; that so he might take the occasion to commend his Almighty Power to them.

3. *THE execution of all his threatnings upon his proudest Enemies.* That Observation, *Whoever resisted God & prospered*; is a witness to his Almightiness, that God can look upon the strongest Combinations of Men against him, and laugh at, and have them in derision; that he can dare them to do their worst, and warn them of the unfruitfulness of their Essays, and give being to those menaces, as Isa. 8. 9, 10. *Associate your selves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear all ye of far countreys: gird your selves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird your selves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand: for God is with us*: speaks his Power to be insuperable. For this reason he suffers them to prosper, and arrive at the height of Success, Pride and self-Confidence, raiseth them in his Providence to their height; that he may give a terrible instance of this Attribute in their destruction, see, Exod. 9. 16. *And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.*

7. *WHEN the Scripture speaks of some things, which it saith God cannot do, it is no way contradictory to this Attribute of his* OMNIPOTENCY; but it doth rather confirm us in the belief of it. Here therefore we are to consider the things wherein such Assertions are laid down; and we shall readily see a satisfying reason for them: let these Rules then be here observed on this account.

1. THERE are some things *done by Men which arise from, and argue imperfection in them.* These things then God cannot do, not for want of Power, but by reason of Power. When we read, that God *cannot lye*, it argues no weakness in him, but his Infinite Perfection. God therefore cannot swerve from his own Rules, or cross his own Nature, who is a God of Holiness and Truth: Men thro' weakness can swerve from the Rule; Sin is therefore called a *falling short*, Rom. 3. 23. but because God hath no weakness, but is Omnipotent, therefore he cannot lie, or deceive, or sin.

2. THERE are some things which God cannot do *by reason of impossibility in the things.* And this no whit weakens his Power. There are two sorts of impossibles to be observed,

1. THERE are some things *impossible to nature.* Nature natured hath its Powers limited and regulated, and there are bounds beyond which it cannot pass; such things we therefore call impossible; but these things are easy with the God of Nature: Nature cannot, but God can and did *make a Virgin to conceive*: Nature cannot produce the fruits of the earth for our nourishment but successively; but Christ by his Divine Power, could multiply the loaves and fishes immediately.

2. OTHER things are impossible *in Nature.* Not for want of Power in him, but by reason of incapacity & inconsistency in the subject; the doing of the thing inferring an impossibility. The Rules of Art are Eternal & Unchangable Principles, which therefore cannot be nullified. It is impossible that there should be an *Effect* without a *Cause*; an *Adjunct* without a *Subject.* God cannot make a thing to be, and not to be at the same time, place, and respect; or a thing done, not to be done. God cannot make a contradiction true, because then he should nullify his own Infinite Wisdom, which he cannot do. In a word, whatever God cannot do, it is because either for want of Entity or Goodness, it cannot be the Object of his Will.

3. DIVINES do from Scripture observe a *twofold Power ascribed to God*, viz.

1. *AN unlimited & absolute Power*, by vertue of which he can do all possible things, even such things as he never actually doth: of this Power it is that we read, Matth. 3. 9 ---*God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.*

2. *AN Ordinate Power*, which is not a Power different from the former, but the former considered, as God hath pleased to set limits or bounds to it by the Decree, with respect to his exerting of it in his works of Efficiency. It is certain that he hath by an Eternal purpose, determined in himself whatsoever shall be done in time; and this did unalterably fix the limits between things meerly possible, and things future: and it is with respect to this limitation, that it is sometimes said in Scripture, that God could not do some things. Thus we read that God could not destroy *Sodom* till *Lot* was out of it: that Christ could not do many miracles in his own Country, because of their *Unbelief*, &c. Not that his Arm was shortned in these respects, but because his purpose, and sometimes his promise had tied his hands; his *Will* was otherwise, and he pursues *that* in all he doth, *Eph.* 1. 11.

USE 1. LEARN hence *how vain a thing it is for any to go about to resist God.* There is no opposing of Omnipotency, no striving against him who is Almighty: tho' every sinner doth so in every sin; Job. 15. 25, 26. *For he stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty. He runneth upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers.* Know it, every time you dare to commit any Sin, you bid a challenge to God to come and fight against you if he dare; and do you know whom it is you set your selves in battle array against? Shall briars and thorns arm themselves against a consuming fire? Shall a Worm rouse it self up against a Lion? Every time you are tempted to sin, ask your selves that Question, 1 Cor. 10. 22. *Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?* You must doubtless have the worst of it, Job 9. 4. *He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength: who hath hardned himself against him, and hath prospered?* Ask the damned in Hell, who once were Rebels as you are, and they will tell you, that they are ruined & damned, heaps upon heaps, to be Eternal witnesses, that there is no withstanding him.

USE

USE 2. THIS tells us, That *there is none that can ſecure a Sinner from God's hands.* There are mighty ones in the World; but there is none Almighty but he, and therefore none can bicker with him. The Sinner endeavours to fortify himſelf in his ſtrong holds, and enters into combinations with Earth & Hell, but all is to no purpoſe, they cannot ſave him; Iſa. 47. 13, 14. *Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counſels: let now the aſtrologers, the ſtar-gazers, the monthly prognoſticatours ſtand up, and ſave thee from theſe that ſhall come upon thee. Behold, they ſhall be as ſtubble: the fire ſhall burn them: they ſhall not deliver themſelves from the power of the flame: there ſhall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to ſit before it.* They cannot deliver themſelves, how much leſs can they ſave others? it is vain to look to them, or expect help from them; Jer. 3. 23. *Truly in vain is ſalvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains.* All leagues with them ſhall be broken, and ruin not be prevented, *Jer.* 28. 17.

Hence,

USE 3. WE learn *how fearful the Deſtruction of Sinners muſt needs be.* And there are two amazing conſiderations of it which are diſcovered in this Attribute.

1. THE *certainty* of it. There is no eſcaping out of the hands of Omnipotency; no delivering your ſelves from his Wrath; *Iſa.* 43. 13. 1 Theſ. 5. 3. *For when they ſhall ſay, Peace and ſafety; then ſudden deſtruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they ſhall not eſcape.* The Almighty Power of God is engaged againſt the Sinner; and if Almightineſs can make him miſerable, it ſhall be done; if the Arm of God can bring him down to the loweſt Hell, he ſhall not eſcape. Were the Sinner to cope with a Man like himſelf, he might conceive ſome hope of overcoming; but if God be his enemy, he will tear him in pieces, he will ruin, deſtroy and damn him: and God would have Sinners to think of it; Pſal. 50. 22. *Now conſider this, ye that forget God, leaſt I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.* He can with more eaſe tread you down to Hell, than you can cruſh the leaſt worm under your feet.

2. THE *greatneſs* of it. God doth all things like himſelf: in particular, we are told that God deſigns the declaration of his Power in the deſtruction of impenitent Sinners; Rom. 9. 22. *What if God willing to ſhew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-ſuffering the veſſels of wrath fitted to deſtruction.* He will therefore powerfully deſtroy them, and then their miſery cannot be ſmall: He will not ſtrike the Sinner as a Man, but he will do it like a God: He will hold him up by one hand of his Power, and ſtrike him down with the other. And will it not be an intollerable ſtroak that Almightineſs ſhall inflict? Ezek. 22. 14. *Can thine heart endure, or can thy hands be ſtrong in the days that I ſhall deal with thee? I the Lord have ſpoken it, and will do it.* And what a powerfull Argument doth this afford, to perſwade Sinners to make their peace with God, conſidering, Heb. 10. 31. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

USE 4. THIS tells us, That a *true Believer need not to fear any evil.* There can no danger offer it ſelf before him to diſtreſs him, but he may anſwer it with God's Almightineſs. In times of difficulty, when every door is ſhut up, he can open one that we know not of. In times of danger, when our enemies are more and mightier than we are, yet are we ſafe under the ſhelter of his wings; the feathers of the Almighty will cover us; and tho' ten thouſands riſe up againſt us, there is no fear. In times of ſoreſt temptation, when all the Power of Hell is engaged to devour us, yet they that have Omnipotency for their protection, are in an Arm out of which all the Devils of Hell cannot be able to pluck them. Let us then reſolve, that at what time we are afraid, we will truſt in the Lord: having taken, let us keep faſt hold of his Almighty Arm; and tho' every ſtep to Heaven were guarded with a legion of Devils, there would be no danger: this Attribute is our encouragement; and let us take it as God is giving it to us, Iſa. 26. 4 *Truſt in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting ſtrength.*

[SEPTEMBER 10. 1689.]

SERMON *XXIII.*

3. ANOTHER of the *Divine Vertues* expreſſed, is his *Holineſs.* This is one of thoſe Attributes, which hath a glorious diſplay in the works of Efficiency: It is alſo one of them which are called communicable Perfections, becauſe there is the Image of it in Angels & Saints: but it belongs to him Originally, and tranſcendently. Here therefore we may enquire, 1. Into the Nature of this Attribute. 2. In what ſingular reſpects it belongs to him. 3. Wherein the diſplays of it are eſpecially to be obſerved.

[1.] OF *Holineſs* take this Deſcription; *It is God bound for himſelf & his own glory, as his laſt End.* Holineſs in the largeſt ſenſe may ſerve to ſet God forth abſolutely Perfect, in his Being; and ſo it comprehends all the Attributes under it: but looking on it as a diſtinct Perfection, and ſo it reſpects the Divine Purity. God's Holineſs may be conſidered, either, as it is *Eſſential*, and ſo it is his *ſpotleſs Glory*; hence ſaid to be *Glorious in Holineſs*, Exod. 15. 11. Or, as it is *relative* to his *Works of Efficiency*, and therein it appears to us according to the Deſcription given. There are two things to which Holineſs is oppoſed in Scripture, which will give ſome light to the knowledge of it:

1. TO things that are *unclean.* Hence the Prophet when he had a glimpſe of this Perfection, preſently cries out of his own, and his People's Uncleanneſs, Iſa. 6. 3, 5. *And one cried unto another, and ſaid, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hoſts, the whole earth is full of his glory. Then ſaid I, Wo is me, for I am undone, becauſe I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midſt of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have ſeen the King, the Lord of hoſts.* The Prieſts

were

were forbidden to touch any unclean thing, because they were holy: this in a moral sense tells us that Sin and Holiness are directly opposite. God's Holiness is negatively his Being, altogether without Sin. Now the most comprehensive Notion of Sin in a Creature, is that it carries him to some other end than God and his Glory; that is its impurity.

2. TO things that are *common.* Things were therefore made holy by Consecration, which was done by a separating of them from common, and dedicating them to Divine Use. On this account the Tabernacle, Temple, and all their Utensils, Priests, Levites; yea, and the people of Israel were made holy, and so called, because they were made God's peculiar; hence that title, 1 Pet. 2. 9. ---*An holy nation.*--- So that the more solemnly any Person or thing were devoted to God, and the farther separate they were from any other end or use, the more holy they were accounted: hence we have some glimpse of the Holiness of God; and in the Description observe two things,

1. IT is God *bound for himself, and his own Glory.* He hath as it were separated himself from all inferiour ends, and devoted himself to employ himself for his own glory; to look after, and see to the advancement of that. We have God himself expressing his Holiness after this manner, Isa. 42. 8. *I am the Lord, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.* It is the Creature's Sanctity to be for God, because it is of him, Rom. 11. 36. *For of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory for ever, Amen.* It is his, to be for himself, because he is of himself, and from no other. And this is that which he stands bound for, *i. e.* in all his works of Efficiency, he aims at it, and is resolved to promote it; Prov. 16. 4. *The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.* (Rev. 4. 11. Ezek. 28. 22.) All he doth is for his great Name sake, that he may display his wondrous Perfections, and declare that he alone is God.

2. HEREBY he makes *himself his own last End.* That which one is bound for, is his End; that which he is ultimately bound for, is his last End. Holiness is a disposition to seek the advancement of the most excellent End in the last place, and to have no other in co-ordination with it, but to subordinate them all unto it: the last *Good*, is deservedly the last *End*: because God is better than the Creature, he is therefore its End; and because there is none better than he, he is its last End; and because he hath no equal, he must have no Competitor; and because he knows none better, no other God besides himself, therefore is he his own last End; you have a sufficient Reason for it, Isa. 44. 8. ---*Is there a God besides me? yea, there is no God, I know not any.* When therefore God promotes in all his works, the declarative glory of himself; and makes all things to contribute to the illustration and exaltation of it, then he appears to be holy; Isa. 5. 16. *But the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy, shall be sanctified in righteousness.* And see, Ezek. 36. 23. *And I will sanctifie my great name which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them, and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.* They had endeavoured to make his name common among the Heathen; but he would shew himself to be the most excellent one: God indeed doth carry on subordinate Ends in the World, he manageth things in the Order wherein he hath placed them; and he hath a peculiar great design in the Salvation of his Elect; but this and all other are swallow'd up in his own Glory: and this is his Holiness.

[2.] *IN what singular respect Holiness belongs to God?*

Answ. BECAUSE the Vertues of God are said to be *Communicable*, i. e. *That there is something like to them to be found in some Creatures*, and which have the same denomination put upon them. We ought to observe the difference; an exemplification whereof we may take in this of *Holiness*, which may be applied to his Wisdom, Power, *&c.* Here then,

1. IN general, God is *transcendently or surpassingly* holy. There are none in Heaven or Earth that are like him for Holiness; hence that, 1 Sam. 2. 2. *There is none holy as the Lord.* For this reason he is said to be *thrice* holy, *Isa.* 6. 3. And to be *Glorious in holiness*, Exod. 15. 11. The greatest purity of the most spotless Beings in the Creation, is unholiness compared with his; Job 14. 18. & 15. 15. *Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.* But,

2. MORE particularly, Let this *Difference* be observed,

1. HOLINESS is in God, *his Nature, his Essence*; whereas in the Creature it is but a *Quality.* We indeed ascribe it to him as a quality, according to our manner, but in reality he hath none; whatsoever is *in God, is God.* So that God, and his Holiness are one and the same; whereas the Creature, and its holiness are two distinct things; its essence is one thing, and its qualities another: and hence it is ascribed to God in the *Abstract*, to them but in the *Concrete*; they are said to be *holy*, but never to be *Holiness*; hence that, Psal. 89. 35. *Once have I sworn by my Holiness, that I will not lie unto David.*

Hence,

2. THE *Divine properties belong to this Attribute in him*; which put an unconceivable difference between him, & the Creature's sanctity: for what God is in his Being, that he is in all his Perfections, which are his Being.

Here then,

1. GOD's Holiness is *Infinite*, the Creature's *finite.* Among them there are some that have more than others; but he that hath most, hath a poor little to what he hath. *Angels* among second beings excell in this as in other Perfections; how often are they called *holy ones*; but alas, when they come into his holy presence, they all veil and cover their faces and feet, as being ashamed of themselves: they glorify God with

with their whole might, but not up to his deſert: but it is an Infinite, unmeaſurable Sanctity that God poſſeſſeth; for he loves himſelf with an Infinite love, and is therefore called *love it ſelf*, 1 Joh. 4. 8. and his Holineſs cannot be better expreſſed, than in his loving himſelf with the choiſeſt love, and loving other things for himſelf.

2. IT is *Eternal.* He is the Eternal God, and he never was without his Holineſs; it is impoſſible that God ſhould be, and not be holy; whereas Creatures once were not, there was a time when they began to be, & they could not be holy before they were; and there is a vaſt diſproportion between that which is Eternal & what is temporary. God's Holineſs having no beginning, can have no end; the Creatures that once were not, may ceaſe to be. Some indeed ſhall never actually ceaſe, but they have a poſſibility.

Hence,

3. GOD is *Unchangably* holy. He cannot loſe his, but the Creature may part with its purity. God's Holineſs being himſelf is inſeparable from him; but the Creatures being a quality, may be ſeparated, though its Being continue: there are ſome natural qualities of things, which cleave ſo cloſe, that the removal of them deſtroys their being; but all moral perfections in the Creatures may be loſt: a wofull inſtance of it we have in fallen Angels and Men, who are become altogether corrupt and defiled by Sin: and on theſe accounts God is ſaid only to be holy; Rev. 15. 4. *Thou only art holy*——.

3. GOD is holy *Originally*, the Creatures are ſo but by *derivation.* His Holineſs is the *Prototype*, theirs but the *Copy*; his the *ſubſtance*, theirs but the *image* or *ſhadow*; his the *fountain*, theirs but ſome few drops, or ſmall *ſprings* that iſſue from it: all the Holineſs that is in all the Creatures is borrowed of him; he hath his in and of himſelf, and they have theirs of and from him. Man became holy by God's putting his Image upon him; Gen. 1. 26. *And God ſaid, Let us make man in our image, and after our likeneſs: and let them have dominion over the fiſh of the ſea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattel, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.* He is beholden to God for it, whereas God owes his to none; hence that, Rom. 11. 35. *Or who hath firſt given to him, and it ſhall be recompenſed unto him again?*

4. HENCE God's Holineſs is *above all degrees*, whereas that of the Creature is *gradual.* God is full, perfect, can receive no addition or encreaſe, it is impoſſible that he ſhould be more holy than he is; but ſecond beings are capable of more, at leaſt they are contained in bounds and gradations. Put all the Holineſs together, that is in all Angels, Saints, the third Heaven, and all will not make up ſuch an one as is in God, they are none of them pure in his ſight. Tho' Angelical Holineſs be ſinleſs, yet I know not why it may not be growing; if they encreaſe in knowledge, they may in love.

[3.] *WHEREIN the diſplays of this Attribute are more eſpecially to be obſerved?*

Anſw. IT is certain that Holineſs *runs thro' all God's Works*: Pſal. 145. 17. *The Lord is --- holy in all his works.* But there are ſome particulars in which it more eminently beams out to us: there are dark Providences that puzzle the godly, and are the bane of wicked men, the Holineſs whereof God will one day vindicate, to the confuſion of thoſe ungodly ones who thought him to be altogether like them: but there are other things on which his Holineſs is imprinted in Capital Letters, which may be reduced to four heads,

1. GOD's Holineſs appears in the *Image which he ſtampt upon Reaſonable Creatures, and the law which he gave them.* I put them together, becauſe in the one they were *fitted for*, in the other they were *appointed to* their end: when God would make a Creature like himſelf, and would grave his own Image upon it, he made it holy; Eph. 4. 24. ---*The new man, which after God is Created in --- true holineſs.* As if in nothing could he be equally repreſented, as in this Perfection: and what elſe was that Rule of Government, which he gave unto Man, for the regulating of himſelf by in his whole Converſation, but a *Rule of Holineſs?* This is the Encomium that *Paul* gives the Law, Rom. 7. 12. *The Law is holy*---. It was a Rule of glorifying God, of loving him with our beſt love, and our neighbour for his ſake, *Matth.* 22. 37, 38. A farther teſtimony did he give to this Attribute, in the Sanctions which he put to this Law, in that he promiſed felicity to Man on condition of his perfect conformity to this Law, which conſiſted in a life of holineſs; he engaged no leſs a reward than Eternal happineſs to it; and in that he menaced him with Death in caſe of his tranſgreſſion, that if he came ſhort of that Holineſs he ſhould die: what greater teſtimony could he give to the Creature, that he loved Holineſs, and hated Iniquity?

2. IN the *diſpleaſure which he providentially diſcovers at Sin & Unholineſs.* In this he diſcovers how contrary it is to his nature; the Infinite diſtance which he ſtands at from all thoſe that ſtand in the way of his glory; that he will have no ſociety or fellowſhip with ſuch; that he will not admit them to any Communion with himſelf: Pſal. 94. 20. *Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowſhip with thee, which frameth miſchief by a law?* As he holds ſecret and everlaſting Correſpondence with thoſe that join with him in his ends, *Prov.* 8. 17. Holy Men, are Men after his heart, *Acts* 13. 22. But thoſe that go about to croſs him in his ends, and that ſwerve from his great and holy law, he cannot endure them, nor will he defile himſelf by having any thing to do with them, he cannot ſo much as look on them, Hab. 1. 13. *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canſt not look on iniquity.* (*Pſal.* 5. 4, 5.) And that he executes ſuch amazing Judgments upon impure and obſtinate Sinners, herein he ſhews his Holineſs eminently: The Pſalmiſt ſaith, Pſal. 9. 16 *The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is ſnared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion, Selah.* q. d. Let all the world meditate on this,

and how is he known but in his Holiness? When Man that was made upright, and was a friend and intimate of his, fell from his Integrity, God turned him out of Paradise, and made the Curse to fall upon him; Sin therefore is said *to separate between God & Man*, Isa. 59. 2. When proud *Pharoah* would justle with God, and set himself to oppose him, what fearfull Plagues, and what astonishing ruin did he bring upon himself; and *Moses* confesseth him herein to shew himself *glorious in holiness*, Exod. 15. 11. When God thus comes to recover his Glory of his insolent enemies, he tells the world that he is an *Holy* God.

2. IN the way of *Man's Redemption by Christ* When God would exalt his Mercy, in the recovery of a Company of Sinners from the misery they were fallen into, who had sinned and fallen short of his Glory; rather than do it in any such way as should in the least reflect on his spotless purity, or give the world any ground to suspect that he had any favour for Sin, he gave his own Son for a ransom, and punished Sin in him without any favour, he made him to bear the whole weight of wrath that was due to his Elect. When therefore the Son of God was under the terrible forsakings of his Father, and severest impressions of his Anger for Sin, which he undertook to satisfy for, he then takes notice of, and acknowledgeth his Holiness, Psal. 22. 3. *But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.* Justice indeed did the execution upon our dear Saviour, but it was Holiness that hid his face from him, and employed that Justice of his.

4. IN *qualifying of his Elect for Eternal Glory.* Tho he hath loved them with an everlasting love, and appointed them to be Heirs of the Kingdom before the foundation of the world; yet he brings them not to it, till they are by Holiness prepared for it; and therefore gives them the Assurance in the Gospel, that without it they shall never come into his presence, Heb. 12. 14. *Follow ---Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.* He therefore sanctifies them throughout, in Soul, Body & Spirit, in order to his saving of them; and Christ by his Spirit thus fits them to be presented to himself in Glory, by taking away every spot and wrinkle, and blemish; and hath certified us, that there shall enter into the holy place, nothing that defiles.

USE 1. WE hence learn *the miserable state of Sinners.* The Holiness of God is a glass in which all ungodly Men may read their doom: and Oh that such as live and ly in Sin would consider of it! Think who that God is, with whom you have to do, and then say what hopes have you to escape his Infinite Wrath? Doth his Holiness engage him to stand up for his own Glory, and shall such vile Creatures who do nothing but dishonour him, hope to avoid the suffering of the impressions of his hot displeasure? It is the Sinner that sets himself against God. Sin is the thing that dishonours him, that tramples upon his Glory, and will God stand by as one unconcerned? Will he always keep silence? Where is his Holiness then? They that think so, believe not this Attribute of his. Sinners, know it, you have an holy God to deal withal, one that hates Sin irreconcilably, one that will not lose the least tittle of his Glory, tho' he destroy a whole World that set themselves in opposition to it. And then remember, that his Wisdom, and his Power, which are equally Infinite, Eternal and Unchangable, do stand engaged for the upholding of his Holiness, and will exert themselves in the Destruction of all those that are Enemies of it. And now say, how shall you escape and how shall you endure? Is it not a fearfull thing to fall into the hands of that God, whose Holiness will cause his fury to come into his face, and engage the other Attributes to conspire in your Destruction: think of this, and let it drive you to Repentance, and make Sin an evil and bitter thing to you.

USE 2. LEARN hence a *sufficient reason for all the Judgments which God brings upon any places or people.* It should point us to, and call upon us to adore God in his Holiness. When a *whole World is drowned* because of abounding Iniquity, a *Sodom* burnt with fire from Heaven, yea, when *Jerusalem* is laid in Ashes, all is to display this Attribute. When therefore we see the hand of God out against a professing People, and his Judgments awfull upon them, and Men are ready to say, what means the heat of this so great Anger? see and enquire if such a People have not opposed God's great ends, if by Sin they have not greatly dishonoured him; wonder not then, if they do not glorify him, if he glorify himself.

USE 3. IT tells us *what to think of such as mock at Holiness.* Is there not such a generation of Men among us, that scoff at the Conscientious care of God's People to abstain from Sin, and live in the constant exercise of Holiness in all manner of Conversation; who laugh at Fastings & Prayers, who ridicule those who are afraid of swearing, filthy communication, and profanation of God's Name & Day: certainly, these are impure, filthy Creatures, and must needs be enemies of an holy God, and must expect his Holiness to fall upon them and consume them.

USE 4. THIS tells those that *want Holiness, whither to go for it.* Think, without it you are miserable; and do you find your selves impure, and cry out of your uncleanness, and enquire where you may get to be made holy; remember, God is not only so in himself, but he is a fountain of it to all such as want it; and he hath in Christ opened this fountain in his Ordinances; Zech. 13. 1. *In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin, and for uncleanness.* And if you carry your unholy hearts to him, he hath set up a sanctifying Office, his *Holy Spirit* is the dispenser of this Grace, who can restore this Image to you, and by working you up to a conformity unto the Holiness of God, make you fit to dwell

with

with him in that holy place, into which no unholy thing shall enter, where Holiness grown perfect, shall be crowned with everlasting Blessedness.

[OCTOBER 8. 1689.]

SERMON *XXIV.*

4. *JUSTICE* is the next of the *Divine Vertues*, offered to our consideration. Justice, as was before observed concerning Holiness, may come under a double consideration, *viz.* either as it is *essential* in him, and then it is nothing else but the *rectitude of his Nature*; or as it is *relative* to the Creature; and because I shall speak to it in this last sense, we may take this Description of it:

JUSTICE is God enclined to render to every one their due, according to Rule. And this is that which doth eminently shine forth in his works of Efficiency; particularly in his Administration of the Government of the World: and because there are some foot-steps of this Vertue to be found in some Reasonable Creatures, we may from thence be a little helped in our Conceptions of it.

JUSTICE, among Men, is usually ranked under two heads, viz. *Commutative* and *Distributive*: It is the *latter* of these which comes nearest to the discovery of the *Relative Justice* of God to us, because the dispensation of it belongs properly to his Gubernation. Commutative Justice argues some equality between Persons; whereas distributive Justice is dispensed between unequals; or is the Administration of a Superiour to Inferiours.

THERE is a Justice which God observes in the management of the whole World, and every Creature is a sharer in this; but the most radiant beams of this Perfection are refulgent to us in the Transactions that pass between God and his Reasonable Creatures, Angels & Men; and it is most profitable for us to consider it in reference to the *latter*. In order to a more particular View of this, I shall premise in general:

1. THAT the *foundation of distributive Justice is some law that is obliging to the subject.* Humane reason can have no conception of this Justice, without a pre-conception of a law upon which it is built. It is true, where absolute Sovereignty hath a prerogative, its Administrations must needs be just: and God's *Sovereignty* is his *Absolute Justice*; but we must distinguish between the Attributes of Lordship, and Justice in God; for he intended the displays of this as well as that in his transactions with his Creatures Justice must referr to a Law, and to a Law promulgated; and therefore where there is no Law, there is no Obedience, no transgression, no recompensers, no room for any Justice to discover it self; Rom. 4. 15. —*Where no law is, there is no transgression.*

2. THAT *Justice may be accordingly dispensed*, there are *three things requisite.*

1. THAT he *who makes & executes the Law, have a right or lawful Authority so to do.* It doth not belong to every one, either to make Laws, or to put them in Execution; and tho' the thing it self were never so just, yet it were injustice in such to take it upon them: giving and pursuing of Laws, are acts of Government, and they that take it upon them, must have the power on them, either in themselves Originally, or by a rightfull Delegation: for a Judge to Sentence a convicted Murderer to Death is Justice, for a private Man to do it is Murder: and all acts of Usurpers, have been wont to be rescinded, tho' possibly some of them have been for the matter just.

2. THAT the *Law*, which is to be Rule by which this is to proceed, *be it self just.* For tho' there must be a Law upon which the Distributive Justice is built, yet there is a Justice which is antecedent rationally to that Law, according to which it ought to be enacted; and all lawgivers ought to have an eye to that as the Rule by which they make their Statutes: nor can all the lawfull Authority in the World make a thing to be just, by giving it the sanction of a law, which in it self or its own nature is unjust; for the nature of the thing continues the same after, that it was before; hence that Woe, Isa. 10. 1,2. *Wo unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness, which they have prescribed* ---. And indeed, here lies the greatest injustice of all; for if the Rule be crooked, they that must use it, cannot do right.

3. THAT the *Judge* in all his dispensations, *keep close to this Law*: that he make use of it, as his proper directory, in examining of all Cases, and final determining of every matter that comes under his Cognizance. The Judge, as such, hath nothing else to do with the Person under Trial, then just as the Law prescribes; and all his Justification is in keeping exactly to it: if any thing be, it is the Law that is offended; if that be not broken, the Man is no Criminal: if then the Law be just, it is that which must prove the Judge to be so too; it is not what *he* saith, but what *that* saith, and that in the true genuine sense & intention of it: to vary from this, is in Scripture called perverting of Justice, Prov. 17.23. *A wicked man taketh a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment.* Upon these things thus premised, let us now take a nearer and more particular account of the Justice of God, in the following Conclusions:

1. THERE was *a Law which God gave to Man at first to regulate himself by.* God having made Man a Reasonable Creature, and a Cause by counsel of his own Actions, and having withal made him for his own Service & Glory, he revealed to him what was his Duty, and wherein he expected his Service, or how he would be glorified by him. That, when God had made Man, he brought him under the Rule of Government, is evident from Scripture, and that he revealed this Rule to him is no less apparent; the relicks of this Law in fallen Men's Consciences, are a witness that once there was a fair

inscription; the records of Scripture do all witness also that once God did shew Man the way. And the very nature of Man pleads for it, for the service of a reasonable Creature, must be a reasonable Service, which naturally requires, that he must know his duty in order to his doing of it.

2. THAT *God had the undoubted Authority of a Lawgiver.* That he had an *absolute Sovereignty* over the Creature, is beyond any rational ground of disputation. He had his Authority in himself, and needed not to derive it from the Subject. Humane Power is delegated, but God's is *Originally in himself*: Impossible it is to conceive of an higher and more natural right than that of Creation: if the Potter may claim a liberty over the clay, which he made not, but was given him for his use, much more may God over the Creature, which had its whole both Essence & Existence from him: so he argues, *Psal.* 100. 2, 3. It was his Arbitrary Pleasure, whether he would ever have given being to a Creature, he therefore acted his pleasure, as in making, so in the specification of the several sorts of second beings. He may therefore without Usurpation claim of them the Service to which he hath given them a Capacity, and if he requires no more of them, than what he endowed them for, he is just: they owe themselves entirely to him, he that is the first Cause, is also the last End; if he be Creator, he must needs be Governour.

3. THAT *the Law which God gave to Man was a Righteous Law.* It is a dispute among the learned, whether God wills things because they are good, or whether they are good because he wills them; *i. e.* Whether the will of God commanding, or the goodness of the things that are commanded, be the ground of the Righteousness of his Laws. I may not here discuss this at large; but methinks, here is no need of Controversy, if we consider, that God's Being, Understanding, Will, Wisdom, Justice, Goodness, *&c.* are not diverse in themselves, but only diversified to our Conception, and in the things done by him; these being all Eternal, there can be no goodness more Ancient which should direct him; and if it be Co-eval, it is himself. The Contrivance of the suitableness between the Creature and its Rule, is the product of his Wisdom; the determining it to be so of his Will, whence the Command it self results; and from this fountain all goodness derives; and yet the derived goodness hath a real goodness in it, else it would not be a genuine issue of God's Wisdom and Will: and then God both wills the things because they are good, his Wisdom doth so contrive them; and also they are good because he wills them, his Active Will put the actual goodness into them. We may then argue well for the righteousness of the Law from its Holiness, and its Goodness; and therefore the Apostle puts these three together, Rom. 7. 12. *Wherefore the law is holy; and the commandment holy, and just, and good.* Its Holiness appears in that it is a Rule of glorifying God by his Creature, and its Goodness in that it is suited to the nature of the Creature, being a rational Service, and adapted to make him happy: it was within his compass, and directive of him to blessedness.

4 THIS *Law had conditional recompences annexed to it.* A Law in a moral sense signifies a Rule to direct the Creature in its Actions; requiring a Conformity to it from the Subject: but in a Political sense, it also includes in it the Sanction that is put to this Rule, to hold Men under Obedience, and preserve the honour and prerogative of the Law it self Now the Sanction of the Law mainly consists in the recompenses determined for Obedience & Disobedience with which it is ratified; which, that they may take place according to the merit of the Case, is that wherein the lawgivers Justice is concerned: When therefore God gave this Law to Man at the first, he added to the Command, a promise of Life to Man, in case he should perform perfect Obedience to it, and a threatning of Death, if he should violate it; and as he obliged Man to that part of it, which respected his Duty, so he no less bound his Justice, to see to that part of it, which referred to the Conditions which were adjoyned to it, Gen. 2. 17. *But of the tree of the knowledge of good & evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* Rom. 10. 5. *For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things, shall live by them.*

5. FROM the consideration of these Conditions *ariseth the distinction of God's Justice, into Rewarding & Revenging.* This distinction is clearly asserted and expounded, Rom. 2. 6, 7, 8. *Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them, who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath. Rewarding* Justice, is God enclined to recompence the Creature's Obedience with a constant Life of endless happiness. *Revenging* Justice is God as fully enclined to recompence the Disobedience of the Sinner with destruction; the former is summed up in the word *Life*, the latter in that of *Death.* Both of them are the same Relative Justice, bearing a different respect to the Creature according as it stands related to the Law.

6. THAT these *recompenses* of rewarding and revenging Justice affix'd to the Law, *are righteous.* A Law cannot be righteous unless the Sanction of it be so; such are these: not only is the Command just and good, but the conditions are right. The Recompence of reward is righteous, not that there is as much intrinsecal worth in Man's Obedience, which is but his Duty, as to purchase the Glory promised; but, as God promised no more but what he had a power to do, so having past his word, and given his promise to the Creature, it is right for him to perform it, and he would wrong his own Truth if he should not so do. The punishment of Sin is just, it being a Crime against the Supream Majesty, a rebellion of the Subject against his Sovereign; a wrong done to the Glory of the Infinite God, and therefore cannot but deserve the

the utmost penalty the Creature is capable of.

7 THE *declarative glory of God's Justice consists in his standing to this Law.* This is that wherein we make the discoveries of this Attribute. Justice considered in him, is his inclination thus to do; and upon this account he is said to love it, Psal. 45. 7. *Thou lovest righteousness.*——Love in us is an Affection engaging of us to a closure with our Object: the manifestation of this is by his standing by his own Law, and when he doth so, then he makes it appear, that he is a just God, Now,

8 *GOD always eyes this Law in his dispensations to his Reasonable Creatures, as their Judge.* God having fixed this Rule of Government, he now stands by it, and sees to the fulfilment of it: he bears a true respect to it in all his proceedures with the children of Men: he acts impartially, and therefore is said to have *no respect of persons*, Rom 2. 11. All the trials of Men are reduced to, and regulated by this Law; the Sentence which he passeth is according to it, and such are the Executions, (*Rom.* 2. 6.) and whenever he enters into Judgment with Men, there is no bribe can be put upon him, so as to biass him in his Sentence, or make him to pervert the Rule: Just as Men are found, so it shall certainly go with them. Holiness and Justice run through all his Judicial proceedings; Psal. 145. 17. *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.* And whilst he stands by a just Law, needs must he appear to be a just God.

9. THERE are *Sovereign Acts* in God's dealings with the Children of Men, *which no whit infringe his Justice.* There are other Attributes of God which he designs the display of towards fallen Man; and tho' the effects of them may seem different from those of Justice, yet they in no wise contradict it; though our dim sight cannot discern many times the Consonancy, and our prejudiced minds are ready to make wrong interpretations; and these are especially two, the one respecting *Reprobates*, the other the *Elect.* In regard to *Reprobates*, there is his bounty or common goodness, which bears with them in Patience, and gives them abundance of the *blessings of life*, Job 21. 5, *&c.* This indeed is not properly Justice, but Favour, they have no claim; but his Justice is not blemished by it: all this is but an indulgence to them as Prisoners, before the day of trial and execution; and this satisfied, Job 21. 29, 30. *Have ye not asked them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens? That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction; they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath.* And not only so, but he will call them to an account for all this, and the abuse of it will add to their indictment: abused goodness turns into *treasures of wrath*, Rom. 2. 3, 4. In respect of the *Elect*, there is his special Grace appearing in the pardon of their Sins, and restoring them to his favour, and bestowing on them Eternal Life, who were guilty and condemned by the Law: and here Justice is not injured, but highly honoured, in that he hath provided its satisfaction in *Jesus Christ*, who hath born the penalty due, and therefore in him Justice and Peace are at Agreement; hence that, Rom. 3. 26. *To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.* And indeed, never had Justice rode in such stately triumph, had not the Son of God in our nature and stead resigned himself up into its hands.

USE 1. LEARN hence that there is *no hope for a Sinner that is in his Sins to escape the wrath of God, and vengeance of Hell.* A vain thing it is to plead the mercy of God, and think to shroud your selves under that, whilst there is guilt lying upon you: Remember, that when God displayed all his Goodness before *Moses*, that he took care to put in a caution against such as you, Exod. 34. 7, 8. *Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the childrens children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.* Think, God is just as well as mercifull, and *this* Attribute is equally Infinite, Eternal and Unchangable with *that*; whatever love vain Men may plead that God hath for his Creatures, which are the works of his hands; yet know it, he hath an Infinite self-love, which is his Holiness, which engageth him to secure the interest of the declarative glory of all his Perfections; and he will not suffer any one of them to have the least stain or blemish upon it: if therefore you cannot reconcile the Immaculate Justice of God to your hopes of Salvation, you have little ground of encouragement or comfort: that there is a way to do this, is of God's rich Grace; and if ever you would stand in the Judgment before a righteous God, it infinitely concerns you to seek after and secure this title, else all your hopes will perish forever.

USE 2. *THIS Attribute stands to strengthen the hopes, and confirm the consolation of true Believers.* They that have taken sanctuary in *Christ*, and gotten under the shadow of his wings, have not only the rich mercy of God to celebrate, and comfort their Souls withal, but the very Justice of God standing on their side; and because he is just, they can never miscarry: the Apostle therefore interests this Attribute in our pardon and salvation, 1 Joh. 1. 9. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* And *Paul*'s design in *Rom.* 3. *lat. end*, is to shew that his Righteousness is displayed in our Justification: for having taken the full of his righteous revenge for the Sins of his People upon our Surety & Redeemer, it must needs be that there is *no more Condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus*, Rom. 8. 1. Justice saith, all its demands are compleatly answered, and it hath no more to say. Let Sinners then tremble, but let the Saints rejoice and clap their hands at this, *that God is Just*, *Psal.* 36. *lat. end.*

USE 3. *THAT it is very safe for us freely to recommend all the Injuries or wrongs that are done to us, unto God, and to leave them with him.*

We

We need not anticipate God, by going about to revenge our ſelves: the Juſtice of God will do us right; and if we can but leave it with him, never fear but he will in his own time, and in the beſt ſeaſon right our Names, and clear our Innocency, however it hath been beſpattered in the World. Let us then bear injuries, and hard cenſures & reproaches with patience, and reward good for evil, praying cordially for them that deſpitefully uſe us, that if it may be, God will give them Repentance in this life, aſſuring our ſelves, that if we ſuffer innocently, and for righteouſneſs ſake, God who hath clothed himſelf with Righteouſneſs as with a Robe, will clear up our Integrity before the World, to our Everlaſting Conſolation.

[NOVEMBER 5. 1689.]

SERMON *XXV.*

5. IT follows that we take ſome account of *the Goodneſs of God*, which is another of his *Vertues* or glorious Perfections: which alſo hath its manifeſtations in the works of Efficiency. For, tho' God be good in himſelf, yea, *Goodneſs it ſelf*; yet from this Eſſential Goodneſs of his there is a *Relative* one, which derives to the Creature, by which it makes diſcoveries of this Perfection in him, whereby it taſtes and ſees that God is good. We may take an account of it under this Deſcription: *Goodneſs is God enclined to beſtow his favours freely upon his Creatures.* We do not look upon this Attribute here, as an expreſſion of the Perfection of his Nature, which is *the goodneſs of a Being*, for ſo it comprizeth all his Attributes under it; nor as *his own happineſs*, which is the reſult of the former, and is alſo counted the goodneſs of a Being; but as a moral Vertue, according to our Conception, and ſo the Scripture often, yea, for the moſt part uſeth it: and it bears a relation to ſomething unto which it imparts it ſelf, in which Communication it is made known; hence that, Pſal. 119. 68. *Thou art good, and doeſt good.*--- We may here, 1. Make ſome *general remarks* on the *Goodneſs of God.* And, 2. Take a more *particular account* of the *ſeveral diſcoveries* which are made of it in the *works of God.*

[1.] IN *general*, we may obſerve,

1. THE *Subject* that *participates* in this Goodneſs, and that is the *Creature*, taken Indefinitely, and Univerſally. There is no ſecond being, from the nobleſt Angel of Heaven, to the moſt deſpicable Worm in the earth, but partakes in the influence of this Attribute: the Scripture therefore is frequent in expreſſing the unbounded expreſſions of this Perfection; Pſal. 145. 9. *The Lord is good to all.*--- And, 104*th* is ſpent in the diſcovery of it: and for this reaſon it is, that all beings are called upon to *praiſe the Lord*, Pſal. 148.

2. THE *matter* of this Goodneſs *comprehends all thoſe favours which the Creatures do partake in.* Whatſoever is a benefit to the Subject of it, comes under the notion of *Goodneſs*, becauſe it doth it good: and inaſmuch as whatſoever it is, or hath, comes from God, it muſt needs be a fruit and diſcovery of his Goodneſs unto it: they are therefore *his Benefits* that the Pſalmiſt calls on himſelf to praiſe God for, *Pſal.* 103. 2.

3. THAT which commends this Goodneſs is, *that he beſtows all theſe favours freely upon them.* The Creature had no challenge of them in it ſelf; but they are every way free. There could be no antecedent Obligation lying upon God to them, no neceſſity he had of them, having done well without them through a long Eternity: nor could there be any conſequent merit in them, ſo as to deſerve any part of this Goodneſs by any thing they did for him, which could do him a kindneſs, or earn his favour; all its very Powers & Actions being fruits of this very Goodneſs, ſo that God is ſo far from owing the Creature any thanks for any ſervice, that contrary wiſe, it owes him ackowledgment and praiſe for this; 1 Chron. 29. 13, 14. *Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praiſe thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we ſhould be able to offer ſo willingly after this ſort: for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.* And on the account of this freedom it is, that God imparts this Goodneſs after diverſe manners, and in different degrees to his Creatures at his pleaſure, without giving them an account; and they that receive the leaſt, have more than God owed them.

4. *ALL this reſults from a natural inclination in God thus to do.* In Men we obſerve Actions, and that Obſervation leads us to take notice of ſome Vertues which are Principles from whence ſuch Actions flow, which by the frequency of ſuch Actions, we account to be habitually ſeated in them; after ſuch a manner we conceive of God. We may therefore by the conſideration of what highly commends Men for goodneſs, conceive ſomething of that which is ſurpaſſingly and incomparably in God. The Apoſtle ſeems to give preference to a *good* Man, above a *righteous* Man, Rom. 5. 7. *For ſcarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man ſome would even dare to die.* Now the principal Characters of one *eminently Good*, are ſuch as follow, which we may ſee how they tranſcend in God.

1. *HE is ready to do good to all that ask it.* It is ſo natural to him, that it flows out ſpontaneouſly; it is but ask and have; there have been ſome Men commended for this; but God is ſuch an one, hence that encouragement of Chriſt, Matth. 7. 7. *Ask, & it ſhall be given you.*--- And that declaration of the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 145. 18. *The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.* And he ſeals it with his experience, Pſal. 34. 6. *This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him; and ſaved him out of all his troubles.*

2. HE is ready to do for them *before he is asked.* A good Man by vertue of his inclination, cannot

cannot tarry till he be ſollicited; but he looks out to ſee for ſome Objects of his bounty, enquires who ſtands in need of his favour; and it is certain, that God prevents his Creature, and beſtows innumerable kindneſſes upon it unſought; Iſa. 65. 1. *I am found of them that asked not for me: I am found of them that ſought me not* ---. One would think it enough to do for them when they pray; but ſee, Iſa. 65. 24. *And it ſhall come to paſs, that before they call I will anſwer, and whiles they are yet ſpeaking, I will hear.* The Pſalmiſt did but purpoſe, Pſal. 32. 5. ---*I ſaid I will confeſs my tranſgreſſions unto the Lord; and thou forgaveſt the iniquity of my ſin.*

3. HE doth the Creature good, *tho' he hath provoked him to the contrary.* A good Man will requite good for evil to a very enemy: if he hunger he will feed him, *&c.* He will if poſſible, break his heart with kindneſs; and herein is God's Goodneſs highly celebrated, Matth. 5. 45. *That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh his ſun to riſe on the evil and on the good, and ſendeth rain on the juſt and on the unjuſt.* (*Rom.* 5. 8.) He not only requites the Creatures Service with benignity, but lays obligations upon them, whilſt diſhonouring him, to repent and return to their Obedience; Rom. 2. 4. *Or deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſs, and forbearance, and long-ſuffering, not knowing that the goodneſs of God leadeth thee to repentance?*

4. HE doth good *to a multitude.* Goodneſs is diffuſive: a good Man contents not himſelf with drawing out his Goodneſs to one or two, but would do good to all as he hath opportunity and ability; Gal. 6. 10. *As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men*---. And truly all Creatures, as innumerable as they are, receive the largeſſes of God's Goodneſs; Pſal. 145. 15. *The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou giveſt them their meat in due ſeaſon.* For this reaſon he is compared to the *Sun*, (Pſal. 84. 11.) which imparts its light to the whole earth: and to a *Fountain*, (Jer. 2. 17.) which ſends forth its ſtreams far and near.

5. HE is *unwearied* in it. A good Man is not tired out; his natural inclination maintains in him a readineſs to be multiplying acts of Beneficence; ſuch is God, like the Sun, which is never weary of travelling about the earth, but is as a *giant* in it, *Pſal.* 19. 4. Like a fountain which runs as full to day as it did yeſterday, and beſtows its ſtreams with as much freedom.

6. HE *delights* in it. Connatural acts are pleaſant: the Sun rejoiceth to run his race. Good Men are never better ſatisfied, than in imparting their Goodneſs: and God takes delight in being kind to his Creatures; Mic. 7. 18. --- *He delighteth in mercy.* He is as we may ſay, *in his Element.* It is one thing wherein he exalts his glory; and in all theſe reſpects the goodneſs of the Creature is but a poor dark ſhadow of his, as will be exemplified in the things that follow: Hence,

[2.] LET us take a more particular account of the *ſeveral diſcoveries which are to be made of this Goodneſs, in the works of God.* And theſe may be reduced to two heads. God's Goodneſs may be conſidered, 1. As it relates to his Creatures in *general.* 2. As it diſcovers it ſelf to fallen Man in *particular.*

(1.) THE Goodneſs of God may be conſidered as it *relates to the Creatures in general.* We have obſerved that it is Univerſal, and there are none exempted from it; and therefore all beings do abundantly declare it: and we may trace the footſteps of it thro' all God's works of Efficiency, both of Creation and Providence.

1. IN the works of *Creation.* We read, *Gen.* 1. *ult.* that all the things which God created were *good*, yea, *very good*: ſuch they were as they came newly out of his hands: and there are ſeveral tokens of his Goodneſs here, which deſerve an *Aſteriſm.*

1. IT was Goodneſs that made, or *gave being* to the Creature. The ſecond being is the proper iſſue and product of Goodneſs as well as Power. Goodneſs is accounted to be one of the prime affections of being; meerly to be, is in Nature better than not to be; now the Creature had its being from God, *Acts* 17. 28. it once was not, and had never had been, if his Fiat had not given Entity to it.

2. THAT he made it *for an end* which it was to ſerve unto. Philoſophy tells us, that the end and goodneſs of a thing are convertible; a thing had as good not to be, as to be to no uſe or purpoſe: and the goodneſs of a thing is proportionable to the end it ſerveth to: that therefore God made the Creature for an end, and no leſs than his own Glory, as, Prov. 16. 4. *The Lord hath made all things for himſelf.* (Rev. 4. 11.) ſets forth his great Goodneſs to it.

3. THAT he *put* into the Creature *a fitneſs or Capacity, of ſerving to their end*, in their place. To have made a thing for an end which it could never have attained, had been to make it in vain. The habitual goodneſs of any thing, is its uſefulneſs to the purpoſe it is deſigned for; and ſo far as it is uſefull, ſo far it is good. Now this was the goodneſs which God ſaw in all his works, and they had it from him; his Wiſdom contrived, and his Power effected it, and the effect it ſelf is his Goodneſs. There is no Creature but hath its uſe.

4. THAT he *put* the Creation into ſuch an *Order* or harmony, whereby every Creature is made *nextly* capable of ſerving to its end in its place. Without this, the habitual goodneſs of the Creature could not have ſutably exerted it ſelf; ſome Creatures are to ſerve God in ſerving their fellow-Creatures, others are to ſerve him in improving of theſe for his Glory; hence every thing was ſet in its place: there is a Concatenation, Hoſ. 2. 21, 22. *I will hear, ſaith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they ſhall hear the earth*, &c. And thus did the Goodneſs of God impart it ſelf to the whole, in its ſeveral parts.

5. THIS Goodneſs hath *expreſt it ſelf more to ſome Creatures*, than it hath done to *others*. Though God's Goodneſs as it is in him is Infinite, yet in the Effect of it, it is diſpenſed variouſly to the Creature; hence ſome are more indebted

to

to him than others, becauſe he hath imparted more to them. For,

1. SOME Creatures have a *more noble and excellent Nature* than others. As there are orders of Being, ſo there are degrees of excellency. A *plant* is more excellent than a *ſtone*, a *ſenſible* Creature hath greater perfections than a *vegetative*, and a *reaſonable* Creature is more noble than all theſe, *Job* 35. 11.

2. HENCE ſome are capable of a *more noble kind of Service than others.* Some Beings were made to ſerve God in ſerving of Man. But Man was made more directly & immediately for the ſervice of God. Some Beings were to ſerve God *paſſively*, not being capable of actually deſigning his Glory; whereas Man was to ſerve him *actually*, being made a Cauſe by counſel of all his Actions.

3. SOME Creatures were made to be *only temporary*, and then to have an *end forever*, as to the individual Being which they had, others were *made for Eternity*, and conſequently capable of ſerving God world without end: Such were *Angels* and *Men* in particular.

4. SOME were made *capable of happineſs in their attaining of their End*, which others are altogether incapable of enjoying, it being a ſtate incompatible to their natures. A *Beaſt* cannot be *happy*, nor a *Star*, but a *Man* may. Theſe therefore had more of *Divine Goodneſs* imparted to them, and are therefore under the ſtronger Obligations.

2. IN the works of *Providence.* Herein the Goodneſs of God makes eminent diſplays of it ſelf, and that both to the Creation univerſally, and to Man particularly.

1. HIS Goodneſs is great towards the *Creation univerſally.* All Creatures partake in his *Providential Goodneſs*, all kinds of Creatures, and that individually too; and there are two things eſpecially in which it appears:

1. IN the *Suſtentation* which he affords unto them. The whole Creation is a dependent thing; the Creature now made cannot ſtand alone, but muſt be held up: as it had its Being of nothing, ſo that Being would retire into nothing again, if he did not uphold it by the right hand of his Power; the Divine manutenency is a continued Creation, it is that which keeps things in their Exiſtence, and conſerves their Eſſence: ſhould God for one moment withdraw this hand of his, or pluck it from underneath the ſecond Being, it would in that very moment ſink into the abyſs of non-entity, and ſuffer an entire Annihilation; Heb. 1. 3.---*Upholding all things by the word of his power*---. If therefore it be a fruit of Goodneſs to *be*, it muſt needs be Goodneſs that affords continuation to that Being.

2. IN the *Care* which he uſeth to *provide for his Creatures preſervation.* Both the ſupplies themſelves, and the influence by which they are efficacious to the attaining this end, flow from this Goodneſs of God. The Creature is a ſhiftleſs thing, nor is its good in its own hands; without ſupply it would ſoon periſh. The very inſtinct by which irrational things purvey for themſelves, is of him; but that is not all; it is he that keeps the wheels of ſecond Cauſes on going, ſo that proviſion is continually made for the maintenance of the Creatures; and he it is that brings it to them when thus provided. He is the Father of this great Family, and that he ſees not only to the ſupply of ſome more excellent members of it, but of the leaſt and moſt deſpicable, ſo that no one is forgotten, commends his *univerſal Goodneſs* to us; Pſal. 104. 27, 28. *Theſe wait all upon thee: that thou mayſt give them their meat in due ſeaſon. That thou giveſt them, they gather: thou openeſt thine hand, they are filled with good.* Even the *ravens*, yea, the *young ravens* are thus lookt after by him, *Pſal.* 147. 9. *Job* 38. ult. All this is by his *opening his liberal hand*, Pſal. 145. 26.

2. THIS more peculiarly diſcovers it ſelf in the Providence which *he exerciſeth towards Man in particular.* And I ſhall only point at two or three paſſages which concerned Man *before* his fearfull *Apoſtaſy*; for what refers to fallen Man, will fall under the next head of evidence. Here then God commended his Goodneſs to Man ſpecially in three things:

1. IN that he gave him a *Command over his fellow-Creatures*, and a *liberty to make uſe of them for his good.* Man's *Dominion* was at firſt founded in God's *Goodneſs*; that excellent *Charter* which God granted to him at firſt, recorded in, Gen. 1. 28, 29. ---*Have dominion over the fiſh of the ſea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God ſaid, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing ſeed*---, was a token of his kindneſs: Man's right properly derived from this donation, theſe Creatures were God's property originally, and not Man's till he gave them to him; and how much of benignity there was in it, and how much Man was brought under obligation to God by it, the Pſalmiſt takes notice of with admiration, *Pſal.* 8. Hereby he had both an honourable, and a liberal maintenance beſtowed upon him, and as much of good as there was in the things, ſo much did God's Goodneſs expreſs it ſelf to him.

2. IN that he gave him a *Law to direct him in his reaſonable ſerving of him.* Other Creatures were to be govern'd by *inſtinct*, but Man was a Cauſe by counſel, and muſt have a *Rule* to conform himſelf to, elſe he muſt have lived in vain: God gave him a Law in his good Will, and accommodated it every way ſuitable to his nature, and there was nothing in it, but what was *holy, juſt & good*, Rom. 9. 14. Now the Goodneſs of the Law given, muſt needs reſult from, and give evidence to the Goodneſs of the Lawgiver; Neh. 9. 13. *Thou---gaveſt them ---good ſtatutes* ---.

3. IN that he *promiſed* them *glorious Rewards of their Obedience.* The *firſt Covenant* is ſaid to be of *Works*, becauſe the *Promiſe* was annexed to the condition of Man's *perſonal Obedience*, not becauſe that Obedience had a valuable proportion to the recompence. It was free Goodneſs, that ſecured to Man in the Covenant, a conſtant life of Happineſs, on the ſuppoſal of a faithfull diſcharge of the Duty required of him. Man owed himſelf to God, but God owed nothing

nothing to him, till he had voluntarily by promiſe made himſelf a debtor: It was therefore incomparable Goodneſs that ſtood bound to do ſuch great things for Man.

USE. WE may hence take notice *how vile and horrible* a thing *Man's Apoſtaſy* was; and how deeply the conſideration of it ought *to humble us* all that had an hand in it. No affronts are more bruitiſh and inhumane, than ſuch as are offered to Goodneſs. The very Heathen could ſay, *Si Ingratum dixeris, omnia dixiſti.* Ingratitude is the moſt unreaſonable thing; and indeed, there is not a more convincing and aſhaming conſideration to be put on any Sin, to make us bluſh and be even confounded at the thoughts of it, than to reflect upon, and upbraid our ſelves with the thought of the ſtrong cords by which the Goodneſs of God hath bound us to him, all whereof muſt needs be ſnapt aſunder by us, before we can adventure to Sin againſt him.

WOULD we then obtain to abhor our ſelves in duſt and aſhes for any Sin, let us be much in contemplation of the innumerable paſſages of God's Goodneſs, by which he had engaged us to the contrary.

[DECEMBER 3. 1689.]

SERMON *XXVI.*

(2.) GOD's Goodneſs is alſo conſiderable, as it diſcovers it ſelf to *fallen Man in particular.* We have heard, That tho' all taſte of his Goodneſs, yet ſome more than others; and there are ſome peculiar remarks to be made of it in relation to the Children of Men; and this Goodneſs is twofold, either that which is *common to all*, or that which is *ſpecial & peculiar to ſome.*

Firſt, THERE is a *Goodneſs of God* which is *common to all ſorts of Men*, and is therefore called *common*, becauſe it is diſpenſed to good and bad, to friends & enemies: and yet it hath a ſpecialty in it, reſpecting them, from the *general Goodneſs* in which the whole Creation is intereſted, and hath a peculiar Conſideration on it, as it hath fallen on ſinfull Man for it's ſubject; and is therefore in a more reſtrained ſenſe called the *Mercy of God*: Mercy ſometimes in Scripture comprehends both of theſe, but elſewhere it intends the former, *viz.* The *Benignity of God*, which all fallen Men are ſharers in: The proper head to which this belongs is Efficiency, where it diſcovers it ſelf, and belongs there to the Day of Puniſhment, referring to the Moderation which God at preſent uſeth in the execution of it: but being one branch of his *Goodneſs*, may here be diſcourſed, and may thus be deſcribed:

GOD's Mercy or common Goodneſs, is *God willing to ſuccour ſinful Men in their Miſery.*

THAT there is ſuch an Attribute in God, the Scripture is full for; that it is common to ſinful Men will appear, if you compare, Matth. 5. 44, 45, 48. *But I ſay unto you, Love your enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, & pray for them which deſpitefully uſe you, and perſecute you: That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his ſun to riſe on the evil & on the good, and ſendeth rain on the juſt & on the unjuſt. Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.* with, Luk. 6. 35, 36. *But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again: and your reward ſhall be great, and ye ſhall be the children of the higheſt: for he is kind unto the unthankful, and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father alſo is merciful.*

WE may here conſider ſomething in *general* concerning this Attribute; and then obſerve the *particular* diſcoveries or diſplays of it.

[1.] IN *general*, in the Deſcription conſider theſe things,

1. THE *ſubject* in which this Attribute exalts its declarative glory, viz. *ſinful Men*, and that univerſally. Sin is the common diſeaſe of Mankind, the whole race is fallen into it; (*Rom.* 5. 12.) there is not ſo much as one exempted; Rom. 3. 12. *They are all gone out of the way*---. And this is the Emphaſis and Eminency of this Attribute, that it hath choſen ſuch a ſubject to be its foil in which to make it ſelf known: and there are theſe conſiderations that make it admirable,

1. *BY Sin they had forfeited all claim to any Goodneſs*, and could expect nothing at God's hands, but that his revenging Juſtice ſhould fall upon them, and cut them off; they were under the Curſe of Death, which contains in it a loſs of all good, and a ſuffering of every evil, and it belonged to them, *Dan.* 9. 8.

2. *BY Sin they had provoked God to do execution upon them*; they had made themſelves his enemies; and ſuch is the ſtate of Men by Nature deſcribed to be, Rom. 5. 10. *--When we were enemies*---. And therefore had all reaſon to expect the utmoſt of his Wrath to fall upon them; for if a Man find his Enemy, will he not ſlay him?

3. *BY Sin they had made themſelves unprofitable*, and could therefore have no ground in themſelves to expect ſuch a favour; Rom. 3. 12. *---They are altogether become unprofitable*---. They had wholly loſt their ſtrength of ſerving God, or doing any thing to his Glory, become vain and uſeleſs, as to active Obedience; and why ſhould God trouble himſelf with ſuch an uſeleſs burden? and all this beſpeaks that it is meer Mercy that any favour at all is ſhewn to theſe Creatures.

2. THE particular thing which this Attribute employs it ſelf upon, in this ſubject, viz. *their Miſery.* God looks upon their miſerable condition, and he moves his own bowels in compaſſion to them: *Miſery* is the proper foil of *Mercy*, it can have no other *Object.* This Vertue was eminently in God from Eternity, but it could make no diſcoveries of it ſelf to the Creation, till the Creatures infelicity provided it a ſubject to work upon: all Creatures may partake in God's *general Goodneſs*, but this *particular* expreſſion of it in *Mercy*, always ſuppoſeth the

Creature to be unhappy, in distress, labouring under some oppression; and Sin had reduced all Mankind unto this Condition: Death was fallen upon them, and that contained all conceivable Miseries in it. Man had no sooner sinned, but he knew what it was to be undone, and now he stands in need of Mercy: this is that which Mercy looks upon with a commiserating eye; Judg. 10. 16. ---*His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.*

3. THAT wherein this Attribute exerts it self is, *it succours them in this Misery.* We conceive it as a Divine Vertue in God, to be an inclination & readiness thus to do; this we discern by the effect when we see that he so doth: all the relief that he affords them in this forlorn estate of theirs, belongs to his Mercy. Would we then take a scantling of this Mercy of God, we must lay those two things together, *viz.* What *belongs to* their Misery, and what *abatements of it* they enjoy: to the *former* belongs the consideration of what was their due demerit by the Rule of Justice; to the *latter* the observation of the degrees to which it is at present restrained or moderated in the execution: would we throughly understand the *former*, we must unbowel the Curse, and that will give us an admirable discovery of the *latter*, by laying it by the Providence under which they are; and this leads us to Enquire,

[2.] WHAT are the *particular discoveries* or displays of this *Mercy* of God towards Sinners?

Answ. HERE first take this general Rule, That *whatsoever Sinners enjoy that is not of Merit, is of Mercy.* And that will make way for another, *viz.* That *every thing* in the Sinners condition, which is *better than Hell*, is hither to be assigned, Lam. 3. 22. *It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.*

THE state of the Sinner in point of merit, doth here come under a double consideration, 1. What he *doth* deserve, and that is Death; Rom. 6. 23. *For the wages of sin is death*---. And that contains in it all the miseries of this life, but the height of it is in the Eternal state of the damned: hence every mitigation of this, in what degrees so ever, is Mercy. 2. What he *doth not* deserve, and that is any favour at all. If that good Man could make that ingenious confession, Gen. 32. 10. *I am not worthy of the least of all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant*—. Must not every Sinner do so? Where all is wholly forfeited, there can be nothing deserved; and hence every good thing which a Sinner enjoys, is part of this Mercy.

UPON these considerations, the Mercy of God contains in it *two Attributes*, in and by which it makes it self known to Mankind, viz. *Clemency* and *Benignity*; and in opening of these two, we shall make a particular discovery of it.

1. THE *Clemency* of God, is *God enclined to spare Sinners a while, that deserved presently to die.* Man is no sooner a Sinner, but he is a Child of Death: as soon as ever sin is committed, God hath an advantage put into his hands, which he might immediately lay hold of, and make the Creature know his fury; but in Justice he remembers Mercy, Clemency holds his hands, so as that he doth not strike the Sinner down dead upon the place; and this is a fruit of Mercy, *Lam.* 3. 22. 2 *Chron.* 36. 15. Psal. 78. 38. *But he being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not; yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.* Now there are two other Attributes, in which this Clemency of God shines out, which are, as we may say, the degrees of its discovery, viz. his *Patience* and his *Long-suffering*, in both of which God makes to appear how willing he is to spare the Sinner. These may be severally spoken to

(1.) THE *Patience* of God, is *God willing for the present to bear those injuries that are offered him by Sinners.* Whilst the wretched Creature is offering all affronts and abuses to his sacred Majesty, God *keeps silence*, Psal. 50. 21. He bears with all these indignities quietly. He is not put into a chafe by them, as we are wont to be, when we think our selves to be affronted; he is calm and composed under all. Sin is contrary to the holy nature of God, and therefore he might justly break forth in fury, upon the least Sin committed, cloath himself with indignation, and shew no pity; but Patience moderates his Anger, so that he withholds the deserved punishment, and for this reason it is that the Sinner dies not upon the spot: and this very Patience is a glorious Attribute, and will appear to be wonderfull, if we lay it by the consideration of the lives and conversations of Sinners, their daily carriages towards him; and remember, that God looks on, and sees all this, and that they are not cut off and destroyed: let us then a little commorate here, and observe how admirably Patient God is.

1. HE *sees*, for he cannot but see, *That the Sinner pays him not the homage or tribute of Obedience which he owes to him.* Man owes to God the whole strength of Body and Soul, to be continually improved for his Glory; to be always lifting of his Name on high, in all his thoughts, words, and actions; but the Sinner doth nothing less, *God is not in all his thoughts*, Psal. 10. 4.

2. HE sees the Sinner *daily going on into more and more Sins*; running himself into further and more provocations, encreasing of Iniquity, adding of Sin to Sin, *Isa.* 30. 1. Instead of reforming former ways, and returning from them, he is multiplying of transgressions: Sinful Man is every day throwing in one more stick to his pile, running further and deeper on the score; every new Action hath a new exorbitancy accompanying of it, and still the more he acts, the more he Sins; all this God sees.

3. HE sees how the Sinner *grows worse and worse every day*, instead of growing better.

How

How he is daily provoking him, not only by iterated acts of the ſame Sin, but aggravated degrees of ſinning, and finding out new Sins, and new ways of ſinning againſt him: how they grow bolder and bolder in tranſgreſſing his holy Laws.

4. HE *knows*, for he keeps an exact regiſter, of *all the individual ſins*, ſecret and open, which they have committed. They are written in his Book, and laid up among his treaſures; his eye follows them to all their vain Companies, lewd Practices, all that they do in the dark, ſtands in the light of his countenance; he counts all their vain thoughts, and idle words, and obſcene actions, and how many thouſand of theſe hath the Sinner been guilty of, and God hath forgotten none, and can ſet them all in order before him.

5. HE ſees *what entertainment Sinners give to all his Warnings & Counſels*, which he ſends to them. All that ſcorn and contempt which they offer unto them: all their ſecret upriſings of heart againſt them; all the reſolves they make not to hear them; all the mocks and flouts at God, and Godlineſs; hears when they ſay as, Job 21. 15. *What is the Almighty, that we ſhould ſerve him? and what profit ſhould we have, if we pray unto him?* Jer. 44. 16. *As for the word that thou haſt ſpoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee.*

6. HE obſerves *how all his Mercy & Patience, hardens them in Sin*, and emboldens them to perſiſt in it. Pſal. 50. 21. *Theſe things haſt thou done, and I kept ſilence: thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch an one as thy ſelf* ---. How they deſpiſe his Goodneſs and forbearance, and make thoſe very things which ſhould lead them to Repentance, their encouragements in impenitence, and ſo bring a world of vanity upon the Creature. And,

7. HE ſees how they are *always quarrelling*, and finding fault *with him*; charging him with *injuſtice*, and finding flaws in his Providence, murmuring at every thing, and full of diſcontents: angry if they have not their wills in every thing; enraged if he croſs them; Pſal. 73. 9. *They ſet their mouth againſt the heavens*---. All theſe things God knows right well, and the time is coming when he will make them underſtand that he ſo doth: but he ſuffers their manners for the preſent. And for all that God knows all this by them, they are not cut off, but have a room allowed them in God's World, and he for the preſent puts up all theſe wrongs; and is not only ſilent, but pitifull, and helpfull to ſuch Creatures; he ſuffers all this indignity with abundance of gentleneſs: This is the *Patience of God*.

(2.) THE *Long-ſuffering* of God, is *God willing to deferr the Sinners execution, till there be no remedy*. Sentence is paſt upon the Sinner as ſoon as he is one. In civil Courts, it uſeth not to be long between Sentence, and Execution. On ſome God ſhews his ſeverity in cutting them off ſpeedily, and this is juſt; for they are under the Sentence, and ſtand at the Judges diſcretion; but to others he deals otherwiſe; and though they go up and down the world, under a Sentence of condemnation, yet are they forborn, and ſometimes a very great while. Now the *Long-ſuffering* of God appears more eſpecially in the gradation, or thoſe many and ſlow ſteps which he takes in executing of his anger upon Sinners; he might do the work at once, but that he doth not, but proceeds gradually, ſpeaks him a long-ſuffering God. Here then, obſerve theſe ſteps,

1. *HE waits, and is not ſpeedy in coming out againſt the Sinner.* Eccl. 8. 11. --- *Sentence againſt an evil work is not executed ſpeedily* ---. He did not fall upon *Adam* immediately, but tarried till the cool of the day. Some he delays Ten, Twenty, Forty, an Hundred Years before he brings them to the Hell where they deſerved to be the firſt moment of their being: *Gen.* 6. 3. We read of a Sinner of an *Hundred* Years old.

2. *GOD often firſt debates the caſe with Sinners before he deſtroys them.* He falls not upon them, till he hath reaſoned it out, and offered them matter of Conviction; he reaſons with them, Iſa. 1. 18. *Come now, and let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord*——. Gives them leave if they can, to find any fault with him, or bring any thing to juſtify their own Courſes; Jer. 2. 5. *Thus ſaith the Lord, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?*

3. *AFTER Conviction he waits again, to ſee if they will hearken unto him.* Whether there may be any ſenſe or remorce in them, that if Conviction would do, he might proceed no farther againſt them; and as long as there is any hope, he continues debating: thus he did by his Prophets of old with a degenerate People, Jer. 8. 6. *I hearkned and heard, but they ſpake not aright: no man repented of his wickedneſs, ſaying, What have I done? every one turned to his courſe, as the horſe ruſheth into the battel.*

4. IF *pleading* will do no good, *he proceeds to threatning*. He ſlays them by his *Prophets*, before he ſlays them by his *Sword*: He ſends his Servants to denounce Judgments, to ſee if this will make them walk ſoftly, with *Ahab*; and Faſt with *Nineveh*; theſe blow the Trumpet, and tell Men of the wrath that is impending.

5. *HE continues this diſpenſation ſome while.* He *threatens* not once or twice, but *many times*. He ſends one Prophet after another; 2. Chron. 36. 16. *But they mocked the meſſengers of God, and deſpiſed his words, and miſuſed his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord aroſe againſt his people till there was no remedy.* Waiting to ſee if they thus may be perſwaded, if ſome warning or other will not faſten, and awaken them to bethink themſelves, and repent.

6. *WHEN he begins to execute*, he doth it *gradually*, and not all at once; but by ſteps, firſt by *lighter* plagues, and after that by *heavier*: tries firſt what *rods* will do, to ſee if they will prevent *ſcorpions*, Pſal. 78. 38. And

he hath many steps in the way, before he comes to the top, Lev. 26. 27, 28. *And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me: Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.*

7. *HE makes a pause between one Judgment, and another.* He doth not bring them in an heap; but stops between, to give them opportunity, and that to see if there be no fruit of the *easier*, which may obviate the *heavier*, and therefore they are said to come, if so be the former will not check them; *Lev.* 26. Sinners have many respites.

8. IN the midst of his Judgments, *he looks carefully to see if there be none to stand in the gap*, and make up the hedge. Would fain have somebody to hold his hands, and prevent further and sorer Judgments; see Ezek. 22. 30, 31. *And I sought for a man among them that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none*---. Or whether they themselves will return: hence that complaint, *Amos* 4.

9. *HE waits till there be no remedy*: till all other ways fail, before he makes a full end of them, or proceeds to the utmost, 2 *Chron.* 36. 16.

10. AND there is one amazing step more, and that is, *when there is no remedy*, all means fail, all courses have no Effect, but they continue obstinate, *he is now at a stand*, and doth not know how to do *this strange work*, yea oftentimes *takes up a resolution, that he will not do it*, Hos. 11. 8, 9. *How shall I give thee up Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim; for I am God and not man, the holy One in the midst of thee, and I will not enter into the city.* (*Isa.* 57. 19.)

USE 1. *LET no bold & daring Sinners take encouragement from hence to persist in sinning.* Know it, God can be patient and long-suffering too, and yet come soon enough to your cost, to fall upon you and destroy you forever, and he will too, if you repent not; and then abused Patience, and neglected Long-sufferance, will rise up against you, and make your woes the more intolerable. Think not God is reconciled, forbearance is no payment; Psal. 50. 21, 22. *These things hast thou done, and I kept silence: thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thy self: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.*

USE 2. *LET it call upon Sinners to bless God for a Day of forbearance, and to make the right use of it.* There is not the least Child, but hath occasion to take notice of it, but for which you had been now as long roaring in Hell as you have been; and Oh consider what unspeakable Mercy there is in it! The damned are gone to their own place, and there is no Redemption; these are the Attributes that give a space and opportunity to repent in, and encouragement to repent: And Oh! think with yourselves, if God be thus loth to destroy me a wretched, unprofitable, provoking Sinner, how ready then will he be to receive me a repenting, mourning, returning Sinner, betaking my self to JESUS CHRIST. And let this quicken and encourage you to fly speedily unto his Everlasting Arms of Mercy.

[DECEMBER 31. 1689.]

SERMON *XXVII.*

2. THE *Benignity* of God, is *God willing bountifully to bestow the good things of this life upon Sinners, contrary to their deserts.* In the *former* he restrained their deserved execution; in *this* he pours out his undeserved bounty upon them. For the illustration of this precious Attribute, let us observe,

(1.) THE *subject* of it, *Sinners.* It is true, this bounty is *universal*, the whole Creation are shearers in it, *Psal.* 35. 5. & 145 9. all Mankind in particular, good & and bad partake of it, (*Matth.* 5. 45.) but it is more *peculiarly* observable that Sinners, God's Enemies, Rebels that are up in Arms against him, have such deep draughts of it: He hath better things for his Children, (as we shall hear afterwards;) but he is willing that for the present, the worst of Men should be made to know by their own experience that he *is Good.*

(2.) THE *matter* of it, *the good things of this life.* Or all those things which are suitable for the maintenance, and comfort of their outward Man: whatsoever affords them present benefit or relief belongs to this head, of which we may take a brief general survey; hitherto then do these things belong,

1. THE *Care* which God hath of the Sinner in his *Conception and Birth.* He is made out of the corrupt mass, he is conceived in Iniquity; he is a Sinner in the womb; and yet the hand of God's Providence extends kindness to him; he keeps him in his Mother's belly, preserves him from all those Casualties which might prevent him from ever seeing the light of the Sun; makes the knees to prevent him; puts into him a reasonable Soul, with all its faculties & powers; gives him an understanding, will & affections; making him a Cause by counsel, and giving him ability to exercise them, that he is not born a *natural*; gives him also the true shape and bodily perfection belonging to his kind, writes down all his Members in his Books, that there is none of them wanting, none superfluous, and every one in their right shape and place, and they are fitted for their several uses to which they were designed; he gives them a seeing eye, and an hearing ear; it might have been otherwise, and God sometimes orders it so to be, to let sinful Man know how much he is indebted to Divine Goodness for such favours; *Psal.* 139. 14, *&c.*

2. THE *Sustentation & Preservation of all*

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the faculties & powers in Sinners. This alſo is of his benignity, that God keeps him alive, who deſerves to die as ſoon as he is born; that he not only ſhores up his life, by putting under the hand of his power, but he looks after all, that none of them ſuffer or are deſtroyed; that thoſe Caſualties he is liable to every moment, are kept off, which would impair the powers either of Soul or Body; there are innumerable of them and unſeen: the Sinner could not avoid them, if God did not watch over him, and guard him with his watchful Providential eye. He is defended from outward violence, and inward infections. Every ſtep might be a trip, and every trip a fall, every fall might break his bones. Every indiſpoſition might prove a ſickneſs, and every ſickneſs his Death; every one he meets might be his Enemy and ſlay him; that theſe things are *not*, is God's Goodneſs. *David* ſaw much in this; Pſal. 35. 10. *All my bones ſhall ſay, Lord, who is like unto thee, who delivereſt the poor from him that is too ſtrong for him, yea, the poor and needy, from him that ſpoileth him.*

3. THE *comfortable place* which God hath provided for the Sinner *to live in*, and his making it ſo to him. This lower World was adapted for an habitation for Man, and made every way convenient and comfortable for him; and tho' Man's fall hath greatly impaired the excellency of it, and brought many inconveniences into it, yet it is ſtill a place of much delight to poor Man: and that God gives Sinners a room in his World, a place on this Earth, and liberty to breath in this Air, is a great favour. Hell is another manner of place where he deſerved to be, and God doth many things here to preſerve the conveniency of it; that he hath firm footing here to walk up and down, and the earth doth not cleave under his feet, and ſwallow him up, as it did *Corah* and his Complotters; that he keeps the Air pure and ſalubrious, and doth not poyſon it with thoſe infectious vapours, which ſhould make him to ſuck in his breath and bane at once, is Mercy; that the waters do not return and drown him; that the Sun, that great eye of the World, keeps its circuit to give him light; and the Moon and Stars lend him their benign influences, and do not fight againſt him.

4. THE *ſuitable Proviſion* that God makes for him in this place. A Faculty without an Object is miſerable, and it will be a great part of the infelicity of the damned, that their Faculties ſhall be deſtitute of all convenient Objects for them to act upon. But here in this life God gives to Sinners ſuch Objects as their outward man is delighted in, and they take much content in the enjoyment and uſe of them: he gives them food to live upon, and ſuch as their Palats reliſh, and in due ſeaſon; he affords them raiment to wear, to cover their nakedneſs, and defend them from the injuries of every ſeaſon; he is their great provider, the whole World is his Family, and what he gives, they have; *Pſal.* 104. 27, 28. He ſpreads their Table, fills their Cup, gives them Houſes to live in, Eſtates to live upon, makes every Creature to pay them its ſervice; they have their Wives and Children and Friends to ſolace themſelves withal; gives them Callings to attend, and proſpers thoſe Callings; keeps their Houſes and Shops and Warehouſes from burning; their Ships from miſcarrying, *&c.*

5. THE *Fruition* which they have of the good and comfort *of all theſe good things*: That their Faculties meet with their Objects, and take ſatisfaction in them; that they can ſuck out the ſweetneſs of them, and take pleaſure in them. God could either ſhut up the vertue of theſe things in them, that they ſhould not exert it; (there is bread, and there is the *ſtaff* of bread;) or he could impede the Faculty, that it ſhould not act upon its Object with delight. Give Meat and no ſtomach, and digeſtment or nutriment; Cloaths and no warmth; give Men abundance, and deny them a heart to make uſe of it, making themſelves miſerable in the midſt of plenty. That he gives them both the things to rejoice in, and enables them to joy and delight in them, is his great Benignity, *Pſal.* 65. 8 Eccl. 2. 24. *There is nothing better for a man, than that he ſhould eat & drink, and that he ſhould make his ſoul enjoy good in his labour. This alſo I ſaw, that it was from the hand of God.*

(3.) THE *manner* of God's *beſtowing theſe good things* upon Sinners: He doth it *bountifully*. God's Eſſential Goodneſs appears in his communicative bounty. He had been Good in himſelf, yea Goodneſs it ſelf, if he had never willed any of his good things to the Creature; but we had not known him to be ſo, had he not in his Efficiency revealed himſelf to us in his Benignity. He doth not keep theſe treaſures lock'd up with himſelf; but he opens them and diſtributes them as the Sun diffuſeth its beams, and innate warmth; as the Fountain ſends abroad its waters in ſprings, and refreſhes with its ſtreams the thirſty lands. God unlocks his Store-houſes, and ſupplys his indigent Creatures; Deut. 28. 12. *The Lord ſhall open unto thee his good treaſure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his ſeaſon, and to bleſs all the work of thine hand: and thou ſhalt lend unto many nations, and thou ſhalt not borrow.* And that which commends it is, that he doth it liberally, or bountecuſly; and there are two things implied in this,

[1.] THEY are *Riches of Goodneſs* which God beſtows upon Sinners. Rom. 2. 4. *Or deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſs---.* There are a world of Mercies that they are made to participate in, in this World: God is heroically liberal, magnificently bountiful to them: He is not ſparing, near and cloſe of his treaſures; but they are poured out as a mighty Fountain vents it ſelf, not in ſmall ſprings; but great Rivers: And there are four things in which this appears,

1. HIS Bounty is *manifold*. It doth not conſiſt in ſome one good turn which he doth to the Sinner; but in an uncountable variety: He ſupplieth every ſort of want; he anſwers all his outward needs, gives him conveniences every way, anſwers them in all; Acts 17. 25. *---He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.* Gives them a World to live in, Air to breath in,

an Earth to walk upon, Light to ſee by, Fire to warm them, Houſes to dwell in, Meat, Drink and Raiment; and theſe varieties, not for bare neceſſity, but delight too. All the Sinner hath, or can ſpeak of, comes out of this Fountain or Treaſury.

2. HE beſtows all theſe things *plentifully* upon Sinners. He gives them great Store in every kind which they enjoy. Their Furrows are richly watered; Graſs grows plentifully, and Corn enough and to ſpare; Pſal. 65.9, &c. *Thou viſiteſt the earth, and watereſt it: thou greatly enricheſt it with the river of God which is full of water: thou prepareſt them corn, when thou haſt ſo provided for it*---. God is no niggardly Houſekeeper, but maintains his Family in the World, ſo as the Beaſts eat not all the Graſs, nor is all the Proviſion ſpent, neither need they to allowance themſelves. He might, as in Juſtice he ſometimes doth, make them eat their Bread by weight, and drink their Water by meaſure; but he doth not ordinarily do ſo, but they may eat & drink their fill.

3. HE ſhowers down ſo much Goodneſs upon Sinners, that *their hearts or deſires are filled with joy & gladneſs.* They have even as much as they could wiſh for; Acts 14. 17. *Nevertheleſs, he hath not left himſelf without witneſs, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful ſeaſons, filling our hearts with food and gladneſs.* (*Pſal.* 145. 11.) They have even what they will, all things at pleaſure. God doth not croſs them in their wills, nor diminiſh them, but every thing goes on proſperouſly and merrily with them; Job. 21. 7, &c. *Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?* --- That which the World declares to be Man's happineſs, they have it; *Pſal.* 144. 12, &c. Yea, ſo as they can pronounce themſelves bleſſed in their enjoyments and ſing a *Requiem* to their Souls in the midſt of it; (*Luk.* 12. 19.)

4. THE Goodneſs of God doth *ſuperabound towards them:* They have not only enough and to ſpare, not only to the utmoſt of their deſires, but beyond them; Pſal. 73. 7. --- *They have more than heart can wiſh.* The word is, that which *paſſeth the thought of their heart.* Had they contrived to themſelves a worldly condition, and ſet out in their thought what they would have, and what would give them moſt pleaſure and delight, they could never have laid it out to ſo much advantage, and ſo little of incumberance. They could not ſo much as in a dream have fancied for themſelves ſuch a plentifull ſupply of every good thing, and ſo much eaſe as they are poſſeſſed of. Their Cup is not only full, but it runs over, and they have ſo much that they cannot tell what to do with it, or how to make uſe of it; they ſurfeit upon earthly delights, and have a great deal; (*Pſal.* 17. 14.) and all this is of God's Benignity.

[2.] GOD beſtows all this Goodneſs upon Sinners *freely.* All the coſt and charge which God is at, in holding up their Being, maintaining their Life, ſupplying them with all that neceſſity, convenience, or delight can poſſibly call for, and more than ſo, is all upon free coſt. The Sinner pays him nothing for all this; but provokes, and injures, and wrongs him, notwithſtanding all. There is no ſervice done for God, he is paying him no homage, makes him no returns; nay, he is not ſo much as thankfull; Rom. 1. 21. --- *Neither were thankful.* And doth not ſo much as know whence it comes, or who is the owner of it; *Hoſ.* 2. 7 8. Though he doth no good, but is an unprofitable burden upon the Earth, is a fruitleſs tree, that cumbers the ground, and therefore lays God under no obligation at all to him; yet he doth it for him, meerly to diſcover his own bountiful Nature.

(4.) THAT which farther enhanceth the wonderment of this Attribute, is, that God doth all for him *contrary to his deſerts.* The Sinner, who is the Subject of all this Benignity, and ſwims in theſe Pleaſures and Delights, that hath all things at his Command, and is laden with God's Favours; if he had his own, and no more but his proper due, ſhould have had nothing at all, not a World to live in, or Air to breath in; much leſs a Table richly ſpread, an overflowing Cup, a ſoft Bed, a richly furniſhed Houſe, a lovely Wife, and deſirable Children; all manner of Recreations, Mirth, Muſick and Jollity. His proper place was to be all this while in Hell, naked and deſtitute of all that is Good, dwelling with the devouring fire, and everlaſting burnings, combating with the Wrath of God; and inſtead of laughter and pleaſure, filled with wailing and gnaſhing of teeth. And whilſt God hath been doing all this kindneſs for him, he hath been daring him to this, by his bold tranſgreſſions. God hath nouriſhed a *Viper* fed a *Rebel*; beſtowed his good things upon an Enemy, one that hath armed them all againſt him, and miſimprov'd them to his great diſhonour. And what Orient Colours doth this conſideration put upon the Benignity of God.

USE 1. HENCE *common Mercy is no evidence of God's ſpecial Love.* Eccl. 9. 1. --- *No man knoweth either love or hatred, by all that is before them.*

USE 2. THE conſideration of God's common Goodneſs, *may ſerve to convince the Sinner of his horrible Ingratitude to God,* in that he returns him nothing for all his Mercy, but Sin. Do you thus requite the Lord, Oh fooliſh and unwiſe! Think, vile Sinner, where thou hadſt been long ere this; had unmixed Juſtice taken place on thee, as ſoon as it had an advantage againſt thee; not where thou art; but in the bottomleſs Pit, there dwelling with Devils and damned Spirits, if Mercy had not ſtept in, and ſtopt the Execution. And hath God inſtead of pouring out his Wrath upon you, exalted his Mercy towards you? Hath his Clemency ſpared you? hath he born with Patience all your injurious dealings with him? and drawn out his forbearance unto long-ſuffering towards you, uſing all means to reclaim you? and not only kept you out of Hell, but ſtrewed your paths with fatneſs, and filled your bellies with the hidden treaſures of his Goodneſs; and do you ſtill go on in your Sins, diſhonouring & provoking God?

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is this the pay you make him for all his Coſt and Love to you? and can you ſtill depend for more, and ask it at his hands? How bruitiſh and unreaſonable is this: the *Ox* and the *Aſs* will riſe up in Judgment againſt you one Day. Ask your own reaſon, would you nouriſh a Viper which would gnaw out your Bowels? Is not this conſideration enough to put a ſtop to your Career in Sin, and make you aſhamed of your ways and doings.

USE 3. LET this Conſideration of God's common Goodneſs or Mercy, *invite and encourage Sinners to Repentance.* This is the rational tendency of it, and the thing which God looks that it ſhould work in the hearts of Sinners; Rom. 2. 4. *Or deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſs, and forbearance, and long-ſuffering, not knowing that the goodneſs of God leadeth thee to repentance?* 2 Pet. 3. 9. *The Lord is not ſlack concerning his promiſe, (as ſome men count ſlackneſs) but is long-ſuffering to us-ward, not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance.* And the thing it ſelf ſpeaks a great deal of quickning and encouragement. It ſpeaks aloud,

1. *THAT God deſerves all the ſervice of the Sinner.* He that gives you your lives for a prey, that keeps you out of the Pit, that ſuſtains and maintains you with ſuch liberality; if he be not loved and ſerved by you, who ſhould? certainly, theſe are the Cords of a Man, and would bind you in affection to another, and why not to God? is God to be deſpiſed for that which you would think Men can be never enough acknowledged for?

2. THAT *your ſinning againſt him hath been highly unreaſonable.* Thus *Daniel* convinced that Heathen Emperour, Dan. 5. 23. —*The God in whoſe hand thy breath is, and whoſe are all thy ways, haſt thou not glorified.* May not God well expoſtulate with you and ſay, I have done you good; and not hurt all your days: I have beſtowed uncountable Favours upon you, ever ſince you had a Being; for which of all theſe is it that you thus diſhonour me, hate me, and take up Arms of Rebellion againſt me? ſo he pleads with them; Jer. 2. 5. *Thus ſaith the Lord, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity and are become vain?* And what rational Anſwer can you return to this demand?

3. THAT *God doth not take delight in the Sinners deſtruction.* Every living Sinner here preſent hath the conviction of it in himſelf: Juſtice might long ago have triumphed over you, if God had not been compaſſionate; if your ruin had been a pleaſure to him, he had advantage enough to have given himſelf ſatisfaction in it: no day paſſeth without one.

4. THAT *God is willing the Sinner ſhould live.* All his Patience and Bounty ſay, that he is a Merciful God, and that he is reconcilable to Sinners: He gives them thus a ſpace, and motive to Repent; neither of which are offered to thoſe whoſe day of Mercy is ſpent. And how loudly doth this cry to every Sinner, Oh repent, return, why will you dy? And there is not the youngeſt Sinner here preſent, but is under innumerable of theſe Obligations. Accept then of Mercy's Call, and harden not your hearts into impenitency, leaſt you turn treaſures of Goodneſs into treaſures of Wrath: and know it, common Goodneſs is an Attribute which hath choſen to expreſs it ſelf to you in time; its duration is arbitrary; its time will ſhortly be over, and it will give place to unquenchible Fury. Be afraid then of out-running its ſeaſon, but repent to day while it is called to day; and let this be an incentive further to it, to think, if God can beſtow ſo much upon me an Enemy; what glorious treaſures of ſpecial Favour, hath he to happify all thoſe withal, that accept of offered Mercy, and are reconciled to him through the Blood of CHRIST.

[JANUARY 28. 1689.]

SERMON *XXVIII.*

WE have been conſidering of God's *Goodneſs*, as it doth in particular diſcover it ſelf to fallen Man, in thoſe diſplays of it which are common to *all*, both *good* and *bad*; under the title of *Mercy.* It follows to look on it,

Secondly, AS it is *ſpecial to ſome.* Though all have more than they deſerve, yet all are not alike favoured by God: nor is this difference only in the *degree*, but alſo in the *kind* of the Diſpenſation. Common Mercy is not in like proportions diſtributed to Sinners; but there is another Attribute of Goodneſs whoſe effects are eſſentially diverſe from thoſe, even the higheſt of them; which there are but *ſome*, and thoſe comparatively but a *few* do taſt of, and that is *Grace*, in which the higheſt manifeſtations of Divine Goodneſs are made; and we may obſerve ſomething of it in the opening of this Deſcription;

GRACE is *God willing to exalt a reſidue of fallen Men to a ſtate of Eternal Life & Glory, for his own name ſake.* Here we may obſerve,

1. THE word *Grace* ſignifies ſomething that is *Free.* It is ſometimes applied to a *Perſon*, and then it deciphers a diſpoſition in him to beſtow undeſerved kindneſs upon another; ſometimes to a *Thing*, and is as much as a *free gift*: and in this ſenſe, all the common Mercy that Sinners enjoy, may be called *Grace*, becauſe God beſtows it liberally, without their Merit, for Grace and Merit are oppoſed. But the Goſpel alſo is pleaſed to uſe the word in a reſtrained ſenſe, and then the Grace of God, is ſpecifically diſtinguiſhed from his Mercy; the principal differences between which are contained, and may be taken notice of in the remaining particulars of the Deſcription.

2. THE *Subject* upon whom this Attribute falls, *a reſidue of fallen Men.* It is Man for whom this Perfection of God is diſplayed, no other Creatures except *Angels* are capable of it; and *Devils* are denied it; and it is fallen Men, for all are ſo; the Apoſtacy hath included in it the whole race; but that which makes it peculiar

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is, that it is only a residue. Special Grace hath singled out but some of many to glorify it self upon; who these are, belongs to an after Consideration. Here only take notice, that there are but a *few saved*, Luk. 13. 25. a *remnant*, Rom. 9.27. and all that are so, are saved by this Attribute; Eph. 2. 8. *By grace are ye saved* ---. The Subjects of *Anastasy* or Restitution, and the Subjects of *Grace* are the same; and this is one difference between Mercy and Grace, all partake in *that*, and but some in *this*.

3. THE *Act* of this Grace, or that wherein it displays it self: *It exalts or raiseth up this Residue*. The Sin of Man had brought him into a low Condition, cast him into a dungeon of distress, a pit of misery, he was laid by the Curse as low as Hell it self; but now this Grace comes, and with a mighty Power draws him out of this Pit, delivers him from the lowest Hell; it therefore runs through the whole work of Restitution: that is it which knocks off his Chains, unlocks his Prison doors, and brings him out of it; it releaseth him from all his misery, restores him again to God's favour which he had lost, and puts him among those nobles that are admitted to stand in his presence; in one word, it *saves him*, Eph. 2. 8. And this is an Act of transcendently more favour than common Mercy affords unto any: that indeed visits the poor Captives of Justice in their restraint, it makes their Prison more easy to them, mends their fare in it, and carries it self very generously towards those unhappy Creatures, who deserved to have felt utmost severity; but it releaseth none of them, it gives them a temporary reprieve, but it affords them no release; the Sentence of Condemnation abides, and their day of Execution is coming: but Grace gives them a full acquittance, and perfectly sets them at liberty from Sin & Misery.

4. *ONE great and singular Benefit* which this Act of Grace bestows upon the Subject, viz. *It exalts them to a State of Eternal Life & Glory*. The term *from* which is Sin & Misery, the term *to* which is Holiness and Happiness: it frees them from greatest evils, and brings them to the enjoyment of the greatest Good that a Creature is capable of. We have it excellently expresst, 1 Sam. 2. 8. *He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghil, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory* ---. And that makes a mighty difference between common Mercy, and Grace: the things of the one do incomparably surpass the things of the other: *Mercy* only bestows upon them some Crumbs that fall from the Table, and can be allowed to Dogs; whereas *Grace* sets them at God's Table as Children, and provides Children's Bread for them: though great in themselves, yet compared with the other, they are little things which *Mercy* hath to bestow, the transitory and temporary things of this life; but they are the great and Eternal things, Crowns, Kingdoms, durable Riches, and Everlasting Pleasures which *Grace* hath prepared; they are beyond Conception; 1 Cor. 2. 9. *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* *Mercy* is managed in Wisdom's left hand, *Grace* in her right hand, *Prov.* 3. 16.

5. THE *Fountain* or Original from which all this proceeds, *and that is a special love which he bears to them, arising from himself*. He doth it for his own name sake: it is because he loves them, that he doth all this for them, and he therefore loves them, because it was his holy pleasure so to do: it is not for any thing in them, for they have nothing, but he pleaseth himself in it, *Ezek.* 36. 21, 22. Eph. 1. 9. *Having made known unto us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself*. He hath set his heart upon them, and he will herein confirm his Everlasting Love to them: And here also, tho' *Mercy* and *Grace* are both undeserved and free, yet there is a vast Difference. The highest demonstrations of common *Mercy*, are well enough consistent with God's Hatred: *While* God was feeding Israel, and *their meat was yet in their mouths, The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them* ---. Psal. 78. 30, 31. But *Grace* is the expression of a fixed Love which for his own sake he hath placed unmovably upon them; and every Act of Grace is hither to be referred; as well as that in, Jer. 31. 3. --- *I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee*. Now because that which peculiarly recommends this Attribute to us, and puts a Lustre upon it, is that all this which is done for these Persons is of *Grace*, it is free: We may a little commorate here, by reflecting upon several weighty *Considerations*, which greatly declare it to be so; I shall reduce all under these *three* Heads.

[1.] *THE Riches of this Grace appear in the* Great Things *which it doth for the Subject*. A free Favour is enhaunced by the Magnificence of it. It must be Heroick Grace which doth such wonderous things for Men. We may dilate on this by Meditating on all that is done in the work of *Restitution*, both in Redemption and Application, to which the Doctrine of this Attribute properly refers. Here only take a *Specimen* in these two *particulars* which comprizeth much.

1. THE *great* Evils *which it restores or delivers them from*. When Grace comes to apply it self to them, it finds them as miserable as Sin and the Curse of the Law could make them: Innumerable great and destroying Evils are upon them; Hell was open ready to receive them, and the Wrath of God was ready to fall in fury upon them, his Hand was up, and the fatal blow ready to be struck; they were just falling over into an Ocean of unquenchable Fire; and Grace stept in and said, *Deliver them, I have found a Ransom*. *Paul* tells his *Ephesians* what they were when Grace came to them, Eph. 2. 3, 4. *Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us.*

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2. THE *great* Good *that it reſtores him unto.* It raiſeth him up as high as Sin hath made him low. It brings him from Death to Life, from Hell to Heaven, from a Dungeon to a Palace; makes him of a Beggar a Prince, of an Outcaſt an Heir: it gives him Grace and Glory, and all that is good: and it muſt needs be rich Grace that doth all this; Eſpecially if we conſider,

[2.] *THE* Subject *of this great Favour, for whom all this is done*; this will put Orient Colours upon it.

(1.) CONSIDER the Subject *by himſelf* poſitively, what an one he is; and we ſhall find,

1. *THAT he is altogether* undeſerving *of any of this.* He is wholly without the leaſt Merit of it: He did not deſerve the leaſt common Mercy, Gen. 32. 10. *I am not worthy of the leaſt of all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou haſt ſhewed unto thy ſervant* ---. much leſs then ſuch Grace: might ſay as he, 2 Sam. 19. 28. *For all my fathers houſe were but dead men before my lord the king: yet didſt thou ſet thy ſervant among them that eat at thy own table* ---. They had no Merit of *Condignity*, had nothing to ſhew that could lay Claim of Title to this Inheritance; it muſt be given them, Rom. 6. ult. *For the wages of ſin is death: but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* Nay they had not ſo much as any Merit of *Congruity*, if that may be called Merit; were neither in a Poſture fitting to receive theſe Bleſſings, nor any way able to diſpoſe or prepare themſelves thereunto; unprofitable and uſeleſs Creatures: God himſelf muſt firſt make them meet for the Inheritance, before they could partake in it.

2. *THAT he was* ill-deſerving: Not only had no Deſert of Glory, but had Ignominy belonging to him; had by Sin & multiplied Tranſgreſſions given God abundant Provocations to deſtroy him; had wearied God with Iniquity; as in Iſa. 43. 24. *Thou haſt wearied me with thine iniquities.* Juſtice had demanded his forfeited Life, & muſt needs have had it, if Grace had not ſtept in and reſcued him: He was a Child of Wrath as really as thoſe in Hell; Eph. 2. 3. ---*And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

(2.) CONSIDER the Subject *in relation to God*; and there we ſhall ſee the Excellency of this Grace, in that he doth all this for one whom God hath no need of: He ſaves none becauſe he could not otherwiſe have done with them. For,

1. *HE was happy & bleſſed in Himſelf from Eternity*: He lived without them or any other ſecond being, when no World was; and ſo he ſhould have done, if no World had been: His name is, **God Bleſſed forever**; He gives all to, receives nothing from the Creature.

2. *HE had an Innumerable Company of bleſſed Angels, to ſing Everlaſting Hallelujahs to his Praiſe*: In theſe he would have been glorified forever; Dan. 7. 10 ---*Thouſand thouſands miniſter unto him, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand ſtood before him* ---.

3. *HE had the Reſidue of the Spirit*, Mal. 2. 15. He was not tied to this Race of Men: If he had ſeen meet to be honoured by ſuch a ſort of Creature, he could but have ſaid it, and the Stones ſhould have riſen up Children of *Abraham*, Matth. 3. 9.

4. *HE could have gotten Himſelf a Name Glory & Renown in their Ruin.* He would have ſhined forth in the Triumphs of his Juſtice, with his Garments died in their Blood, if he had ſhewn his Wrath, and made his Power known in *them*, as well as he doth in *thoſe* that are the miſerable Subjects of his revenging Juſtice.

(3.) CONSIDER the Subject *in way of Compariſon*; and here alſo will Grace appear eminently. And that,

1. IF we ask *Why God pitcht upon fallen Men rather than fallen Angels*: That when all the vaſt Number of Apoſtate Spirits are kept in Chains of Darkneſs, and not one of them is brought back to Salvation, but they muſt forever feel the ſmart of their Diſobedience; God ſhould ſee meet to lift up the Heads of ſome of deſolate Mankind from the Priſon, and ſet them at his own Table: What was there in *Man* more than in an *Angel* to prefer him in the Choice? *Paul* puts therefore a Remark on this, Heb. 2. 16. *For verily he took not on him the nature of Angels; but he took on him the ſeed of Abraham.*

2. IF we ask *a Reaſon of the vaſt Difference made between Man & Man*: Why this Man is recovered out of his Miſery, and the other left to periſh in it: All were equally Children of Wrath, *Eph.* 2. 3. equally become Unprofitable, *Rom.* 3. 12. equally full of enmity againſt God, *Rom.* 8. 7. equally capable of Salvation: Almighty Power could have done it for one as well as for the other: The ſame Price would have paid for their Redemption; the ſame Spirit could have converted them: It muſt be nothing but aſtoniſhing Grace that determined this Caſe.

[3.] *IF we ſhall run over and glance upon* the ſeveral Parts of Man's Reſtitution, *we ſhall diſcover in each of them a rich Mine of Grace*, enough to tranſport us into Admiration.

1. ELECTION *is an Act of Grace.* Rom. 11. 5. *Even ſo then at this preſent time alſo there is a remnant according to the election of grace.* Eph. 1. 5. *Having predeſtinated us unto the adoption of children by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will.* It is impoſſible that any Created finite Agent ſhould move or incline the Eternal and Immutable Will of God, to ſet his Love upon ſome, who were to receive their Being and their All as the Reſult of his good Pleaſure; or that any thing beſides his own Good Will ſhould direct him to put down this Man's Name in the Lamb's Book of Life, and leave out others, who were all to be of the ſame Lump, all alike and under the ſame Capacity.

2. REDEMPTION *is alſo an Act of free Grace*; and there is manifold Grace to be obſerved in it: It was inexpreſſible Love in God to ſend his Son to redeem us; Joh. 3. 16. *For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* It was incomparable Love in Chriſt to come upon this Errand; Eph. 3. 19. --- *The Love of Chriſt which paſſeth knowledge* ---. It was meer free Grace in God, to accept of the Redemption of Chriſt,

and take him in Exchange for Sinners: For tho' a Surety may stand in Law for *Debt*, yet the Judge may chuse whether he will accept of one for a *Crime*.

3. APPLICATION *also is an Act of free Grace in all the parts of it. Faith* whereby we come to have an Evangelical Right to the Promise, is a Gift of God, as well as the Promise it self; Eph. 2. 8. *For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of your selves: it is the gift of God.* The *Justification* of a Sinner, in Pardoning of his Sin, and adjudging him to Life, is of meer Grace; Rom. 3. 24. *Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.* Our being *Adopted* to the Inheritance of Children, and being made joynt Heirs with Christ, is as a great, so an undeserved Favour; Eph. 1. 5, 6. *Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.* Our *Sanctification*, or being restored to the Image of God, and furnished with the Graces of his Spirit, derives from the same Fountain, and therefore it is called Grace; 2 Pet. 3. 18. *But grow in grace*, &c. Our *Perseverance* in the Faith, and being kept from falling away, is owing to Him; and must therefore needs flow from Grace, 1 Pet 1. 5. *Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation* ---. And what is Eternal *Glory*, but the Top and Consummation of Grace? and for that reason said to be the Gift of God; Rom. 6. 23. ---*But the gift of God is eternal life, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.* Yea all these are but so many Links in one Chain, whereof *Election* is the first, and so they must bear the same Denomination.

Use 1. LEARN hence, *How much they rob God of his Glory, who ascribe their Salvation to* Themselves, *either in whole or in part.* Needs must all *such* endeavour to obscure the Grace of God; and how injurious this is to his Honour, will be seen if we consider how dear this Attribute is to him, and what a costly as well as curious Contrivance he hath laid for the Exaltation of the Riches of it; all of which, Men that would be their own Saviours endeavour to darken: It derogates from the very Design of Salvation in a Gospel way; Rom. 9. 23. *And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.* It puts Man into a better Condition than the Fall hath left him in; Rom. 5. 6. *For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.* It in part at least, arrogates to the Man himself some of the Acknowledgment of his Salvation: and so much as it gives to Man's free Will or Strength, so much it takes away from Grace: Needs then must God reject all such, as thus seek and hope to be saved.

Use 2. LEARN *from the Description of God's Grace, that it is a* Sovereign *Thing*; and consequently, neither have Any cause justly to complain of God if they miss it, nor to be proud if they obtain it: Deny the Freedom of it, and you deny it to be Grace: Here is not any room to charge God with a sinister respecting of Persons, for that hath no room in Gratuities; God may do with his own as he will: There is no Man deserves this Favour at his hands: If therefore he bestow it not, there is no room for complaining: They feel his Severity, but there is no Unrighteousness: If they miss Heaven and Glory, and meet with Everlasting Misery, they have but their Wages: and as for those that have it, it so comes to them, as to exclude all Boasting: It is Grace, and they did nothing to purchase it; nor had they ever had it, if they had not found Grace in the sight of God.

Use 3. *THE Doctrine of God's free Grace tells us, that the Chief of Sinners have no reason to* Despair *of Salvation.* It is no little Glory which is brought to this Attribute, by the large Expressions that it makes of it self to the Children of Men: Grace therefore doth no where more abound, than where Sin hath signally abounded: When therefore the aggravated Considerations of Sin, from the Greatness, Multitude, and ill Circumstances of them, are ready to bear our Spirits down into Discouragement, and make us afraid to hope; let us entertain our selves with the Contemplation of *the Grace of God*, the Fulness and Freeness of it: Remember that it is in God Infinite, and therefore cannot be outdone by us; and that will shew us, that the lowest Hell that we apprehend our selves to be in, is a place of Hope; and though we have nothing in our selves to rely upon, there is still room for us to hope in his Grace.

Use 4. THIS also tells us, *after what Manner we are to go to God if we would obtain his Salvation*, viz. *So as may be most for the Illustration of this Attribute*: Our *Frame* must be such; a Conviction of our Sin, Misery, Unworthiness, Impotency, must bring us down to the Foot of God, and make us resign and submit our selves to the Disposal of Sovereign Grace. Our *Pleadings* also must be built upon such Topicks as these: we must ask all for his own Name sake: There must be no mention of our Doings, our Abstinences, or any thing that we have done; But, together with the Acknowledgment of our own Demerit, and adoring of his wondrous free Favour, we must ask as Beggars, and resolve that if he hear us, his Great Name shall have the Honour of it, and we will sing everlasting Praises to *The Riches of the Glory of his Grace in JESUS CHRIST.*

[FEBRUARY 25. 1689.]

SERMON *XXIX.*

6. THE last of the *Divine Vertues* here mentioned is **Truth**. This also is essentially in God, for it hath its eminent Displays in the works of Efficiency.

THE

THE word *Truth* admits of various Notions which are put upon it; but when it is applied to God, it uſually comes under one of theſe *Two ſenſes*; either, 1. As it is applied to his *Being*, on which account he is ſaid to be the True God, in oppoſition to all the feigned and made ones of the Gentiles, to all Idols; but this is not here to be conſidered, but will come under the following Queſtion. Or, 2. As it is looked upon as a *Moral Vertue*, in Men. *Truth* may be conſidered *Objectively*, and ſo it relates to the Underſtanding, whoſe proper Object is Truth: and then it implies a Knowledge of things as they are; and this when Attributed to God, belongs to his Omniſcience, and is accounted a Vertue of his *Underſtanding*, of which we have already heard under his *Wiſdom*: Or it may be conſidered *Subjectively*, as it is a Property inherent in the Subject, and then it is a Vertue of the *Will*; and it comprizeth in it, thoſe two Vertues of *Faithfulneſs* and *Conſtancy*: *True* and *Faithful* are therefore often joyned together in Scripture Language: and thus it is often aſcribed to God, after the manner of Men: and in *this ſenſe* we may take up this *Deſcription* of it:

TRUTH is God, Fulfilling of all his Will, according to his Word. There is an exact harmony between his Will, his Word, and his Performance, and in this it appears that God agrees with himſelf, and that is his *Truth*. For a brief clearing up of the Doctrine of this Attribute, let theſe things be obſerved,

(1.) *THAT God's Will hath determinately, fixedly, unchangably, purpoſed what he will do.* The Scripture aſcribes unto God a *Will*; ſometimes under the notion of a *Faculty*, ſometimes of an *Act*; and in this latter reſpect, it refers it ſometimes to his *Purpoſes*, and ſometimes to his *Precepts*; in the former reſpect it is more generally, and here to be underſtood: We are here to conſider,

1. THAT *God hath Decreed or fore-determined all his Works of Efficiency*; ſo that what comes to paſs in Time, is no other but what he had appointed before all Time, in the days of Eternity; and for this very reaſon all God's Works are ſaid then to be known to him, Acts 15. 18. *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.* And how ſhould he know them antecedently, but becauſe he had Decreed them?

2. THAT *this Decree is an Act of his Will.* In God we conceive ſome *Acts* to be *Immanent*, others *Tranſcient*; to the former belongs his *Decree*, which is nothing elſe but his Will as it reſpects the Works of Efficiency; and this is an Eternal Act, in which he hath reſolved with Himſelf what to do, and there is nothing comes to paſs, which was not firſt in this Purpoſe; Hence that, Eph. 1. 11. *In whom alſo we have obtained an inheritance, being predeſtinated according to the purpoſe of him who worketh all things after the counſel of his own will.* i. e. He took counſel of no other but his own Will.

3. THAT *this Will of his is determinate, fixed, immutable*: the Decree is ſometimes called *his Word*; for what he hath, as it were ſaid in himſelf, that he will do; and herein is the Truth of this Word, that he ſtands to his own Purpoſes, and never alters them, Job 23. 13. *But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his ſoul deſireth, even that he doeth.* God's Decrees are not *Conditional*, but *Abſolute*: He hath indeed Decreed Conditions or Connexions between things; but he hath not Connected any dependent undetermined Conditions between things, but he hath fixed them: the Conditions of things are but *Media* in his Decrees, and only intend, that he will bring about ſuch Ends, by ſuch Means; and having once purpoſed, he never varies: He engageth to himſelf, that thus he will do, and he ſtands to his Word: But of this more in the Doctrine of the Decree.

(2.) *THAT God is pleaſed as far as he ſees meet, to reveal this Will of his unto Men.* He hath not indeed revealed *all* his Counſels and Purpoſes; there are the ſecret things which belong to God, and are no otherwiſe known but by the Accompliſhment: But ſo far as in Wiſdom he ſees it convenient, he doth declare his Mind, and acquaint his People with what he hath Decreed. And theſe *Diſcoveries of his Will* are made,

1. IN *thoſe Predictions which he hath given of things before-hand, which in the Time appointed were to come to paſs.* The Scripture abounds with ſuch as theſe; ſome referring to *perſonal*, others to more *publick* Affairs: ſome in reſpect of his *Church*, others relating to the *Enemies* of his Church; ſome that have been *already* accompliſhed, others, that are as *yet* to be expected, the Time not being come for the fulfilling of them.

2. IN *the Revelation of the Rule of Man's Happineſs.* He hath ſhewn to Man the Way: He made known to Man at firſt, the things wherein his Felicity did conſiſt, and how he might be bleſſed forever; and he hath alſo diſcovered to fallen Man the Way and Means of his Recovery out of Miſery, and obtaining Salvation by *Jeſus Chriſt*: and this is called *the Will of God* in Scripture, becauſe he did forever purpoſe within himſelf that there ſhould be a Connexion between theſe things: Hence we have that aſſertion of *Paul*, Acts 20. 27. *For I have not ſhunned to declare unto you all the counſel of God.*

3. IN *the Promulgation of the Promiſes.* The word of God is full of precious Promiſes, in which God obliged himſelf, and paſt his Word to his People, that he will beſtow theſe and thoſe Favours and Bleſſings upon them; and they do contain in them Matter of univerſal Conſolation: Theſe alſo are the Manifeſtations of his Decrees, and give us to underſtand what Thoughts he entertained in his Heart from Eternity concerning his People; Jer. 29 11. *For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, ſaith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.*

4. IN *the Denunciation of his Threatnings*: There are fearful Menaces uttered in the Scriptures againſt theſe and thoſe who are God's Enemies, and Haters of Him; whereby Men are fully acquainted what he would have them expect

at his Hands; which are the making known of those Judgments that he had purposed, and prepared in his Decree concerning such; Isa. 30.*ult. For Tophet is ordained of old: yea, for the king it is prepared, he hath made it deep & large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood, the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.*

(3.) *THAT God speaks Nothing but what he hath purposed.* There is Truth in his Word; and this Truth is the exact Agreement which there is between his Counsels and his Declarations: He doth not say one thing and intend another: He speaks nothing rashly, undeliberately, unknowingly. There are *Two Reasons of Men's falling short of Truth in what* they *say*; but God is far from both of these:

1. *IGNORANCE* or *Inadvertency.* Men often mistake, and think of things otherwise than they are, and yet perswade themselves they are in the right; and this ariseth from a want of Knowledge or Deliberation: But thus He cannot utter a Falshood or Error, because of his Infinite all Knowledge: He knows his own Thoughts; and in knowing them, he knows every thing

2. *DECEITFULNESS*, or a *lying Disposition*: Many speak with a Purpose to deceive others, and to impose things that are not true, upon their Credit; and there is a root of this perverse Disposition in all Men by Nature: But there is no such thing with God: Hence the Opposition in, Rom. 3. 4. ---*Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar*; *as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.* And this in Man proceeds from the Wickedness of his Heart; But God is Holy, and therefore it is said to be Impossible to him; Heb. 6.18. *That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie*---. When therefore God is said to *Deceive* the Prophet, *Ezek.* 14. 9. it doth not intend that God revealed a Falshood to him; but it respects his Providence, suffering him to deceive himself by false Conjectures, and disappointing his confident Expectations, which he had in second Causes: All that God saith is very True, and Faithfull.

(4.) *THAT God Always performs what He hath spoken.* What He saith, He will do, That he doth without fail: As there is Truth which consists in a Conformity between the *Heart* and *Tongue*, so there is a Truth appears in an Agreement between *Words* and *Deeds*: God not only intends to do it when he speaks it, but he stands by and pursues that declared Intention of his: There is *Constancy* appertains to Truth, and that is when one is not to be put by from what he hath said: Men may not say one thing, and intend another; and yet they may change their Mind and *Repent* of what they have said, and so go back from it, which is also a Defect in point of Truth: But neither is there any such thing with God; and therefore these two things are put together, Numb. 23. 19. *God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?* God is incapable of *those things* that make Men to break their Words, which they intended when they spake them, *viz.*

1. *WANT of Ability, which they before suspected not.* And there are many things which do casually intervene, unforeseen; for which reason Men are always to resolve with that Clause, *If God will*: But God cannot be obstructed; His Power is as large as his Will, so that he could never be impeded: If he hath a Mind to do any thing, he is able to accomplish it; Job 23. 13. *But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth.* There was no great work ever yet put Him to a stand; there is no Mountain too high for Him to skip over.

2. *SOME new Discovery which makes them to see reason to alter their Thoughts.* Men sometimes say, before they have seen the thing through, and their after Thoughts are wiser: There are many Inconveniences that discover themselves upon Deliberation, which at first view lay out of their sight: But God is incapable of this also; for he sees all things in their Causes, and Effects, and all their Circumstances and Consequences, at one view; so that it is impossible that he should ever have any occasion to repent of his Word. When therefore *Repentance* is ascribed to Him in Scripture, it is an Humane Expression; the Change is neither in his Purpose, nor in his Word, but in his Providence, or Works, and that according to his Word: And if it be said, that we find both Promises and Threatnings in the Word of God, which never were accomplished, but God did otherwise; the Answer is ready, *viz.* That God often reveals Himself to Men in conditional Promises and Threatnings: If therefore the Condition cease, the Truth of the Word doth stand, though the Thing it self be not done: So *David* understood the Promise, 1 Chron. 28. 6,7. *And he said unto me, Solomon thy son, he shall build my house, and my courts: for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father. Moreover, I will establish his kingdom for ever, if he be constant to do my commandments, and my judgments, as at this day.* And so God himself tells us he would have the Threatning to be interpreted, Jer. 18. 7, 8. *At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it: If that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.*

(5.) *THAT God doth all things Exactly, as he hath spoken.* The Execution is not varied from the Expression: He doth not come short of his Word, in the Performance: We have *Solomon* acknowledging of this, 1 King. 8. 56. *Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.* And this is to be observed not only as to the *Substance*, but also the very *Circumstances* of things; and this both in Predictions, Promises, and

and Threatnings: If we ſhall in particular take notice of the *Predictions concerning Chriſt*; How many things, which may to us look like minute Circumſtances, and yet in the Goſpel we ſhall find manifold references to the Old Teſtament in ſuch things as theſe, to certify us, how *exactly* God is carefull in performing the Truth of his Word; and how he orders all things ſo as to bring it about: God's Promiſe to *Abraham* was not only about the Thing, but the Time too; and ſee what a Remark *Moſes* makes upon it, Exod. 12. 41. *And it came to paſs at the end of the four hundred & thirty years, even the ſelf-ſame day it came to paſs, that all the hoſts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt.* If it be here Objected, that *Jonah* Prophe-ſied *Nineveh*'s Deſtruction in Forty *Days*, which yet was adjourned Forty *Years*; it may readily be anſwered, that Forty *Prophetical Days*, which are *Years*, might be intended, tho' *Jonah* underſtood it not; or the *Threatning* might be *Conditional*, and the general Repentance and Reformation it put them upon, might be a lengthning out of their Tranquillity; which neither altered God's *Purpoſe*, nor impaired the *Truth* of his *Word*.

(6.) THAT *God hath not ſo much as the leaſt Inclination in him to vary from his Word.* The *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks of *Truth in the inward parts.* Men may perform their Obligations, becauſe they cannot with Honour or Safety omit ſo doing, when yet they have many Reluctances and Strivings in them, inclining them ſo to do, if they could; which is a ſecret Evidence that there is a great deal of Falſeneſs in their Hearts: But with God there is no ſuch thing: He never ſo much as entertains one Thought in him to do otherwiſe: He doth not Fulfill his Word meerly becauſe he hath Given it, but he gave it becauſe he reſolved to fulfill it; and it pleaſeth him always; he takes a Delight and is fully ſatisfied in it: As he cannot, ſo he will not Repent: His Heart is in all he doth: When therefore the Scripture ſaith, *He doth not do a thing willingly*, as *Lam.* 3. 33. it is ſpoken after the Manner of Men, and only intends that he doth it not without juſt Cauſe, and ſufficient Reaſons moving him thereto. *And in theſe things doth the* Truth of God *ſhine out to us:*

USE 1. LEARN hence, *How ſafe it is to be under the* Promiſes, *and how dangerous to be under the* Threatnings *of God.* The Word of God is full of great and precious *Promiſes*, which contain in them compleat and perfect Happineſs; and here lies the Safety of the Children and Heirs of the *Promiſe*, that when once they come to be under them, and have gotten God engaged to them, they can never fail, becauſe they have the *Truth of God* ſet as a Seal to them: This is the Encouragement, 1 Theſ. 5. 24. *Faithful is he that calleth you, who alſo will do it.* And this is the Conſolation of Believers, Heb. 6. 18. *That by two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lie, we might have ſtrong conſolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope ſet before us.* If God hath once paſt his Word to your Souls, and His Spirit given his Teſtimony, that you are the Sons of God; never fear, *His Truth* ſtands to pawn for your Salvation: Hath he wrought the Condition in you; your Salvation is then ſecured: They horribly injure this Attribute, who ſay a Child of God may loſe his Hope. There are alſo fearfull *Threatnings* menaced by God in his Word againſt ungodly Men; and here lies the Terror of them, God ſpeaks as he intends. He would not have Men to pleaſe themſelves with an Opinion, that theſe are but to fright them, and never purpoſed to be executed upon them: See how he backs his Menaces againſt *Saul*, 1 Sam. 15. 29. *And alſo the ſtrength of Iſrael will not lie, nor repent: for he is not a man that he ſhould repent.* And how dangerous a thing is it for Men to preſume he will not be as Good as his Word, we find in that particular Threatning, Deut. 29. 19, 20. *And it come to paſs when he heareth the words of this curſe, that he bleſs himſelf in his heart, ſaying, I ſhall have peace, tho' I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to add drunkenneſs to thirſt: The Lord will not ſpare him, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealouſy ſhall ſmoke againſt that man, and all the curſes that are written in this book ſhall lie upon him, and the Lord ſhall blot out his name from under heaven.* It is true, God hath graciouſly left the Door of Repentance open for Sinners to eſcape; but there is no other way. If God be true, let Sinners then be afraid of coming under his dreadful Threatnings.

USE 2. HENCE *we have good Encouragement to Believe for the Church of God.* Chriſt's Flock indeed, feeds upon the Mountain of Lions, and Hill of Leopards, and they ly open to no little Danger by reaſon of this; but the Word of God is ſo full for it, that there is a *Day of Deliverance a coming*; and the Predictions there do give us ſufficient Footſteps to trace, which may aſſure us, that the time for Accompliſhment of this cannot be far off; and what thô the Face of Providence be covered with Clouds and Darkneſs, yet the Word of Propheſy is ſure: That God is able to give being to his Word, is witneſſed to by his Omnipotency; and that he will certainly do it, is ratified by his Truth: This therefore affords ſure Footing for our Faith: When therefore *John* had his Revelations about theſe Great things, he had that given him for his Confirmation, Rev. 19. 9. *And he ſaith unto me, Write, Bleſſed are they which are called unto the marriage-ſupper of the Lamb. And he ſaith unto me, Theſe are the true ſayings of God.*

USE 3. BE we exhorted to *Imitate God in this Attribute.* As he is a God of Truth himſelf, ſo he loveth Truth in his People, Pſal. 51. 6. *Behold, thou deſireſt truth in the inward parts*---. And on the contrary, he hates and abhors Lying, and hath fearfully threatned it, Rev. 21. 8.--- *And all liars, ſhall have their part in the lake which burns with fire & brimſtone: which is the ſecond death.* Let us then abſtain from Lying, Diſſembling, Deceitfulneſs either in Words or Deeds, as we would not pull down Divine Diſpleaſure upon our ſelves. And let Children and Young ones beware of this Sin: Be afraid of telling

telling a Lye; the true God will be fearfully Angry with you if you addict your selves to Falshood; you mend no Fault by it, but make two of one: Remember, you are naturally addicted to it, you are born with a Lye in your Mouth; Psal. 58. 3. *The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray assoon as they be born, speaking lies.* You must then pray with *David*, Psal. 119 29. *Remove from me the way of lying*---. Get a Love to the Truth, and a Hatred to every false Word and Way; and so God will Love you; Uprightness and Integrity shall preserve you; and you shall be called the Children of God, and *His Truth shall make you Happy.*

[APRIL 22. 1690.]

SERMON XXX.

QUESTION V.

ARE there more Gods than ONE?

ANSWER.

THERE is but ONE ONLY, the LIVING and TRUE GOD.

IT is of Infinite Concernment, that we be rightly fixed on the *Object* of Worship; for if it be not such an one as can make us happy, our Religion is vain. That this must be a *God*, the Light of Nature discovers, and therefore all Nations do acknowledge it: But yet how wofully have they mist it, through their vain Imaginations, by reason of the Darkness on their Minds, whilst they have sought to Gods that cannot save? That we may not be mistaken in this, which is as much as our Life; after the Description of God by his Attributes, in the former Question, our *Catechism* in this leads us to some further Discoveries of Him: In which, 1. *It reduceth us to an* Unity, *assuring us that there is but* ONE. 2. *Points us to some Discriminating* Notes *by which we may know Him*, and not take another for him; and these are *Two*, 1. *He is the* LIVING. 2. *He is the* TRUE *God.* For the help of our Faith, these things may be briefly opened.

First, *THE* Unity *of the Divine Essence is here asserted*: There is but *ONE* God. This is a Foundation Principle of the Christian Religion, 1 Cor. 8. 4, 5, 6. ——*There is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many) But to us there is but one God* ——. The *Heathen* worshipped many Gods: Though they had some Notion of a Deity, yet they divided and crumbled it in pieces, distributing it to every thing that did them good, Sun, Moon, Stars, Rivers, Fountains, Elements, Brutes, Vegetatives: Yea, they encreased their Gods according to the Number of their Cities: Yea they had their Tutelar Gods, their Houshold Gods, their Gods for all particular Callings, Concerns, Diseases: We have an Account in Gentile Antiquity of *Thirty Thousand* of them: The *Romans* had their *Pantheon*, a Temple in which all the Gods of the Nations were Worshipped, the True God excepted: And tho' the true Religion acknowlegeth but *One*, and no more, yet even among those that have professed Christianity, the *Gnosticks*, and *Manichees*, and *Marcionites*, made *Two*, one the Author of Good, the other of Evil; and the *Tritheites*, for the Trinity of Persons, have surrogated *Three* Gods: It is therefore necessary to be well-grounded in this Article: And if our Faith will give Credit to the Divine Testimony, we need look no farther for Proof; the Scripture every where asserting it: See Deut. 6. 4. *Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord.* Psal. 83. 18. *That men may know, that thou whose name alone is* JEHOVAH, *art the most high over all the earth.* God denies himself to have any Corrival, Deut. 4. 35. *Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the Lord he is God, there is none else besides him.* Isa. 44. 8. --- *Is there a God besides me? yea, there is no God, I know not any.* Ch. 45. 5, 21. *I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God besides me*: --- *There is no God else beside me, a just God and a saviour, there is none beside me.* And resolves he will part with none of this Glory, Isa. 42. 8. *I am the Lord, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.* Nay, Reason it self, and Nature's Light, if well improved, would convince Men of this Truth: And therefore the wisest of *Heathen Poets* and *Philosophers* have believed this Assertion, and spoken it as far as they durst, to avoid the Severity of their Laws, whilst they have taught that all things must needs proceed from *One First Cause*, who is the Efficient, and prime Mover of them: Yea, *Socrates* spake it so plain that he died for it; and *Plato* hardly escaped the *Ostracism.* Among many *Evidences*, convictive of this, let a few suffice.

1. *THE* First Being *can be but One.* Reason saith, that if there be a Second, there must be a First; for all Number begins in an Unity, and to say there are two firsts, is a Contradiction in the Nature of things: Equality and Priority are inconsistent to the same Subject: Now it is one of the Divine Properties to be First: And from thence God Himself argues his being alone; Isa. 44. 6. *Thus saith the Lord the king of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts, I am the first, and I am the last, and besides me there is no God.*

2. *THE very* Order of things *in the World, proves that there can be but ONE God.* There is a Plurality of second Beings, therefore there must be but One first Being. As the First can be but One, so there must be a First; for where

where is no First, there is no Order; and where there is no Order, there can be no Goodness; for what Goodness can there be in Confusion? and where there is no Goodness there is Nothing; for *Ens et Bonum convertuntur.*

3. *IF there be more Gods than One, either they must be all* Equal *one to another, or else there must be* Superiority & Inferiority *between them: but neither of these can possibly consist with right Reason to admit of:* If we conceive them *Equal*, there can be no Chief Good; we cannot call one of them so, because there is another as Good as he; and then the Attribute of *the most High* must cease; for among Comparatives, there is no Superlative: If we conceive an *Inequality*, we cannot allow them both to be God: If there be another above Him, then He is not over all God blessed forever: He must Himself be a dependent being, and so, not an adequate Object for our Faith to rely upon: If he be acknowledged Superiour to the other, then that other is a Subject, weak, imperfect, and cannot be God; Supremacy being a Prerogative of the Deity: It is Folly to count Him our God, that cannot do what he will without Control, that cannot save us in despite of all Opposition.

4. *ALL the Divine* Attributes *prove that there is but One God.* God hath revealed himself to us in and by his glorious Perfections: If then we acknowledge none to be God, but Him to whom these do belong, we must conclude that there is but *One*: There are indeed some Attributes that we call *Communicable*, a Shadow of which is in the Creature; such are the *Divine Vertues*, as *Wisdom*, *Holiness*, &c. But then, if we consider, that they belong to the Creature only in the *Concrete*, to the Deity in the *Abstract*, and consequently in the Superlative, they can so appertain but to *One*: There may be many Wise, but Wisdom it self is but One: There may be Holy Ones, but the *most* Holy cannot be more than One. As to the *Incommunicable* Perfections, it is impossible that they should be multiplyed; and this more essentially carries conviction to his Infinity: It belongs to God to be Immense and Infinite; but this inseparably belongs to Unity: The Notion of two Infinites being contradictory to all rational Conceptions; for if there be two, they must confine each other, and so neither be Infinite, *&c.* Hence learn,

1. *THAT* Polytheism *is but a sort of* Atheism. They that worship more Gods than God, do in effect worship no God at all: For they cannot worship any one as God, who divide their Worship to more than One: They therefore who thus fear God, are in Scripture said, not to fear him, 2 King. 17. 33, 34. *They feared the Lord, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations, whom they carried away from thence. Unto this day they do after former manners: they fear not the Lord* ---.

2. *THAT there can be but* One Religion. Religion is properly the Worshipping and Serving of God: Where there is no God acknowledged, there is no Religion professed; and if so, then, where there is but One God confessed, there ought to be but One Religion practised. The Reason of the Heathens different Rites, was their adoring of divers Gods, whom they apprehended they must worship in a different manner: Thus therefore the Apostle argues, Eph. 4. 4, 5, 6. *There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

Secondly, *THE way to Know this One God, is here pointed to us*: And if there be but One, it is necessary that we Know Him: And here are *Two Titles* put upon Him, by which He is to be distinguished from False Gods & Idols.

I. *HE is the* Living *God.* As Being is better than no being, so a *Living* Being is more noble than such things as are without Life: The Scripture therefore ascribes *Life* to God: And because there are many second Beings that participate in Life, we are therefore to distinguish the *Life of God*, from that of the Creatures, in that they have their Life by *Participation*, but He hath his Life *of Himself*; according to, Joh. 5. 26. *For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.*

LIFE, according as it refers to the Creature, is *the Act of the Soul upon the Body*; or more generally, *a power in the thing of self-motion in its proper Place*: Whatever hath an internal Principle of Motion in it, is accounted to have Life: Now *Life* is attributed to God by way of *Analogy*: And as the *Rational Life* is of all the most noble, or that which some call *Intellectual*, we therefore ascribe that to Him: and of *this Life* of God, we may take this brief Description;

IT is that whereby God is in Himself, the Fountain or Original of all eminent Actings.

Here observe,

1. *GOD Lives.* Hence this Attribute is given to Him; and he so Lives as that it belongs eminently to him; See, Psal. 18. 46. *The Lord Liveth, and Blessed be my Rock*---. Jer. 10. 10. *But the Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king*---. 1 Tim. 6. 17. ---*Nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God* ---. And by this he is differenced from *Idols*, Psal 115. 4. *Their Idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands*, &c. The Sum is, they are altogether Lifeless.

2. *GOD is the Fountain of Life.* He not only *hath* Life, but he *is* Life: It is one of his Attributes, and he hath it belonging to Him in the Abstract. Here *Two things*,

1. *HIS Life is* His own, *He borrowed it not.* It is not a derivative Life, but it is originated in Himself; He is beholden to none for it: And herein he differs from other Living things; They live, but they are not all Life; They live, but it is a borrowed Life which they enjoy; They received it from another to whom they owe Acknowledgment of its Derivation, but none gave Him His.

2. *HE is the Author of Life to all other Living Beings.* They are but little Springs of Life which they have, and they come from this Fountain; Acts 17. 25, 28. ---*Seeing he giveth*

to all life and breath, and all things. For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain alſo of your own poets have ſaid, For we are alſo his offspring. It is by his Favour or Indulgence that they live, but he depends on the Courteſy of none for His.

3. *BY Vertue of this Life He is the Original of all eminent Actings.* Becauſe he is all Life, therefore Divines call him a *Pure Act*, having no Paſſivity, or Potentiality in Him; and hence alſo He exerteth ſuch noble Acts as no Creature can do the like; and there are *Two things* wherein the Eminency of God's Actings diſcovereth it ſelf, *viz.*

1. *HE acts with the greateſt* Light. His Life is moſt tranſcendently intellectual; ſurpaſſing our Comprehenſion: Hence his Thoughts which he makes known to his People are moſt wonderful, Pſal. 40. 5. *Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou haſt done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward.* And yet the World hath but ſome Rays of this ſhining in it: and tho' the Angels and glorified Saints ſhall dwell in great Light, ſuch as is beyond our preſent Conception, yet His tranſcends them all, 1 Tim. 6. 16. ---*Dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath ſeen, nor can ſee* ---.

2. *HE acts with greateſt* Delight. Some define a Rational Life to be *an act with delight*: The damned have the Light of Reaſon, but it is with Sorrow, and therefore they are ſaid to Dy: The glorified enjoy compleat Satisfaction, and in that regard are ſaid to Live: But God's Happineſs is infinite; his Pleaſures can receive no Acceſſion, no Contribution from the Creatures. Job 22. 2, 3. *Can a man be profitable unto God?---- Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him, that thou makeſt thy ways perfect?* Hence learn;

1. *THAT GOD is Immortal.* This Attribute is aſcribed to Him, 1 Tim 1.17. *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, inviſible, the only wiſe God, be honour & glory, for ever & ever, Amen.* And herein it appears to us; for He who lives of Himſelf cannot dye: And thô Immortality doth actually belong to ſome Creatures, yet not ſo as to Him; He that gave their Life to them, is able to take it from them: Thô they cannot dye by Diſſolution, yet they may by Annihilation; And ſhould he withdraw his Upholding Hand from them, they would return to their former Nothing; For this reaſon Immortality is reſtrained to Him, 1 Tim. 6. 16. *Who only hath Immortality* ---.

2. *THAT GOD is Independent.* This Attribute is alſo implied in Scripture, *Rom.* 11.35. *Or who hath firſt given to Him?* And is argued from his being the Fountain of Life, Act. 17.25. *Seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.* He lives *of* and therefore *on* Himſelf; He needs nothing to ſupport Him; All his Life is at home; He is ſelf ſufficient. Our Dependence ariſeth from our Derivation of all from Another: He then who derives nothing muſt be independent; He who gives all, and receives nothing, muſt needs be ſo; Thus doth God.

3. *HENCE GOD muſt needs be his own Laſt End, and the Laſt End of all other Beings.* If He lives *of* Himſelf, He can then look no farther than Himſelf; If He lives *from* Himſelf, he muſt needs live *to* Himſelf; and if all others live *from* Him, they ought to live *to* Him: The Firſt Cauſe and the Laſt End cannot be diverſe, but muſt be the ſame; Theſe are therefore put together, Rom. 11.36. *For of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.*

II. *HE is the* **True** *GOD.* There are many Falſe gods, that are ſo called by fooliſh and deceived Men; But this One God, this Living God is the *True God*: And it concerns us to know Him; for if we ſerve a Falſe god, we have a Falſe Truſt, and Falſe Hopes; But if we ſerve the True God, and in Truth, we ſhall have a True Happineſs. And would we know Him from every other, we may take *Theſe Rules* for our Direction.

1. *THE True God, is the Everlaſting Firſt Being.* If we worſhip any Being from the Firſt, we worſhip an Idol: If there were any thing before it, that is not God: And this muſt be an Eternal Being: This is the Comfort which *Moſes* encourageth God's *Iſrael* withal, Deut. 33.27. *The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlaſting arms.* And when God would ſet on his Conſolations on his People with Efficacy, He preſſeth them with this Conſideration, Iſa. 44. 6. *Thus ſaith the Lord the king of Iſrael, and his redeemer the Lord of hoſts, I am the firſt, and I am the laſt, and beſides me there is no God.*

2. *THE True God is He who hath his Being in Himſelf, and received it of no other.* Our Faith is not to live upon any one that hath borrowed his Being: He is Being it ſelf, who is God: And therefore when God ſends *Moſes* to tell *Iſrael* under the Tyranny of *Egyptian* Bondage, that He would come and work a Deliverance for them, He reveals Himſelf to them under that Name, *I AM*, Exod. 3. 14. *And God ſaid unto Moſes, I AM THAT I AM: And he ſaid, Thus ſhalt thou ſay unto the children of Iſrael, I AM hath ſent me unto you.* That which is but a little Crumb or Particle of Being, cannot be a God to us, nor is to be acknowledged as ſuch by us.

3. *THE True God is the Author & Creator of all other Beings.* He is no God that hath not made the World, and every thing in it: God therefore often reveals himſelf to his People by this Conſideration, and proves Himſelf to be God by it, *Iſa.* 45. 5,---13. So, Iſa. 44. 24. *Thus ſaith the Lord thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things, that ſtretcheth forth the heavens alone, that ſpreadeth abroad the earth by my ſelf.* And on this conſideration he caſts Contempt upon all the Heathen gods; Jer. 10. 11. *Thus ſhall ye ſay unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens & the earth, even they ſhall periſh from the earth, and from under theſe heavens.* They are gods of no Value.

4. *THE True God can See all our Wants, and Hear all our Cries*: It is a vain thing to call upon a God that hath neither Seeing nor Hearing,

ing, Pſal. 135. 15, 16, 17. *The idols of the heathen are ſilver and gold, the work of mens hands. They have mouths, but they ſpeak not; eyes have they, but they ſee not. They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths.* But ſuch is not this God whom we are called upon to Worſhip & Serve; Pſal. 34. 15, 17. *The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, & his ears are open unto their cry. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.* He is one that ſees all their ſecret Neceſſities, knows all the cloſe Contrivances of Hell againſt them, Hears their groans, and the very Deſires of their Hearts: This is a God to be truſted in.

5. *THE True God can afford us Help every where, and in every Caſe, and all his People at once.* He is not afar off, but a Preſent help; Pſal. 46. 1. *God is our refuge & ſtrength, a very preſent help in trouble.* He is not like *Baal*, otherwiſe occupied, ſo as he cannot tend us; He is not only a God of the Hills, but of the Valleys too: He can help all and every where at the ſame time.

6. *THE True God hath all ſecond Cauſes at his Command.* He can order and diſpoſe them as he ſees meet: He hath no Dependence upon them, but they are entirely ſubordinate to Him: He can give Rain, and he can withold it; open or ſhut the Bottles of Heaven at his Pleaſure; can turn the Hearts of Men for or againſt us; and they all wait for his Word, and move at his Bidding.

7. *THE True God can give Eternal Life to his Friends and Favourites, in ſpite of Men and Devils.* He is a poor God who can only beſtow temporary Favours on ſuch whom he hath a delight to honour: Our God is not ſo; He gives Eternal Life, an Everlaſting Kingdom, an Infinite Glory; and he gives his People leave to challenge all the World to ſeperate them from this Love; *Rom.* 8. 38, 39. There is None that is able to pluck them out of his Hand: This is the God whom we are to acknowledge for Ours, and no other.

USE. *HOW happy then are they, whoſe this* One, *the* Living *and* True *God is?* They, and only they have made a good Choiſe, that have renounced all other, and put themſelves under the ſhadow of His Wings: Be then adviſed, Older, Younger, to labour to be able to ſay, *This God is our God.* It is not ſufficient to ſay, that you have a God, but ask who he is: Be able to ſay with *Paul*, 2 Tim. 1. 12. *I know whom I have believed.* Do not build *Altars to an Unknown God*, leſt it prove a Falſe one, and then you be undone; Let it be the *Living God*: You ſtand in need of Life, you can find it no where elſe but in Him; all other things are dead, the Spring of Life is with him, and it is a living Spring, is always full and running over, and the Life that he hath to give is an endleſs, never-dying Life, and ſuch a Life only can make you happy. And be ſure that it is *the True God*, whom you Acknowledge, Worſhip, Truſt in: Every one talks of God, but how few are there who can tell who their God is? And yet the Dependence here is as much as your Souls are worth: If after all the Profeſſion you have made, and confidence you have pretended unto, it ſhould be found that you have made to your ſelves More Gods than One, or taken up with a dead *Idol* in the room of the Living God, a Falſe inſtead of the True One; and then when your folly comes to be diſcovered to you, this God ſhould refuſe to help you, and ſend you to the Gods whom you have ſerved, to ſee if they can ſave you; what a miſery will you labour under? Say then, *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us, we will have no more to do with Idols*: Make Him your only Truſt, and He will make you Happy forever.

[MAY 20. 1690.]

SERMON *XXXI.*

QUESTION VI.

HOW many PERSONS *are there in the God-head?*

ANSWER.

THERE are THREE PERSONS in the God-head, the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY GHOST; and theſe Three are One God, the ſame in Subſtance, equal in Power and Glory.

THE Divine Alſufficiency diſplays it ſelf unto us in God's *Eſſence*, and *Subſiſtences*: The former hath been already ſpoken to; the latter now follows: Under that we conſidered his *Unity*, in this we are to obſerve how this One is *Three*. The Doctrine of a *Trinity of Perſons in the Unity of the Divine Eſſence*, is one of the great Myſteries of Religion, and above the Comprehenſion of humane Underſtanding; It therefore requires us to ſearch into it with Sobriety: It is an Article meerly of Faith, and we muſt reſt in the Diſcoveries which the Scripture gives us about it; not counting it our Wiſdom to be wiſe above what is written. Our buſineſs is to enquire what *The Word* ſaith, to believe that it is true; and Faith muſt ſilence the Upriſings of Carnal Reaſon, that asks, How can theſe things be?

THERE are *Three Heads* to which the Anſwer may be reduced, 1. *The Diſtinction of the God-head into the Perſons in it.* 2. *The Names of theſe Perſons.* 3. *Their Unity & Parity in the God-head.* A brief reflection of theſe will help our Faith in a right Conception of this Doctrine.

Firſt, *THE Diſtinction of the God-head, into the Perſons in it*; *This* One *is* Three. In

the right stating of this, we may gather out of Scripture *These Conclusions*,

I. *THAT in the Divine Essence, there are certain Divine Subsistences.* The word *Subsistence* is used, *Heb.* 1. 3. translated *Person*: It signifies *a standing under*. Though there be but One God, yet that One God subsists in a diverse Manner; or the Essence stands under a different respect to it self: Though God be but *One*, yet He is more than One, he is *Three*; not Three Gods, but *Three Manners of Being are in this One God*. This Unity of Being and Plurality of Persons, are plainly asserted in, 1 Joh. 5. 7. *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.* That this is so, we are therefore to believe; How it is, though many have essayed to shadow it to us by earthly Similitudes, yet none have reached it: Humane Reason must be here silent and wonder: But,

II. *THESE Subsistences are distinguished from the Essence, as a relation in a being is from the being it self*: Joh. 1. 1. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* A Relation is less than an Essence, and yet it is more than a thing meerly Rational: It is True, though it be not essential: Things differ *really* when there are Two Essences, *Rationally*, when the Difference is only in our Conception: *Modally* or *Relatively*, when the Being it self differs from the several respects that it bears: Thus a *Man* differs modally from himself considered as a Man, and as a Master, and as a Servant; which though it be but a dark resemblance of this great Truth, yet it is such as God accommodates us with: Thus then, tho' God the *Father be God*, yet He is not Father as he is God, but as he begets the *Son*: Hence these Relations are assigned to Him in the *Concrete*, and not in the *Abstract*: He is called *Father*, not Fatherhood; Eph. 1. 3. *Blessed be the God & Father of our Lord Jesus Christ* ---.

III. *THESE Subsistences are significantly called Persons*: So the word *Subsistence* is translated, Heb. 1. 3. and that word, 2 Cor. 4. 6. *Face*, is used in that Language for a *Person*; and it is very Analagous. A *Person* in our account, is *an individual Subsistence of a Rational Being*: That thing which is endowed with Reason, and is an Individual, is a *Person*: A Beast is an Individual, but without Reason: The Soul hath Reason, but it is not an Individual: Now every manner of Being makes a distinct Person in God, because his Essence being indivisible, must be in every Manner of Being.

IV. *A* Divine *Person may be thus Described*: It is *the Divine Essence subsisting under an Individual Relative Property.*

Here *three Things*,

1. THAT *the Essence & Subsistence go together to constitute a Divine Person.* Subsistence adds to Substance its Individuation, or its distinct Manner of Being; and consequently it giveth Personality to Rational Substances: And we look upon God under the Notion of a Reasonable or Intellectual Being, which is the highest we can ascribe to Him.

2. *THE Subsistences are so many several Relations of the God-head to it self*: Our Conception of them comes under the rational Head of Relation; and therefore the Names which are given to these Persons in Scripture, are Names of Relation, and do directly point us to such a Conception of them; and tho' a Relation in the Creature do not constitute a Person, yet such Relations do hold forth such Persons in the Deity.

3. *NOT a Relation alone, but a Relative Property denominates a Divine Person.* It must be a particular individuating Relation; It must be proper to this Person, and distinguish Him from the other Persons; and therefore it must not be that which is common to more than One: Hence tho' there be Four Relative Affections, yet not Four Persons, because One of them is common to Two of them, viz. to *Breath*: And tho' there be more Properties, yet they are not Relative, and so don't Denominate a Person: Thus, not to be Begotten is a Property of the Father, but it is no Relation, and so no Person. Now a *Divine Person* differs from one *Created* in three *respects*,

1. EVERY Created Person hath a *distinct Essence* by it self; But all the Divine Persons have *one and the same Essence*; Joh. 10. 30. *I and my Father are one.* 1 Joh. 5. 7. *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.*

2. ONE Created Person, hath not his *Inbeing* in another, whereas these have, Joh. 14. 10. *Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of my self: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.*

3. ONE Created Person proceeds from another *in Time*: But tho' here be an external Order, yet there is *no Priority of Time* or Nature; They were all of them together in the same Eternity.

V. *THE Divine Persons are* Three, *neither more nor less, and therefore we call them the Trinity*: This also is of Revelation; the Works of Creation and Providence declare a God, but not a Trinity; But the *Scripture confirms us in this.*

For,

1. *THERE is a* Plurality *in the Deity there asserted.* Hence words of the Plural used to express God by; called, *Elohim*, Gen. 1. 1. *Jehovah Elohim*, Gen. 2. 4. *Makers*, Job 35. 10. *Creators*, Eccl. 12. 1. *Adonai* or *Pillars*, Gen. 1. 26.

2. *THE Word of God also confines this Plurality to the Number of* Three: Some Footsteps of this there are in the *Old Testament*; Psal. 33. 6. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made: and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.* Psal. 67. 6, 7. *Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God shall bless us. God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.* Isa. 6. 3. *And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.* But more clearly and positively is asserted in the *New Testament*; Matth. 3 16, 17. *And Jesus when he was baptised, went up straightway out*

of

of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he ſaw the Spirit of God deſcending like a dove, and lighting upon him. And lo, a voice from heaven, ſaying this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed. Matth. 28. 19. *Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.* 2 Cor. 13.14. *The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghoſt, be with you all. Amen.* 1 Joh. 5. 7. *For there are Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt* ---.

Secondly, *THE* Names *of theſe Perſons are expreſſed; the* Father, *the* Son, *and the* Holy Ghoſt. Under which Names, every of which the Scripture makes mention of, is recommended to us that which is to be known of their diſtinct Perſonality; and from theſe we are to *Deſcribe* them, and conclude their *Difference* one from the other. Here then,

I. *FOR their* Deſcription.

1. *GOD the* Father *is a Divine Perſon*, Begetting *the Son*. Active Generation ſhews the Father's Manner of Subſiſting: What this Generation is, the Word of God forbids our over curious Enquiring; Iſa. 53. 8. --- *And who ſhall declare his generation?* --- But this is the Father's *Relative Property*: It is not an Eſſential Act, for then it were common to them all; But it is Perſonal; To *Beget*, and not to be Begotten, belongs to the Father as He is Father, Pſal. 2. 7. *I will declare the decree: the Lord hath ſaid unto me, Thou art my ſon, this day have I begotten thee.* Hence, tho' He is not the Fountain of the Deity, yet He is the Original of the Perſons, and the Fountain of all Bleſſedneſs; Eph. 1. 3. *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt.*

2. *GOD the* Son *is a Divine Perſon* Begotten *of the Father.* See, Joh. 1. 14. *And the Word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father)* ---. Heb. 1. 5. *For unto which of the Angels ſaid he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he ſhall be to me a Son.* Prov. 8. 24, 25. *When there were no depths, I was brought forth: when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were ſetled; before the hills was I brought forth.* Paſſive Generation is the Son's Manner of Subſiſting; and hence to be *Begotten*, and not to Beget is his *Relative Property*: For this reaſon he is called *The Bright Image of his Father's Perſon*, Heb. 1. 3. The word ſignifies a derived Light: For tho' as He is God, He is of Himſelf; yet as He is Son, He is of the Father.

3. *THE* Holy Ghoſt *is a Divine Perſon* Proceeding *from the Father and Son.* Joh. 14. 26. *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghoſt, whom the Father will ſend in my name, he ſhall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatſoever I have ſaid unto you.* Chap. 15. 26. *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will ſend unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, he ſhall teſtifie of me.* It is hard for us to conceive of the Difference between the Nature of the Son's Generation, and the Spirit's Proceſſion; But this the Scripture certifies us of, that as the Son is from the Father alone, ſo the Spirit is from Them Both; and for this reaſon He is not only called the *Spirit of the Father*, but *of the Son too*, Rom. 8. 9. *But ye are not in the fleſh, but in the Spirit, if ſo be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his.* Gal. 4. 6. *And becauſe ye are ſons, God hath ſent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.* Proceſſion therefore is His Manner of Subſiſting; and His *Relative Property* is to *Proceed* from Both.

Hence,

II. *THAT wherein they* Differ *one from the other*, is eſpecially in theſe *Three Things*;

1. *THEY Differ in the Order of their Original in the Divine Nature.* And that is in one Perſons being *from* another; For according to their Proceſſions and Relations, ſuch is their Order; The Father is the Firſt, *&c.* And we may not invert this Order: The Father is not of Another, and Another is from Him; The Son is of Another, and from him together with the Father, is Another; The Holy Ghoſt is from Others, *viz.* The Father and Son, and from Him is not Another; which Order is not an Order of Duration, or Dignity, or Cauſality, nor Nature; But only of Original.

2. *THEY differ in their Perſonal Properties.* i.e. Thoſe Incommunicable Properties which belong to one Perſon, and not to any of the other: From whence it follows that one Perſon cannot be another; The Father cannot be the Son, *&c.* Tho' he that hath ſeen the Son, hath ſeen the Father, *Joh.* 14. 9.

3. *THEY differ in their Manner of Working*: Becauſe that flows from their Manner of Subſiſting: The Father worketh of Himſelf, the Son from the Father, the Holy Ghoſt from both Father and Son, Joh. 5. 19. *Then anſwered Jeſus, and ſaid unto them, Verily verily I ſay unto you, the Son can do nothing of himſelf, but what he ſeeth the Father do: for what things ſoever he doeth, theſe alſo doeth the Son likewiſe.* Ch. 16. 13. *Howbeit, when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he ſhall not ſpeak of himſelf; but whatſoever he ſhall hear, that ſhall he ſpeak: and he will ſhew you things to come.*

Thirdly, *THEIR* Unity *and* Parity *in the God-head.*

I. *THEIR* Unity: *They are* One *God, the ſame in Subſtance.* This is evident from the Conſideration of *Two Things*:

1. THAT *God is but One pure and individed Eſſence.* That there is but One God hath been already proved; and to this Oneneſs of His belongs the Simplicity of his Eſſence, that it admits of no Diviſion; There can be no Parti-

tion made in the God-head, because it hath no Parts neither potential nor actual.

2. THAT *these Three Divine Persons are all of them God.* This also hath full and clear Evidence from Scripture-Testimony: That Person, to whom the Titles, Names, and Incommunicable Attributes and Works of God are ascribed in Scripture, He is God. All these we shall find asserted of Each of these Persons in particular.

1. *CONCERNING the Father.* In the *Old Testament*, *Gen.* 1. 2. So *Psal* 33. 6. i. e. in respect of the Spirit: And in the *New Testament*, *Rom.* 15. 6. 1 *Tim.* 1. 2, 17. *Chap.* 6. 15, 16. *Matth.* 19. 17. 2 *Cor.* 6. 18. But because none but Atheists question the Father's Deity, no more need be said of that.

2. *CONCERNING God the Son.* The Scripture holds forth his Deity plentifully: In the *Old Testament* He is called, JEHOVAH, *Gen.* 18. 14, 17, 20. Eternal, *Psal.* 110. 4. *Prov.* 8. 22. to 31. Omnipotent, *Isa.* 9. 6. Judge, *Gen.* 18. 25. The Object of Divine Worship, *Psal.* 45. 11. God from Eternity, *Joh.* 1. 1. Blessed Eternally, *Rom.* 9. 5. Creator, *Heb.* 1. 2, 10. Eternal Governour, *Ver.* 8. Wrought Miracles in his own Name, *Luk* 5. 13. Knows the Heart, *Chap.* 6. 8. Forgiveth Sin, *Matth.* 9. 2,--6. *Col.* 1. 14. And is Equal with God, *Phil.* 2. 6.

3, *CONCERNING God the Holy Ghost.* In the *Old Testament*, He Co-operates with the Father, *Gen.* 1. 2. Creation is ascribed to Him, *Psal.* 33. 6. He gives Understanding, *Job* 32. 8. In the *New Testament*, Baptism is in his Name, *Matth.* 28. 19. And so is Blessing, 2 *Cor.* 13. 14. Believers Bodies are His Temple, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19. And He Regenerates, *Joh.* 3. 5.

HENCE therefore Every one of them possesseth the whole Divine Essence entirely.

II. *THEIR* Parity: *They are Equal in Power and Glory.* And this follows from the former: For if they be all the same God, they must be so; For God is not above or below Himself: Hence that, Phil. 2. 6. *Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.* And Joh. 5. 23. *That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.*--- If they are Co-essential, they must be Co-equal. And there are *several Things* in which this Equality appears:

1. THEY are Equal in *Existence*; being Co-existent; Joh 14. 11. *Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me*---. They are one in another, and one is as much God as the other: Each is God of Himself, and not God of God: Ones Subsistence is not derived from another's Essence; For if so, then the Son should Beget Himself, and the Spirit Breath Himself.

2. THEY are Equal in *Duration.* They are Co-eternal: Each is God, and God is not Older than Himself: Every one is from Everlasting to Everlasting, and there are no Ages in Eternity; Joh. 1. 1, 2. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.* Isa. 9. 6. *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counseller, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace.*

3. THEY are Equal in *Operation*: All the Works of Efficiency are done by them joyntly: They are all the Works of God; flowing from the Essence, which they are alike concerned in: All Three made the World, Psal. 33. 6. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made: and all the host of them by the Breath of his mouth.* Christ doth the same Works that the Father doth; Joh. 5. 19. ---*For what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.*

4. THEY are Equal in *Honour*: Divine Honour is due to them all, and that alike; Joh. 5. 23. --*All men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.*--- They are all to be Sought or Prayed to, to be Trusted in, to have all Divine Perfections ascribed to them: We are beholden to them all Equally for our Salvation; and therefore, we owe each of them an Equal Acknowledgment of it.

USE 1. THE Doctrine of the Trinity shews us *the Sufficiency of God for our Happiness, not only as we are Creatures, but also as we are Sinners.* It then may well be brought under the Head of Al-sufficiency. As he is *God* all those Oceans of Goodness are in Him, that can fill the most enlarged Desires of our Souls, and make them to run over; And as He is *Three Persons*, He is suitable to bring poor Apostate Men to the Enjoyment of Communion with Himself in these inexhaustible Treasures of Goodness: The *Father* may be pleased with us, the *Son* can please Him, the *Spirit* can apply the Son's Satisfaction to us: Man in Integrity might be happy in the Enjoyment of One God; But Fallen Men cannot be recovered without a Trinity. Hence,

USE 2. BE we all Exhorted *to labour after a distinct* Knowledge *of the Trinity.* To move you to it *Consider*,

1. THIS Knowledge *is necessary to Salvation.* One God in Three Persons is the Object of our Faith; and to know Him so, is our Life, Joh. 17. 3. *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* The Knowledge of God the Father is necessary, Joh. 1. 18. *No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.* Of the Son, 1 Joh. 5. 20. *And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true: and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.* Of the Holy Ghost, Rom. 8. 9. *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* And the Reason is, because God heareth none but such as come in the Name of Christ; and by the Help of the Spirit.

2. THIS Knowledge *will establish you against damnable Heresies, which Carnal Reason hath obtruded on Man*: Such as those of the *Anteitrinitarians*, the *Tritheites*, the *Arians* & *Socinians*.

3. *WE*

3. *WE cannot perform True Worſhip to God without this.* Divine Worſhip is due to Every one of theſe Perſons: But how ſhall They be worſhipped by us, if we do not Know them?

4. THIS Knowledge *will confirm us in the Belief of the Scriptures.* We know the Word of God to be True, upon Divine Teſtimony; The Word of God, is the Baſis of our Faith & Hope; It is needful then that we be confirmed in the Verity of it: And by this Knowledge we find that there are Three Witneſſes, 1 Joh. 5. 7. *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt: and theſe three are one.* And ſee *Joh.* 8. 12,——18.

5. THIS Knowledge *is neceſſary to our Communion with God.* Thoſe that have true Fellowſhip with him, have it with One God in Three Perſons, 1 Joh. 1. 3. *That which we have ſeen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye alſo may have fellowſhip with us: and truly our fellowſhip is with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt.* 2 Cor. 13.14. *The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghoſt, be with you all: Amen.* It is by the Son that we come to the Father; and the Holy Ghoſt brings us to Chriſt. And if we deſire to have a right Conception of theſe things, we muſt veil Carnal Reaſon, and hearken to the Word of God, and content our ſelves with ſtudying what that reveals of this Myſtery.

USE 3. BE we alſo adviſed, if we deſire to be truly happy, *to labour to make ſure of an Intereſt in this One God in Three Perſons.* Let us ceaſe from vain Creatures, which can neither deliver us from Miſery, nor make us Happy: But here is all Communicable Glory to be derived to the Soul: One God in Three Perſons, is a ſufficient Portion for all Souls: If we can come to enjoy God Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, we are Bleſſed forever. Let us then aſcribe all Glory hither, and expect all Happineſs from hence; that *Unity in a Trinity*, from whom we derived our Being, unto whom we owe our Lives and all that we have and are, and at whoſe Hands we only can receive our Eternal Felicity.

[JUNE 17. 1690.]

SERMON *XXXII.*

QUESTION VII.

WHAT are the DECREES *of GOD?*

ANSWER.

THE Decrees of God are his ETERNAL PURPOSE, according to the Counſel of his Will, whereby for his own Glory, He hath Fore-ordained whatſoever cometh to paſs.

OUR Catechiſm having given an Account of God's *Alſufficiency*, appearing in his Eſſence and Subſiſtences; is now paſſing over to the Conſideration of his *Alefficiency*; And for an Introduction hereinto, gives us a View of the *Decree*: And here indeed is the true and proper Place for the Doctrine of it to be Methodically handled; becauſe we look upon God as a Rational or Intelligent Agent, and Wiſe Artificer, who will have an *Idea* of his Works before him: If therefore God works in Time, we preſuppoſe that he Purpoſed ſo to do before Time. Our Catechiſm puts a Plural Word upon this Act of God, calling it his *Decrees*; not with reſpect to God Decreeing, for in Him it is one Eternal Act, as we may hear; but with reference to the Things Decreed, which are manifold and uncountable by us. We may here in the Firſt place *Conſider the* Evidence, *that there is ſuch a Decree*, and then *Enquire into the* Nature *of it*, as the Word of God hath given us Light to diſcover it.

Firſt, THAT *there is a Divine Decree*, will appear, more particularly from *Two Evidences.*

1. *FROM the Works of* Efficiency: If there be any Works done by God, then there was a Decree for the doing of them: It is proper to a *Cauſe by Counſel*, and ſuch we conceive God to be, to deliberate and conclude before he Acts: Raſhneſs and Incogitancy are Defects, and not the Commendations of a Rational Agent: If therefore God doth all He purpoſed to do all; unleſs we will ſay that He doth He neither knows nor regards what; which would contradict that Infinite Wiſdom which is in Him: Hence that aſſertion, Eph. 1. 11. *---Who worketh all things after the counſel of his own will.*

2. *FROM the Conſideration of his* Omnipotency. When we conſider that the Works of God wrought in Efficiency, are not natural and neceſſary, but Voluntary and Contingent; He was under no Compulſion to make a World, He did it for his Pleaſure, Rev. 4. 11. *---For thou haſt created all things, and for thy pleaſure they are and were created*; And then remember that he is able to do every Work of Power, and therefore hath not gone to the utmoſt of his Ability, but there was the Reſidue of the Spirit with Him; it ſaith that there muſt be ſomething that made a Partition between the *Poſſible* Beings, which never ſhall actually be, and thoſe *Future* Things that ſhall in Time have Exiſtence; and what could that be but the Decree? inaſmuch as they wholly depend on his Will.

Secondly, *IN the Conſideration of the* Nature *of the Decree*; We may take up with the ſeveral Parts of the Deſcription given in the *Anſwer*; in which we have,

I. *A more* General *Account of it*; it is *His Eternal Purpoſe*; and this includes all: Here is,

1. *SOMETHING in which it agrees with other Decrees*; it is *His Purpoſe*: Now a *Purpoſe* ſignifieth a *fixt, reſolved, determinate Reſolution about a Thing.* It is therefore ſaid to be ſettled, Pſal. 119. 89. *For ever, O Lord, thy word is ſetled in heaven.* A Purpoſe is oppoſed to Irreſolution, and

and Indetermination, when a Thing is under Deliberation: But He is resolved, He knows his own Thoughts, Jer. 29. 11. *For I know the thot's that I think towards you, saith the Lord*---.

2. *SOMETHING in which it differs*, viz. It is *Eternal*: In God we conceive some Acts to be *Immanent*, some to be *Transient*; To the Former of which his Decree appertains: It must needs therefore be *Eternal*: God never was without this Decree; It is therefore said to be *Forever*, Psal. 119. 89. Else there would be a Change in God, which is contrary to his Nature, Mal. 3. 6. *For I am the Lord, I change not*.---

II. *A more* Particular *Account of this*: In which,

(1.) *THE* Subject *of the Decree*; or the the Things decreed; *Whatsoever comes to pass*; i. e. All that is wrought in his Efficiency: The Decree involves every Thing in it, and hath left nothing uncertain as to that; It extends it self to all Effects and Events, *Eph.* 1. 11. It reacheth to *Sparrows*, Matth. 10. 29. And *Hairs*, Ver. 30. To *Goards* and *Worms*, Jon. 4. And as it neglects not the Least things, so it orders the Greatest; all Changes in *Kingdoms* and *Monarchies*, Dan. 4. 32. And things most *Eventual*, Prov. 16. 33. *The lot is cast into the lap: but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.* Yea, even the Arbitrary Contingent Actions of *Reasonable Creatures*, Acts 2. 23. *Him being delivered by the determinate counsel & foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified & slain.*

(2.) *THE* Influence *which this Decree hath upon the Subject*; it *Fore-ordains* Them; it Pre-determines Them. There are a vast Company of *Possible Beings* in the Knowledge or Understanding of God; the Decree appoints which of them shall be; and therefore by it they pass from Possibility to Futurition: And it appoints, not only their Being, but the Manner of their Production, the Time, the Means; and all this Before-hand: Hence that *Acts* 2. 23. and Chap. 4. 27, 28. *For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.* And this Ordination is a Firm and Immutable Determination; and therefore in the Execution of them God's Constancy discovers it self: In all that He doth, he stands by his Decree: What He hath once purposed he never alters, or goes from in the least, Numb. 23. 19. *God is not a man, that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken and shall he not make it good?* (Rom. 11. 29. Psal. 102. 27.) Prov. 19. 21. *There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.* And the Reason of it will anon appear.

(3.) *THE* Freedom *or* Liberty *which God used in making this Decree*; He did it *according to the Counsel of his Will*, Eph. 1. 11. And here are *Two Perfections* or Attributes of God, which eminently appear in this Decree:

[1.] *HIS Counsel*; in which his Infinite Wisdom appears: Counsel in our Conception, is necessary to a Decree, which cannot be well made without it: And God is *a Cause by Counsel*: The Decree is therefore frequently called by this Name: And it may be thus Described,

IT is *His Eternal Deliberation with Himself, concerning the Best Way of effecting his own Designs.*

1. *IT is a Deliberation*: This is after the Manner of Men; who in Consulting do Deliberate about Matters: And tho' God knew from Eternity, and at first Sight, what was Best, yet is He brought in Deliberating, Gen. 1. 26. *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness*, &c.

2. *IT is an Eternal Deliberation*: For his Decrees are Eternal Projects, Acts 15. 18. *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.* 1 Cor. 2. 7. *But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory.* These were past before Time had any Existence.

3. *IT is with Himself*: For in that Eternity there was no other to consult with but Himself; nor needed there any, He comprizing all Wisdom in Himself: All second Beings were to be the Product of this Counsel, and therefore none of them could be at it.

4. *IT was concerning the Best Way of effecting his Designs.* In all Counsels there is an End or Design propounded; and that which is the *Question* is, How this may be *Best* brought about? So that the Nature of Counsel properly, is to be employed about the *Means*, tho' always with an Eye or respect to the *End*. God hath many Ways in which he could have brought about his Ends; but his Wisdom sets it self on work, to contrive that which may *Best* Answer them.

NOW in this Counsel, God contrives in his Mind an *Eternal Idea* of all things that are to be. God having a Work to do, in the Creation and Gubernation of the World; lays out the *Whole Scheme* of it in his Infinite Understanding, in which he hath a Pattern of the Whole World, and every thing in it: And this *Idea* must be *Eternal*, because Time, and all the Things of it are contrived in it, Acts 15. 18. *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.* And there is a vast Depth of Wisdom in it, Rom. 11. 33. *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!* There is a *Double Knowledge* we ascribe to God; a Knowledge of his *Allsufficiency*, by which he knows his own Power, and what he can do; and in this are comprized all Possible Beings: And a Knowledge of his *Decree*, which is called a Knowledge of Vision, in which he knows all Future Things; and this is in Scripture called his Fore-knowledge, Rom. 8. 29. *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son.* And hitherto belongs this *Idea*, which is nothing else but a knowing of what he intends to do: For tho' in *Men*, the Things are the Idea, and their Knowledge is nothing else but the Image of the Things; yet in *God* his Knowledge

is the Idea, and the Things are the Image: They are the firſt in his Mind, before they are in themſelves: Now this *Idea*, is but *One* in God; at One Perfect and Eternal View, he clearly ſees all Things that are to be, without any ſucceſſive Intuition: They all ſtand before Him at once; For in ſeeing Himſelf he ſees all Things: And yet as it hath a diverſe reſpect to the Creature, ſo it is manifold; ſo that the Idea or Rule of one Creature, is not the Idea of another; and for this reaſon it is called, *The manifold wiſdom of God*, Eph. 3. 10. It extends not only to the Kinds and Natures of Things, but to every Individual in each Kind, and every Action and Change that belongs to it: It counts every Drop of Rain, Hail, Snow that ſhall fall, where and when; Every Thought that comes into the Mind of every Creature; and there is not the moſt minute Thing that eſcapes it; Pſal. 139. 2, 3. *Thou knoweſt my down-ſitting, and mine up-riſing, thou underſtandeſt my thought afar off. Thou compaſſeſt my path, and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.*

[2.] *HIS Good Pleaſure.* For though Counſel be uſed in the Preparation of a Decree, yet the Will exerts it ſelf in the Fixing of it: The Authority of that Signs and Seals it, and ſo makes it a *Decree*: And of this, we may take this Deſcription:

IT is *An Act of God's Will, moſt freely and efficaciouſly determining in Himſelf, concerning the effecting of all Things.* Here obſerve,

1. *IT is an Act of* God's Will; i. e. according to our Conception, 1 *Pet.* 3. 17. tho' it be improper; For in God, the Faculty and Act are one: But it implies he hath an *Intention*: The Will ſets the Underſtanding on work, by intending a Thing, which it will have that contrive; and ſo the Will is the Firſt Mover: As alſo a *Determination*, when the Way contrived by the Underſtanding is approved by the Will; That determines nothing, but leaves it to This, which ſetting its Royal Signet to it makes it Authentick: For though God be Omniſcient, yet he is not Omnivolent; It is therefore called his *Determinate Counſel*, Acts 2. 23.

2. *THIS Will of God is moſt* Free *&* Sovereign. God acted in the Decree with the greateſt Liberty: He acted not by Neceſſity; For there is no Dependance of the Being of God upon that of the Creature: He might have done as well without thoſe that be, as without thoſe Poſſible Ones, that ſhall never be: Nor hath He any Obligation to the Creature, which He willed to be: If God had never willed the Creature to be, He had not injured it in the leaſt; being no otherwiſe obliged than as he hath bound Himſelf, Rom. 11. 34, 35. ---*Or who hath been his counſeller? Or who hath firſt given to him* ---. And if he had not been *Free*, there had been no room for Counſel: Neceſſary Things muſt be, and therefore need no Deliberation about them.

3. *THIS Will of God is moſt* Efficacious. This Decree, by reaſon of it, puts a certain Futurition into things, Pſal. 135. 6. *Whatſoever the Lord pleaſed, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the ſeas, and all deep places.* His Will brings all Things ordained by Him into Actual Exiſtence in the due Seaſon, without fail: His Operative Will doth but ſay, *Let ſuch Things be*, and they are, Gen. 1.

4. *HENCE this Will of God, is the* Firſt Cauſe *of all Things.* If the Reaſon of the Being of Things be followed up to the Top, we muſt find it in the Decree; and in that we ſhall find them to have been determined by God's Will: *Inſtrumental* and *Intermediate* Cauſes there may be many, which he Wills to improve in the Execution of his Decree; But this is the *Higheſt* cauſe of all: Hence was the Creation, Rev. 4. 11. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour and power: for thou haſt created all things, and for thy pleaſure they are, and were created.* The New-birth, Jam. 1. 18. *Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth*---The Application of Mercy, Rom. 9. 18. *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will, he hardeneth.* Hence He is guided by no Previſion in the Creature.

5. *HENCE the Will of God is* without *Cauſe*; *or there can no proper Reaſon be given why he Wills*: I mean any Thing without Himſelf, determining his Will: There can be nothing greater than the Will of God; for it is Infinite; Nor before it, for it is Eternal. Matth. 11. 25, 26. *At that time Jeſus anſwered and ſaid, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes. Even ſo Father, for ſo it ſeemed good in thy ſight.* There may be a Reaſon of God's Will given, in reſpect of the Creature willed; He may Will the Exiſtence of One for Another, and all have their Ends; ſo that if we ask why God made the Sun, *&c.* But if we ask what moved and enclined God's Will, *&c.* we muſt ſay, Nothing but his Will.

6. *THE* Object *of this Decreeing Will, is* all Things in Efficiency. It concerns the effecting of all things; There is nothing eſcapes it, as we have already heard.

7. *THIS Will makes the Decree* unalterable. It engageth God in Conſtancy to ſee to the Execution of all Things juſt as they are determined: Hence that, Job 23. 13. *But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his ſoul deſireth, even that he doeth.* It therefore cannot, ſhall not be fruſtrated: If any thing have paſt under this Act, it ſtands ratified, and God abides firm by it, and all the Creation ſhall not turn him away, Iſa. 43. 13. *Yea, before the day was, I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who ſhall let it?*

8. *YET this Will lays no forcible Neceſſity on the Creature; but only a* Certainty *as to the Event.* Things ſhall be as it hath determined; and yet the Freedom of Cauſes by Counſel is no whit infringed by it, but ratified; becauſe in it, God hath purpoſed that Free Agents ſhall Act freely: As to the Event, Chriſt's Bones could not be broken, and yet there was no Neceſſity Cogent laid on the Souldiers.

(4.) *THE*

(4.) *THE Great & Ultimate* End *of the Decree*; it is *for his own Glory*. Every Wise Agent hath an End in his Working, and that End is in his Eye when he lays out his *Work*: How else shall he be able to accommodate it aright? For *that* being to be a Mean to the End, cannot be so without a suitableness for it: Now tho' there are several subordinate Ends of Creatures, one being made for another; yet all and every one of them are ultimately for God: That God made all for himself is certain, Prov. 16. 4. *The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.* And if so, then He purposed thus to do: God is the Best Agent, and must have the Best End; and there can be Nothing better than *His Glory*: This then is that to which other ends are but means: Hither then all God's Designs drive; Eph. 1. 5, 6. *Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace---.* And therefore the Wisdom of all is to be judged of according as it serves to the Advancement of this.

USE 1. *INFORMATION*, Learn hence,

1. THAT *there are no Events* Casual *in respect of God.* To us it is true, Time & Chance happen to all Things: They come to pass by unseen Ways, and unknown Accidents: But in respect of God it is not so: There can Nothing fall out either besides his Knowledge or Intention; For it is his Decree that gives Being to all Events, and the Things that are, had never been if he had not Purposed them; *Joseph*'s Vendition into *Ægypt* had not come to pass, if God had not Fore-ordain'd it, *&c.* Gen. 45. 5, 7. *Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with your selves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you, to preserve life.--- And God sent me before you, to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.*

2. THAT *all Things that come to pass, are the* Product *of Infinite Wisdom.* God doth all, and he doth it according to Counsel. We are ready to find some Flaw in God's Providence, and think we could mend many things; but remember, all Things are ordered by the Counsel, not of Men or Angels, but of God, who doth nothing rashly: The highest and most dreadful *Wheels* are *full of Eyes*, Ezek. 1. 18. As to the Creature, sometimes Things might have been better, Matth. 26. 24. *The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but wo unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed: it had been good for that man if he had not been born.* But as to the Great End, which swallows up all else, *viz. The Glory of God*, all is best; and if we do not see it, it is our Ignorance.

3. THAT *no Decrees of God can be* Unrighteous, *but all are* Just & Holy. His Sacred and Divine Will is the Rule of the Decree, which is also the Rule of all things: He who Wills things because they seem Good in his sight, and is not any way accountable; He whose Will is Supream and Holy: He cannot err nor do amiss: It is therefore Impudent Boldness for us to find Fault with Him for any thing

USE 2. LET the *Doctrine of the Decree*, teach us these *Practical Lessons:*

1. TO *see our* Nothingness *without God*; How out of Him we are Nothing: It was his Decree that gave us our Being: He accounts us Nothing, Isa. 40. 15, 17. *Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.---All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.* Let us count our selves so. As Creatures we are meer Effects of his Good Pleasure: When we are lifted up in Ourselves, let us look on the *Possible Beings*, which never shall be, and remember it is the Decree that put all the Difference between Us and Them: We came from Nothing, and had been Nothing still, but for this.

2. TO *adore the* Wisdom *of God in all Things that fall out in the World, and that befall Us in particular.* We are apt to Cavil; but remember, Infinite Counsel ordered them; That satisfied Him, Job 23. 14. *For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him.* The Reason why we see not the Wisdom of them, is, *Partly* because being Creatures we cannot fathom the Wisdom of the Creator; and as sinful Creatures we are blind and prejudiced: *Partly* because we forget the End they ultimately aim at, and measure them by such as we allot them; and *Partly* thro' Pride, having an high Opinion of our own Wisdom, which is indeed Foolishness.

3. TO Sanctify *God in all our Changes*: Let us to this End acknowledge his hand in all; neither ascribing them to *Chance*, as if they fell out beside the Intention of the First Cause, which is a Blasphemy against Providence; nor looking too much upon *Instruments*, either in Good or Evil, forgetting their Absolute Subordinacy to the First Cause, but acknowledge his hand, sending and disposing of all: And let us Acknowledge his Sovereign Prerogative to Order all as he sees meet; that He is *Lord*, and hath a Liberty to determine of all Things at Pleasure: And hence learn quietly to Submit to the al-disposing hand of God: Let that silence us in every Thing, *It is the Lords Will*: *Psal.* 38. 13, 14. and 39. 9. Remember, He is the Potter, and we are the Clay, *&c.*

4. TO Commend all *to Him*; not anxiously fearing what may come to pass; believing all shall be as He hath in Wisdom appointed.

[JULY 15. 1690.]

SER-

SERMON *XXXIII.*

QUESTION VIII.

HOW doth GOD Execute *His Decrees?*

ANSWER.

GOD Executeth his Decrees in the Works of *Creation*, and *Providence.*

WE have heard, That the Decrees of God relate to ſuch things as come to paſs in Time; in this Decree therefore we are to conſider its *Conſtitution*, and its *Execution*: the *former* hath been taken notice of under the foregoing Queſtion; the *latter* comprehends in it the whole Work of Efficiency; a Diſtribution of which our preſent *Anſwer* affords us; and gives us the occaſion to look into the thing it ſelf, whereof this Diſtribution is made, *viz.* God's *Efficiency*; of which take this Deſcription:

IT is that whereby *God worketh all things, & all in all things.* What God fore-ordained in his Decree, that he brings to paſs in his Works; theſe therefore are of an equal latitude. Efficiency ſignifies the thorough doing of a thing. Every Being or Thing is a Work of God, and claim's Him for the doer of it.

I. CONCERNING the *general Nature* of Efficiency, take theſe Concluſions.

1. THE Efficient is *a Cauſe from which the thing is.* For he communicates his Vertue unto the Effect. As Chriſt once ſaid, *Vertue is gone out from me*; ſo God, in all his Works, ſends out Vertue from Himſelf, and communicates it to the Creature; ſo that all things are vertually in Him as their Efficient cauſe; as, Rom. 11. 36. *Of him, and thro' him, and to him are all things*---.

2. THE Work of the Efficient is to *Prepare the Matter, bring in the Form*, and *Finiſh the Thing*; ſo making it fit for the *attainment of its End.* Thus we ſee in Artificial Works, as of the Carpenter in building an Houſe; *&c.* And thus God doth Work Artificially in all the things that he doth.

3. EFFICIENCY is not an *Immanent Act* remaining in God, but *Tranſient*, falling upon an external Subject, and leaving an Impreſſion or Change upon that. This Act leaves no Change in God; He is the ſame he was; it only adds a Relation to Him, which he bears to the Effect; the only Change is in the Subject, which by it paſſeth from Not-being, to Being; and ſo to ſuch a Being.

II. AS to the *ſpecial Nature* of Efficiency, take theſe two things, in the Deſcription.

1. IT is that whereby God Works *All things.* He Works all kinds of things, great and ſmall; His Finger is in every thing; there is nothing done in the World, but he is the doer of it, Eph. 1. 11. ---*He worketh all things*---. If we look all over the World, and ſee any thing effected or made; any operation wrought, or thing brought to paſs: we may ſay, as the Magicians once, *This is the Finger of God.* He had his hand in it, or it had never been done.

2. NOT only ſo, but he Works *All in all things*; 1 Cor. 12. 6. *It is the ſame God, which worketh all in all.* i. e. The whole Efficiency of all things Depends upon the Firſt Cauſe; not only as to their Subſtantial Beings, but alſo as to the real Circumſtances thereof, Iſa. 45. 7. *I form the Light*; *and create Darkneſs*: *I make Peace, and create Evil*; *I the Lord do all theſe things.* All that concerns the Time, Place, Event, Succeſs, *&c.* are ordered and wrought by Him; He himſelf drives the great and whole Trade of all the World; being the Cauſe of all Cauſes, and Firſt mover of every thing that moves; Acts 17. 28. *In Him we live, move and have our being.*

NOW that God is ſuch an Efficient is worth our proving; that ſo our Faith being ſettled upon it, may make ſutable Improvement of ſo great and momentous a Truth: and this will appear if we conſider,

1. THAT all Beings or Things are *Inenergetical*, they can do nothing without the concourſe of His Power & Efficiency. If we ſpeak of them, as *Not being*; (and once they were not) what can, what could the thing, (having no Exiſtence, nor any remote principle of Eſſence,) contribute to its own Being, when it never thought of it ſelf, nor was any thing; not having ſo much as a Material Cauſe, out of which it might be made? Or if we ſpeak of the Creatures *already Made*, being now in Act; there is a firſt Mover and Cauſe of their Actions and Operations about themſelves, without which they can do nothing: All Creatures are dead Cyphers, of no ſignification, except the Influence of God adds a Figure to them; if He moves them not, they ly dead, and cannot ſtir; they are as Pictures and Idols, that can let out no Efficacy, except he acts upon them. Sometimes the Sea flows not, and Sun ſhines not, the Fire doth not burn: and the Reaſon is, becauſe he withdraws His Efficacy from them; they are all nothing and vanity; Iſa. 40. 17. *All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him leſs than nothing, and vanity.*

2. IF we conſider His *Sovereign Acting* and *Ordering* of every Motion of the Creature, and that whether *Natural* or *Moral.* Here mind two things:

(1.) HE can *Interpoſe & Prevent* the Motion of the Creature, when He Will. That he doth ſo, ſhews that he can; & we have Inſtances ſufficient for it; See for this, Job 9. 7. *He commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not*; *and ſealeth up the Stars.* Pſal. 106. 9. *He rebuked the Red Sea alſo, and it was dryed up.* Many ſuch Acts as theſe have been done at the Exerciſe of the Faith of his People; divers whereof are mentioned in *Heb.* 11. particularly *v.* 33, 34.

(2.) THE Creatures, when they do act, are always at *His Command*. They do juſt what He bids them; and no more, or otherwiſe: Pſal. 78. 26. *He cauſed an eaſt-wind to blow in the heaven: and by his power he brought in the ſouth-wind*, &c. He is therefore ſaid to be the Father of all theſe Effects, Job 38. 28, 29. *Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of the dew? Out of whoſe womb came the Ice? and the hoary froſt of heaven, who hath gendred it?* And they all are at his Word, and fulfill it, *Ver.* 31. *Pſal.* 148. 8. And how can this be aſcribed to Him, but in regard of His prevalent and predetermining Efficiency? He who doth this, muſt needs be acknowledged the Firſt Mover.

3. IF we take a *particular* Account of things, we ſhall diſcern that this Efficiency is in them all, and that their whole Dependance is upon it. And this will appear, both,

1. IN the *Production* of all things. Whatſoever is made, He made it. All things are the Workmanſhip of His Hands, Effects which he hath produced by the Word of his Power, *Gen.* 1. 1. *Iſa.* 40. 26. & 41. 4. He made us, and not we ourſelves. If we were made, we had a Maker, and there was none could make the Creature but He; beſides whom there was none, when the Creature was not. And,

2. IN the *Ordering* or *Management* of the things that are produced by Him. In all the carrying on of the Affairs of the whole World, He is *All in All*; and his Hand is in every thing.

(1.) IN the very *Smalleſt* things that are. There is not ſo much as a *Sparrow falls to the ground*, but it is according as He diſpoſeth it, it is not without Him; and the very *Hairs of our head are all numbred* by Him, *Matth.* 10. 29, 30. There is not a *Goard* grows, nor a *Worm* that eats it, but it is according as he Orders it; *Jonah* 4. 6, 7. He hath an Hand in the very Birds *building their Neſts*, and diſpoſeth thereof as he pleaſeth, *Pſal.* 104. 17, 18.

(2.) IN the *Greateſt* things that are. As the Leaſt are not beneath Him, ſo the Greateſt are not above Him: All the high Wheels in the World are turned about by his Hand. All the tranſlations of Kingdoms, deſolations brought upon Dominions, and ruefull verſions of Thrones, are the work of his Pleaſure; He doth all this; *Jer.* 27. 5, 6, 7. *Dan.* 4. 32. 1 *Sam.* 2. 5, 6. All the riſings and fallings of great Men are done by Him; *Iſa.* 40. 20, 23. Pſal. 76. 12. *He ſhall cut off the ſpirit of Princes, He is terrible to the Kings of the earth.*

(3.) IN the moſt *Eventuous* things that be. Things which ſeem to us to be moſt Caſual, and to have no pre-diſpoſal, He is the determining Agent in all theſe. We may inſtance in *Lots*; Men caſt them, and there is a Contingency in them; as to any thing in ſecond Cauſes, there is no Diſcretion of the Creature in the direction of them; yet are *theſe* wiſely over-ruled by Him, and he makes them Decide matters juſt as he had before Purpoſed; Prov. 16. 33. *The Lot is caſt into the lap, but the whole diſpoſing thereof is of the Lord.* Thus the Lot fell upon *Achan*, upon *Saul*, &c. And this alſo is eminent in the Determination He puts upon things that are done without Counſel, to make them to fulfill his Counſel; thus in the Arrow that ſlew *Ahab*, 1 Kings 23. 34. God is ſaid to deliver a Man into his hand, that kills another accidentally, *Exod.* 21. 13.

(4.) IN all the *Evils* that do befall the Children of Men: God challengeth this to himſelf, Amos 3. 6. *Shall there be Evil in the City, and the Lord hath not done it?* And the things that are moſt Eventuous in themſelves, yet they are Purpoſely and Deliberately done by God; and He Connected all the things which produce ſuch an Event. If a *Tile* fall from a Houſe, and ſlay a Man, God brought him thither in the inſtant. And indeed, if all theſe things are fore-appointed by God, as we before heard proved; then He hath an hand in the fulfilling of his Purpoſe; & this *Job* gives Him the free Acknowledgment of, in every thing that he met withal; Job 23. 14. *For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me.*

(5.) IN the diſpoſing of the *freeſt Actions* of the freeſt Creatures, *viz.* Angels and Men. Theſe are Cauſes by Counſel, of their own Actions; they have a free Will of their own, but yet He doth all here too. He preſerves this Will of theirs, or elſe it could not exert it ſelf at all; and He inclines it too, to be ſure to all that is Good; there is never a good motion in it, but He put it in, *Pſal.* 119. 33, 34. Yea, He hath an hand alſo about Sin, though without Sin: He hardens the heart, and blinds the Mind; *Exod.* 14. 8. and Rom. 11. 8. *God hath given them the Spirit of ſlumber, Eyes that they ſhould not ſee.* He uſeth them as Tools, or Inſtruments, to Work his Pleaſure by, in the World, and makes their Wrath ſerve his Praiſe, *&c.* Pſal. 76. 10. *Surely the wrath of man ſhall praiſe thee*---. They mean one thing, and He another; and whilſt they purſue their own Deſigns, they only Accompliſh His; Iſa. 10. 6, 7. *I will ſend him againſt an hypocritical nation; and againſt the people of my wrath will I give him a charge to take the ſpoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the ſtreets. Howbeit, he meaneth not ſo* ---. And if all theſe Works belong to God, then needs muſt Al-ſufficiency belong to Him; He muſt be Acknowledged to Work all, and in all. And it is to be obſerved, that in all things, God keeps His Eye fixt upon His Decree: Efficiency is nothing elſe but His executing of that; it doth neither more, nor leſs, nor otherwiſe. He is ſaid to do whatſoever he willed or pleaſed; which Will or Pleaſure of His is not an occaſional thing, as Men's Pleaſures are: but it is Himſelf, from Eternity, Fixed, and Immutable; which is His Decree.

NOW our Anſwer gives us a full, general Diſtribution of this Efficiency, giving us the two Heads, to which all that can be mentioned, as relating to it, muſt be reduced. All the External Works of God belong hither; God gives

gives a *Being* to all things that are; and having made them He *takes Care* of them, and *Provides* for them, *Orders* and manageth them to the Ends and Purpoſes they were made for. The Creature could not make it ſelf; a meer Non-entity could not reduce it ſelf into a Being, but muſt have remained Nothing for ever, if he had not given it Exiſtence: and when it is made, it is as little able to Maintain its own Being; the ſame hand that produced it, muſt ſet a ſecond hand to it, or elſe it will return again into Nothing; and under theſe two we ſhall find all the Works of God. A diſtinct inquiry into each of theſe will be afforded us in purſuance of the following Queſtions; which will afterwards come under our conſideration.

USE 1. HENCE, It is a ſafe and good way to root *Atheiſm* out of our hearts; and confirm us in the Belief that *there is a God*, to *ſtudy much the Doctrine of Efficiency*. The Apoſtle tells us, That the *Inviſible God, is ſeen and known by viſible things*, i. e Acts of *Creation* and *Providence*, Rom. 1. 19, 20. And the Pſalmiſt read the Declaration of His God-head in His Works, Pſal. 86. 10. *For thou art great and doeſt wondrous things: thou art God alone.* There are glorious, mighty and powerful Works wrought which claim no leſs Wiſdom and Power than that of a God to bring them about. The Production of a World, ſo framed and made; ſo great, ſo many, and ſo curious Beings produced, and all out of Nothing; the great Revolutions and Changes in the World, the wonderful ſecret movings of thoſe great Wheels; the Concurrence of all things to the bringing about Eternal Projects: Did but the Atheiſt read theſe things over in his mind, and well conſider of them, he muſt ſay, the Finger of God, (not Nature, nor Chance, but the God of Nature,) is in all theſe things; and the hearts of Chriſtians would be greatly ſetled againſt all the Temptations to doubt of the Being of God by this Conſideration.

USE 2. HENCE *There is much of God to be ſeen in all the Works* which we daily ſee done in the World. Something of God appears in all; there is no Work which He is not in, no Action which he Orders not; and that, not as a bare Spectator or Superviſor, but an Agent in all. We ſee and hear of many wonderful Providences, ſtrange Changes that are brought about, ſtupendous Effects which non-plus our Underſtandings in the enquiry after the Cauſes of them: Now, who, or whatever be the Inſtrument, He is the Efficient; and this is to be obſerved in every Paſſage, whether of Kindneſs ſhewn us, or Injury done to us, it is the Lord, he bids *Shimei* to Curſe *David*; and this may teach us to Adore and Worſhip Him in all, and to ſit down quieted under whatſoever befalls us, ſaying with him, Pſal. 39. 9. *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it.*

USE 3. LEARN hence, That it is the *Chriſtians Duty to dwell much on the Contemplation of the Efficiency of God.* Pſal. 66. 5. *Come and ſee the works of God.* Pſal. 77. 11, 12. *I will remember the works of the Lord: ſurely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate of all thy works.* God's Works help his People to Work, in the reviewing of them: And this will ſerve both to keep the Mind in a Spiritual frame, admiring at the Glory of God, declared in His Works; and to help them to carry it reverently, and fearfully before Him, keeping up an high eſteem of Him in their hearts: (All low and mean thoughts of God, proceeding from a want of conſidering his Works,) and keeping their Souls humble, when by diſcovering His Infinite *Greatneſs*, in the great things that he hath done, they are effectually convinced of their own *Littleneſs*, yea *Nothingneſs*; that humbled *Job*, Chap. 38. with 40. 41. & 42. 5, 6.

USE 4. HENCE *God is to be ſought to, to work all our works in us, and for us*: We, alas! can do nothing of our ſelves; and yet we have great Duties lying upon us, but are without Strength; our Operations depend upon him; Phil. 2. 13. *It is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his good pleaſure.* Joh. 15. 5. --*Without me, ye can do nothing.* He muſt ſet our Wheels on going, elſe they ſtand ſtill.

USE 5. HERE is the Reaſon, why the *Saints ſhall never fail in their Works*; becauſe *they have an Intereſt in, and Aſſiſtance from Him, who works all things according to the Counſel of His Will.* Chriſt, who is *all, and in all*, dwells in them and helps them; the Spirit, who is *God*, hath made them his Temple; how then ſhall they fail

USE 6. LET this then encourage *Faith in God, for the accompliſhment of every Promiſe*, and direct us to *give to God the acknowledgment of all the Performances of them.* When God would eſtabliſh His People's Faith, He leads them hither, Iſa. 45. 11, 12. *Thus ſaith the Lord, the Holy One of Iſrael, and his Maker, ask me of things to come, concerning my ſons; I have made the Earth, and Created Man upon it*, &c. And when *Paul* would draw us to give God all Praiſe he points us to this, Rom. 11. 36. *For of him, and thro' him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.*

[AUGUST 12. 1690.]

SERMON *XXXIV.*

QUESTION, IX.

WHAT is the Work of Creation?

ANSWER.

THE Work of Creation is, God's making all things of nothing, by the Word of his Power, in the ſpace of Six Days, and all very good.

CREATION is the Firſt part of God's *Efficiency*. The thing muſt Firſt have a Being, in order to it's being Provided for. In the

Description here given, we may observe several things; 1. The thing *described*, *Creation*. 2. The thing *asserted*, Creation *is*, *there such a Work*. 3. The *Author* or *Efficient* of it, *God made it*. 4. The *Subject* of it, *All things*. 5. The *Negative Principle*, (if I may so call it,) *of Nothing*. 6. The *Active Principle*, from which this Efficiency proceeded, *the Word of his Power*. 7. The *Time* taken up in it, *in the Space of Six Days*. 8. The *Quality* in which it was made, *all very Good*. The opening of these, will help us in the Contemplation of this great Work of God.

First, THE thing *described*, is *Creation*. This Word is sometimes used in a more large sense, to express any Origination that is given to the thing, and is applied to any Efficient of things Natural or Artificial. But in the strict and Scriptural sense of the Word, it is restrained to a peculiar sense, and signifies, *the giving to a thing it's whole and entire Being*; and so it is differenced from all other Works, whether Natural or Artificial: In those there are New Forms introduced, into Matter that is fitted and disposed to receive them; but in Creation it is otherwise; for here the Matter is Made, in order to the producing the Form: They do but bring a Form into an old Matter; but in this the thing is altogether New; the thing was Nothing before Creation gave it a Being. It is true, there is a different manner of Creating some things and others; some had their whole Existence at first, others successively; but in both it was *Creation Work* that set the first stroke to them, before which they were nothing at all, as will afterwards appear.

Secondly, THE thing *asserted* Creation is, *there is such a Work*. If there be a Creature, then a Creation. Either the World must be Eternal, or it must have a Beginning; Eternal it cannot be, for then we make it God, to whom Eternal belongs as an Attribute Incommunicable: If it had a Beginning it must needs be Created; a thing that once was *not*, and now *is*, had an Efficient; and if it receive from him it's whole Essence, it was then Created.

NOW, that the World had a Beginning may be proved evidently to us, not only by clear *Scripture-Testimony*, which assures us of it, Gen. 1. 1. *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*: And tells of things which were *before the World was*, Joh. 17. 5. Prov. 8. 23. *&c.* But also by *convincing Arguments*. For,

1. *ETERNITY is ascribed unto God, as His alone Prerogative*. See, Psal. 90. 2. *Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world: even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God*. Col. 1. 17. *He is before all things*---. 1 Tim. 1. 17. *Now unto the King Eternal*, &c. Now that which is not Eternal, must needs be Temporary, for these two are opposites; that which is not Eternal is a Subject of Time. Now Time is nothing else but a Measure of the Creature's Duration; and being a Measure, it must have its Limits. A thing which hath it's Measures, must be followed up to its Beginning, where the Measure is at an end; if it have none, it is Immense.

But,

2. *THE* Original of Nations *will shew that the World had a Beginning, and is not Eternal*. If we look into the Antiquity of the World, we shall find where, and when it was first Peopled; and the nearer we come the Place from whence the Nations spread themselves abroad, the greater Monuments of Antiquity are to be found: Yea, by the help of the Scriptures we may count up how many Years it is, since the First Man was made; and it is unreasonable to think the World should stand so many Thousands of Ages before it had a Man in it.

3. *THE* Original of Histories *gives further light to this*. Consult all Chronologies, and they will confute the Notion of the World's Eternity. The *Scripture History* runs us up the highest of any; and indeed it begins with the *Beginning*, and that comes considerably short of *Six Thousand* Years. The most Ancient History of the *Gentiles* begins with the Monarchy of the *Assyrians*, and the Reign of *Ninus*; which is supposed to be Contemporary with the Life of *Abraham*: all that they speak of before, is meerly Mythological; and indeed those very Records are confused Fragments, and very Fabulous: And if there were no Original of the World; why did not the *Poets* sing of other things before the Funerals of *Troy*. If there have been innmerable Ages, why have we no Relation of their Actions?

4. *THE* Newness of the Invention *of Arts, will further evince this*. It is certain that the Arts are all of them imprinted in the *Book of the Creature*; and from thence it is that Men's Reasoning Power Collects them, by Observation and Experience, the Foundation of them is laid in the Nature of things, and is gathered from thence by curious inquiry: And such is the necessary use of them, in the Management of Human Affairs, that Mankind could not have lived without them for an Infinite space of Time. Now it is manifest in History, who were the Inventors of these Arts. The Scripture gives us an Account of the *Fathers* of many of them: And it is apparent that many of them were but of Yesterday, in comparison, and have not at this Day arrived at Perfection, but have new Experiments added to them continually.

5. *THE* Succession of things *will also prove it*. We read, Eccl. 1. 4. *One Generation passeth away, and another cometh*---. And our constant Observation confirms it to us. Now, not only doth one Generation follow another, but one proceeds from another successively, and it is impossible that the total Collection of Generations should proceed from another by Generation, but it must needs be by Creation. There is a Succession of Hours, Days, Years, Ages; and where there is a Succession, there is no Eternity, but a Beginning: In the same Horizon, either the Day must be before the Night, or the Night before the Day, both could not coexist in the same Place; and if one be before the other then it is a Succession, and not an Eternity which is an abiding N o w, without any Succession at all. If there hath been Infinite Time, then a Day must be as long as a Year; yea then this Day is *not*: If Infinite Days had gone before,

they

they could never have come to an end, to make room for the Introduction of *This Day*; yea Yeſterday, this Day, and to Morrow would be the ſame; which things are meer Contradictions.

6. THE Corruption alſo of things *in the World, doth evince that it had a Beginning.* For if things had not a Beginning, how could they End: Now in this World we ſee things are daily Corrupted; Men and other Creatures are going to their Diſſolution: Time and Change are Concomitants, Eternal things are Immutable: That which hath a Death, had a Birth; that which goes did come; fleeing things are Temporary; diſſoluble things were ſet together; and we are told of the very Earth and Heavens, what they are like to come to, tho' for the preſent they ſeem to abide through all theſe Changes, 2 Pet. 3.10. *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, and the element ſhall melt fervent heat, the earth alſo, and the works that are therein ſhall be burnt up.* If then the World had a Beginning it was *Created*; and this will alſo further appear in the ſequel of this Diſcourſe.

Thirdly, THE *Author* or *Efficient* of this Creation, and that is *God*: God *Created the Heaven, and the Earth*, Gen. 1. 1. The *Works of Creation* are therefore aſcribed to him, *Iſa.* 40. 28. 42. 5. & 44. 24. The Attribute of *Creator*, belongs to Him, and none elſe. Now on ſuppoſition that the World was Created, it neceſſarily follows that God Created it; and this will appear, both,

I. FROM the *Conſideration of the things produced by Creation.* And here conſider,

1. THAT the *Creature could not make it ſelf.* The Cauſe is ſomething Antecedent to the Effect, and therefore cannot be the ſame with it; what can a thing do towards its own Being, when it is *not*? The Efficient is Active, the Effect is Paſſive: If the Creature were its own Maker, it ſhould be before it is.

2. THERE is *no Being either before or beſide the Creature, but God.* The firſt and higheſt diſtribution that we can find of Being, is into God and the Creature; and there is nothing but what belongs to one of theſe. If then the Creature could not make it ſelf, God muſt; if it muſt have a Maker that was before it, it muſt be He. The Creature began with Time, what is before that is Eternal, and that is no other but God.

3. THE *Nature of the Creation* ſaith, that *it could have no other Maker but God.* If we look into the things themſelves, and view the Frame of the World, and take notice of the curious and exquiſite manner of the Make of it; the exact Harmony and Symetry of the whole, and the curious Contrivances in each part; (in which the *leaſt Fly* is full of wonders;) it will diſcover Infinite Wiſdom, and Eternal Power to have been at Work about it: which are plain Demonſtrations that God's Hand alone formed and brought it forth; all the Beings that are in the World carry in them the witneſſes who it was that made them; Rom. 1. 20. *The Inviſible things of Him, from the Creation of the world, are clearly ſeen*, &c. Pſal. 19. beg. *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handy work.*

II. FROM the *Manner of their Production*; which was in a way of *Creation*. It is true ſome Creatures are continued in a way of *Generation*, but all had their Beginning by *Creation*; and this is a Work that none but God could do; there is no other Agent that can work in ſuch a way: Take away *Materials* which they may work upon, and the whole World of Created Agents, Natural and Artificial, muſt ſit Idle, and do nothing at all. Art can work, if Nature afford it ſome compleat matter: Let a *Carpenter* have ſuitable Stuff, and he can build an Houſe, otherwiſe not. Nature can work, if there be a Principle to work upon, though incompleat: Let there be *Seed*, and it can produce a *Plant*; *Spawn*, and it can make a *Fiſh*: But to Work without *pre-exiſtent Matter*, ſo as to bring forth the *Firſt Plant* without a *Seed*, the *Firſt Fiſh* without a *Spawn*; yea, the *Firſt Principle* of theſe, and all things, *out of Nothing*, by his bare *Word of Command*, is proper to God, and belongs to no other; but ſuch is the Work of *Creation*. It is ſuch a Work as requires *Omnipotency* to Effect, and therefore none but He who is *Omnipotent*, could ever bring it about.

Fourthly, THE *Subject of Creation*, and that is, *All things*. There is nothing beſides Himſelf, but what is made; and whatſoever is made, He made it: All Being is either Firſt or Second, and the Second is *from* the Firſt; there is no Second Being can owe its Original Primarily to any but Him. Hence, We read in, Rev. 4. 11. ---*Thou haſt created all things.*--- Every Rank and Species of Being came out of His hand immediately in Creation; the Continuance and Succeſſion of any of theſe Kinds is by His Providence; in the *former* he uſed none, in the *latter* he uſeth the Inſtrumentality of ſecond Cauſes; ſo that there is no Creature but ſtands related to Him as its *Creator*; and there is no Being beſides Him, but what bears the Denomination of *Creature*.

Fifthly, THE *Negative Principle*, or the *Negation of any Principle Material*; God made all *of Nothing*. He had, as no *Tools* to work with, ſo no *Matter* to work upon; and this is that which declares it to be a *Creation* indeed. This Article belongs to the Doctrines of *Faith*; and *carnal Reaſon* knows not how to comprehend it; and therefore the wiſdom of *Heathen Philoſophy* was here puzled and nonpluſt; many of them taught the works of Creation ſo far, as to acknowledge there was a Time when there were *no* particular Creatures, nor Forms of things, neither Elementaries, nor any Elements; nothing but a Rude and indigeſted *Heap* or *Chaos* of *formleſs Matter*, on which they confeſs the Eternal Agent did work, and out of which he educed all the Species of Beings, giving them their ſeveral *Forms* and *Qualities*, and appointed them their ſeveral *Ends* and *Uſes*; but ſtill this Material Principle of the World, they thought to be *Co-eternal* with God. The ground of which Opinion was, a Maxim taken up in Heathen Phi-

Philosophy; *Ex nihilo nihil fit*, from whence they concluded it to be an utter *Impossibility* in the thing, that ever any Being should be produced from a bare *Non-entity*. But this Principle is not universally true. If we consider the ordinary course of Nature, or look upon Nature as now constituted; now things are not ordinarily Made, but are of some Pre-existent Matter: But if we speak of Nature in its Constitution, or seek into the First Order or Condition of Beings, there was a Supernatural Work in that; and though Nature cannot, yet the God of Nature can, and doth produce *Something* out of *Nothing*; and out of that *Something*, *All things*. Now that *this World* was made of *Nothing*, is evident,

1. BECAUSE it was *Created*; and we have heard that the Nature of Creation, is to give the whole of its Being to the thing: The Apostle tells us what is the Article of our Faith, about the Creation, Heb 11.3. *Thro' faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear.* And see, Rom. 4 17 *God who quickneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not, as though they were.*

2. THIS *Pre-existent Matter* must be either *Creature*, or the *Creator*. This is the highest Distribution of Beings that we can rise unto: And what Absurdities are there, which necessarily follow upon either of these Suppositions? For,

1. IF we suppose it to be the *Creator*, then we confess it to be *God Himself*; then we make the *Efficient* and the *Matter* to be the same; then God must communicate of His *own* Substance to the *Creature*; then there is in the Divine Essence a Material Principle, and that Divisible and capable of Generation & Corruption; & then the Creature proceeds from God Naturally and not Voluntarily, Eternally and not in Time: All which are *blasphemous Conclusions*, and altogether repugnant to the Nature of God.

2. IF we suppose it to be a *Creature*, then it must have an *Original*, and thence it must have a Time when it began to be, before which it was not; and therefore that matter must ultimately be made of *Nothing*; for to suppose a pre-existent Matter of that Matter, is not to evade the *Intricacy*, but to make it more entangled: So that of necessity, our Contemplation of these things must ultimately resolve it self here, *viz. That all things came firstly out of Nothing*: And why should it be thought *Impossible* with God, (*with whom all things are Possible*,) to give a Being to the things that were *Not*, because we impotent Creatures cannot comprehend it, since he is able to do more than we can think?

Sixthly, THE *Active Principle* from which this Efficiency proceeded, *viz.* The *Word of His Power*. His *Omnipotent Will* gave the Being of all Things, and this is called His *Powerful Word*; and we read, Psal. 33. 6. 9. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made.*—— *He spake and it was done*---. And how often in *Gen.* Chap. 1. *And God said*, &c. *and it was.* Here is to be observed, 1. God's *Omnipotency*. 2. His *Decree*. (of both which, hath been already spoken,) 3. His *Word*, which is the employing His Omnipotency, to accomplish His Purpose; and so the Creature received its Being.

USE. FROM what hath been already said, we may Learn,

1. GOD's Infinite *Self-Perfection*, in that he could *Live Eternally* without the Creature: He is therefore His *own* Happiness; He was *God blessed forever*, before the World was; and that was Infinite Ages.

2. THAT God *produced the Creature* not by any *Necessity of Nature*, but by his *own Free Will*: Rev. 4. 11. *--For thy pleasure, they are, and were created.* Psal. 115. 3. *But our God hath done whatsoever he pleased.* God's necessary and natural Acts are Eternal, but the Creature was made in Time, and therefore it was meerly a Product of his *Good Will*.

3. THAT it is *vain for Man to build his hopes for Eternity upon the* World, *or any thing in it*: How can the Offspring of Time Crown him with Eternal Felicity? needs must it fail him, who hath no where else to go for it.

4. IT is *good for Man to look back to his own Original*. Let us every one contemplate the Creation, and there we shall see that a while ago, we came out of the Womb of our Mother *Nothing*; and this may allay the Pride of Man, when he begins to be blown up with *Self-Admiration*. Who art thou, or what is thy Father's House? whence comest thou, that thou disdainest all about thee? Tell me, Art thou not the Son of *Adam*, and was not he the Son of *Dust*, and was not that the Child of *Nothing*? Here is thy Parentage.

5. THAT *we are to ascribe to God the Glory of our Creation.* All his *Works are to praise him.* We are to acknowledge that *he alone made us*: The Confession of this Truth, and by it to distinguish the True God from Idols, is necessary; Jer. 10. 11, 12. *Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and stretched out the heavens by his discretion.* Heathen *Pythagoras* could say, He that will challenge a Deity to himself, must be able to *make such a World as this*; and say in Truth, *I made it.*

6. THAT *we are to trust in God against hope*; Rom. 4. 17, 18.

[SEPTEMBER 9. 1690.]

SERMON XXXV.

Seventhly, I Proceed to consider the *Time* that was taken up in the Work of *Creation*; it was done in the space of *Six Days*. This is positively asserted, *Exod.* 20 11. And the particular Account of it given, *Gen.* 1. Those that think that all things were Created, both as to Matter and Form in an *Instant*, and that the Division of the Work of Creation into *Six Days*, was only to decypher the *Order* of things

things themſelves, do directly contradict the expreſs letter of Scripture. It is readily granted, that God did not take up ſo much time in it, for want of Power to have done it at once; He that did it at ſeveral words, could have done it at one, had He ſeen meet; but it otherwiſe pleaſed Him; and tho' the World be but One in Order, but One circumference, and One center; One in Contiguity, all the parts touching one another, without any vacuity: and One in End, being made for God's glory; yet it conſiſts of divers parts, diſtinct in Nature & Eſſence; in which is diſplayed Gods abſolute Sovereignty, in beſtowing variety of excellencies on ſeveral Creatures, and His manifold Wiſdom in making ſo many ſorts of Beings, and ſuiting them all to their various Ends; and God was pleaſed to ſet theſe Creatures in their Order; and being called His Armies, He ſo Marſhalled them in Creation, as He made them Orderly to come forth into Being; and Leaſurely too, to give us the better advantage to contemplate the nature, order & frame of things; which was a main duty of Man in Integrity, by viewing the Power, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs of God ſhining in theſe things, to give Him the Honour & Praiſe thereof; which in all likelihood was a principal part of the employment of the Sabbath, then given to him: and it is ſtill a work which gracious Souls will delight to be ſpeculating; Pſal. 111. 1, 2. --- *I will praiſe the Lord with my whole heart, in the aſſembly of the upright, and in the congregation. The works of the Lord are great, ſought out of all them that have pleaſure therein.*

WE may here then take a brief view of the order of theſe things, and therein the diſtribution of the ſeveral general kinds of Beings, according to their various natures, as they are deſcribed, *Gen.* 1. and according as their natures are diſcoverable from the method in which they were created. And here the firſt diſtribution which we meet with in the firſt days work, is, that of the Creatures into conſtant and inconſtant Natures: and the diſtinct nature of each of theſe is to be hence gathered: The former of theſe is expreſſed under the name of *Heaven*, the other of *Earth*: both of theſe words are here uſed Tropically, and do comprehend diſtributively under them the whole Creation: and it is to be obſerved, that there is no more mentioned in that Hiſtory concerning Heaven, but what is in *ver.* 1. telling us, that *God created it in the beginning*; but the reſt of the Chapter is an Explication of the Earth, and the particular manner of the Production of the ſeveral Speices in it: whence we conclude theſe two ſorts of Creatures; *viz.* ſome that were made perfect immediately, in the firſt inſtant of time, which we call *Conſtant* Natures; others that were made and perfected Mediately or by Degrees, having firſt their Matter prepar'd, and then their Forms given them, which we call *Inconſtant* Natures.

I. *CONSTANT* Natures are ſuch as were made with their principles in them ſtanding together, and perfect in the firſt Moment of time: they had both their Material and formal Principles at once concreated in the ſame Individual Time: and therefore their Principles ſtood together, their exiſtence was compleat from the firſt beginning: there was no world, no creature, no beginning of time before theſe were made: they were made with Time, not in ſucceſſion of Time, and therefore are as ancient as Time it ſelf: That and they began at once: and hence it follows that they are not ſubjects of Generation and Corruption, as Inconſtant Natures are: God having made them Immediately of nothing, perfect, they have no Antecedent Principle to be reſolved into, and therefore no force but Omnipotency can alter their Being, or take it from them: they are therefore perpetual or æviternal; there was no time before them, nor ſhall there be any after them: They are Ingenerable, can acquire no new form; being always enduced without, ever ſince they were: and Incorruptible, their Being is ſo compact, that no power but God's can disjoin it; as will be cleared concerning them in particular. Theſe conſtant Natures then are of two ſorts; *viz.* The *Third Heaven*, and the *Angels*; both of theſe are included in the word *Heaven*.

1. THE *Third Heaven*, and no other is here meant; for we have an account afterwards given of the Creation of other Heavens; *viz.* The *Ætherial*, and *Aerial*, but this Empyrean Heaven hath no other mention in the Hiſtory but here: beſides theſe Heavens are Inconſtant natures, and lyable to corruption, Heb. 1. 11, 12. *They ſhall periſh*, &c. but this is a conſtant Nature, called therefore an *Eternal Houſe*, 2 Cor. 5. 1.

2. THE *Angels* alſo are Metonymically contained in this word *Heaven*; being the Original Inhabitants of this Place, and of a Nature very ſuitable & proper to it. That Angels were Created, is certain; they are ſecond Beings, they were not before time; they are conſtant Natures, and therefore it moſt agrees to the order of Creation, that things of a ſort ſhould be made together; beſides they are called the *Morning Stars*, Job 38. 7. and it ſeems to refer not ſo much to the Morning of the World in general, as the Morning or Beginning of the Creation; eſpecially if we conſider that they are there brought in as a *Chorus* ſinging & ſhouting, while the frame of Inconſtant natures were making; beſides in the Context we have the diſtinguiſhing Notes between Heaven & Earth; one whereof is that the Earth was void, *i. e.* of Inhabitants; intimating that Heaven was ſupplied with theſe, which could be no other but the *Angels*. We may therefore here take a particular account of each.

I. OF the Third Heaven take this Deſcription: *It is the Holy Habitation of God, built by Him in the firſt moment of Time; filled and furniſhed with all Delights needful to Everlaſting Bleſſedneſs, and where God is to be more immediately enjoyed.* Here are theſe things obſervable;

1. *THERE is ſuch a Place or Heaven as this.* The Scripture tells us of it, in ſuch Terms as can be underſtood of no other; witneſs the Epithets put upon it; 2 Cor. 5. 1. ---*A building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.* And ſee, *Heb.* 11. 15, 16. Beſides, the *Angels*, as well as other Creatures muſt

have

have their proper Place, which is here, or no where; Matth. 18 10. ---*In heaven their Angels do always behold the face of my father.* It is therefore one Penalty of fallen Angels, to be excluded from hence; Jude *ver.* 6. *They kept not their firſt Eſtate, but left their own Habitation*, &c.

2. *IT is God's Holy Habitation*: So called, *Iſa.* 63: 15. It is his Palace or Throne, *Pſal.* 33. 13, 14. Not that His Infinite Eſſence is here comprehended; but partly becauſe it is the moſt Glorious Place in the World, hence moſt ſuitable to be His *Throne*, Iſa. 66. 1. partly, becauſe here He makes moſt of his Glory known; here Saints *ſee him as he is*, 1 Joh. 3. 2. It is therefore an Holy Place; both for it's Native Purity, having never been defiled by Sin; 1 Pet. 1. 4. 'Tis *an Inheritance undefiled*; therefore the *now* Devils, *once* Angels, fell not there, Heaven not admitting any *pollution* into it, *Rev.* 21.27. And becauſe it is conſecrated by God, to be His Dwelling place; 2 Chron. 30. ult. ---*His Holy dwelling place, even Heaven.*

3. *IT was built by God Himſelf in the firſt moment of Time.* Hence that, 2 Cor.5 1.---*We have a Building of God*---. And ſo, *Heb.* 11.10. *Gen.*1.1. It is then made of no pre-exiſting Matter, & conſequently an Incorruptible Place, 1 Pet. 1.4. *An Inheritance Incorruptible*: Hence ſubject to no Changes; 'tis an *Eternal Houſe*; it's Creator hath made it to be an Houſe that will not decay or moulder; it is a *continuing City*, Heb. 11. 10.

4. *IT was filled & furniſhed with all Delights needful to Everlaſting Bleſſedneſs.* It being to be the place for Entertainment of God's Friends and Children for ever; it was therefore in Infinite Wiſdom ſuited for it, to the beſt advantage that might be. For,

1. IT is a moſt *Glorious* Place: It is made of the moſt pure and ſubtle Matter of all Bodies in the World; the moſt curious and ſtately Earthly Palace, is but a Dungeon compared with it; all the Excellency of the lower World, is not fit to ſet off the Glory of the Third Heaven, ſo much as by a *Shadow*. It is ſo glorious and ſhining, that it needs no *Sun* to give light there; precious Stones and Pearls are there trodden on; *Rev.* 21. 18, —— 23.

2. IT is a moſt *Spacious* Place. If any Place could contain God, it were this; 1 Kings 8. 27. ---*But, behold the Heaven, and Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee* ---. It is of ſufficient Capacity to entertain all the Heirs of Glory; a *great City*, Rev. 21. 10. It graſps in its Concavity, the whole frame of Inconſtant Natures; the Earth is but a *point* to it; the Starry Heaven, as large as it is, is but a *ſtrait room* compared with it.

3. IT is *filled with all poſſible Delights*, and *tranſcendent Pleaſures*. All that this World affords; Food, Raiment, Muſick, Fountains, Rivers, Gardens *&c.* are but a dark ſhadow of the Pleaſures of this Place; it was made for Delights, and theſe all of them Full and Eternal, Pſal. 16.*ult.*---*In thy preſence is fullneſs of Joy, at thy right hand are pleaſures for evermore.*

4. THE *titles given it in Scripture ſhew its excellency.* 'Tis called *Paradiſe*, Luk.23.43. An *Houſe not made with hands*, 2 Cor. 5. 1. A *City whoſe builder & maker is God*; Heb.11.10. The *City of the Living God*, Heb.12.22, The *Father's Houſe*, Joh.14:2. The *Third Heaven*, 2 Cor.12.2.

5. *HERE God is more Immediately to be enjoyed.* Here He is to be ſeen in great Majeſty, and ſtately Glory for ever. When the Children of God come to Heaven, they approach near Him, into His preſence; there the thick glaſs is taken away, and the beatifical Viſion is compleated, 1 Cor.13.12. *Now we ſee through a glaſs darkly, but then face to face.* But who can declare, that hath not ſeen it, the glorioufneſs of this Fabrick?

II. OF the Angels take this Deſcription: *They are a great Company of Spiritual Natures, or Subſtances, Created on purpoſe to be miniſtring Spirits unto God.* We may take the Explication in theſe particulars;

1. THAT the *Angels were Created*, is evident by Scripture, which numbers them among God's Creatures; *Pſal.*148.2, with 5*th.* Col.1.16. *For by him were all things created that are in Heaven*, &c. That they were Created in the firſt moment of Time, together with the Third Heaven, we have heard.

2. THERE is a *great Company* of them: Luk. 2. 13. --*A multitude of the heavenly hoſt.* Matth. 26. 53. ---*More than twelve Legions* ---. Heb. 12. 22. --- *An innumerable Company*---. In regard of us they are Innumerable, tho' God knows both their Number and their Names.

3. THEY are *Spiritual Natures* or *Subſtances*. They are *Natures*, i. e. They have both *Matter* and *Form*; *Form* they have, becauſe they are eſſentially diſtinguiſhed each from other: *Gabriel* is not another Angel. And to think them *Immaterial* is abſurd; for what ſerves the *Form* for? Beſides they have a common Kind, *Heb.* 2. 16.---*The Nature of Angels*---. Which Community flows from hence. They are capable of Torment; they are not a mere *Act*, as God is, but have a Protention; they are Quantity, and not Infinite; though they can contract and dilate themſelves, yet they are limited to place, and have a local motion, which is not *inſtantaneous*, but *ſucceſſive*, Dan. 9. 21. But they are Spiritual, and therefore In-corporeal; they have the fineſt *Matter*; our ſenſes cannot perceive them; Luk. 24. 39. --- *A ſpirit hath not fleſh and bones* ---. If ever they become Viſible, it is by aſſuming a Body, for the Time, without any perſonal Union: And being Spirits, they are Perſons, inaſmuch as they are Individual Subſtances of a Rational Nature, or Cauſes by Counſel, ſubſiſting of themſelves, and hence are capable of happineſs or miſery.

4. THEY were Created on purpoſe to be *Miniſtring Spirits unto God.* Here conſider,

1. THEIR *Miniſtry it ſelf*, aſſerted. Heb. 1. 14. *Are they not all Miniſtring Spirits, ſent forth to miniſter for them who ſhall be heirs of ſalvation.* And it is two fold,

1. TO *Celebrate the Glory of God.* Pſal.103. 20. *Bleſs the Lord ye his Angels*, &c. Pſal.148.2. *Praiſe him all ye his Angels* ---. To advance his great Name in his Works; hence that, Luk. 2. 13,14. ---*A multitude of the heavenly hoſt praiſing*

ing God, ſaying, Glory to God in the higheſt ---. The Heaven paſſively glorifies God; but theſe do it actively; waiting at his Throne, and confeſſing with Adoration; *Iſa.* 6. 1, 2, 3.

2. TO *fulfill his Commands.* Pſal. 103. 20. --- *His Angels that do his commandments*, &c. It is the Honour of the great King, to have theſe noble Perſonages waiting on his Throne; and their Employment is about Matters of greateſt Moment: Hence they have great Names put upon them, Thrones, Principalities, *&c.* They do all according to the Pleaſure of the moſt high; Ezek. 1. 12.---*Whither the ſpirit was to go, they went*---. And their ſpecial Miniſtry is for the good of the Children of God; Heb. 1. 14. *Are they not all miniſtring ſpirits, ſent forth to miniſter for them who ſhall be heirs of ſalvation? Pſal.* 91. 11. For whoſe ſakes they intermeddle with the Affairs of Kingdoms, and interpoſe to defeat the Plots of Potentates againſt God's People, *Dan.* 10. 13, 20. Hence they attend all the Wheels of Providence.

2. THEIR *Fitneſs* for this Miniſtry appeareth in thoſe Endowments that God beſtowed upon them in their Creation, fitting them to this Service;

1. GREAT *Clearneſs of Underſtanding*, enabling them fully to diſcern God's Mind. They underſtand in a way of Reaſon, and by Revelation, and ſee Effects in the Cauſes, *&c. Eph.* 3. 10. But in this way they are the moſt intelligent Creatures; being Spirits: Hence compared to *Eagles*, as being Inhabitants of Heaven, dwelling at Court, *Matth.* 18. 10.

2. GREAT *Freedom of Will*, fitting them for the Service of God, in a moſt enlarged manner: Hence they are ready to ſerve God, *Pſal.* 103. 20. Hence they *delight to do the Will of God* faithfully and throughly, *Ezek.* 1. 9, 12. And *Love God's People*: Are *theirs*, Matth. 18. 10. And *Rejoice in their Welfare*, Luk. 15. 10.

3. GREAT *Strength*, that they be able to carry thro' their Work without Reſiſtance. They are Conſtant Natures, and therefore are very ſtrong; and they are Spirits, and ſo no other Creatures can grapple with them: *One Angel* can Cope with an *Army* of *Men*. We ſee what Work they make where they come; *Matth.* 28. beg.

4. GREATEST *Activity*, that they may with all ſpeed perform the Commands of God. Their Spiritual Nature makes them ſo: Nothing can ſtop their Courſe: They are *winged*, Ezek. 1. 6. They are to ride Poſt from Heaven to Earth: They have the largeſt Journeys to go; and the King's Buſineſs requires haſt, and the Neceſſity of God's People is very urgent, and calls for greateſt Celerity; *Dan.* 9. 21.

USE 1 FROM the conſideration of the *Third Heaven*; Learn,

1. THE *great Love of God to His Choſen*, in providing a Heaven for them, before they were. This was the firſt work of Efficiency that God wrought: Before he made Man, he made Proviſion for him; and that not only for his *Temporary Abode on Earth*, but for his *Eternal Habitation*. What Tho'ts then ſhould God's Children entertain of Him, who had ſuch Tho'ts of good Will for them, in the Days of Eternity?

2. *WHO they are that are moſt fit for Heaven, and like to go thither when they dye*: They are *Holy Ones*, ſuch as are ſanctified by the Spirit of God, and ſo made meet for the Inheritance. Groundleſs are the hopes of *Unholy Perſons*, to have any part here: Heaven indeed is not for their Turn, neither the Place, nor the Company, nor the Employment; nor can it give them Entertainment, but would ſpue them out, if they were in it. This conſideration invites all to Holineſs, that would not be aſhamed of their Hope; 1 Joh. 3. 3. *He that hath this hope purifieth himſelf.*

3. IS there ſuch a Place, *what do we Here?* Doth it not juſtly reprove our neglect of ſeeking an Intereſt in it? It is to be obtained, being part of the *Prize that is ſet before us*; and we have need of it: Here is no Reſt to be enjoyed in this evil World, nor is it a Place for us to abide in: And how deſirable a Place is it for us, where alone we can be Happy?

4. WE may well *congratulate the Felicity of God's Children*, who have ſuch a Place provided for them, after all their Labours and Travels. Bear couragiouſly all the hardſhips of this Wilderneſs; Heaven will make you amends for all.

USE 2. FROM the conſideration of the *Angels*; Learn,

1. WHAT *little need God hath of our Service.* If we ſpeak of his declarative Glory; ſee what an innumerable Company of Glorious Servitors are always attending on his Throne, ſpeedily, chearfully, conſtantly doing his Will; what a Wonder then is it that he will accept of ſuch dull, cold, and liſtleſs Services as ours are?

2. WHAT *Royal Perſons God's People are*; for whom God hath provided ſuch Miniſters of State, to attend upon them: How honourable are they in God's Eyes, and how ſafe from Evil, Pſal. 91. 10, 11. *There ſhall no evil befall thee, for he ſhall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.* How dangerous then is it for any to dare to meddle with them, or offer to do them any Injury?

3. WHAT is the *higheſt Glory of the nobleſt Creatures.* The greateſt Honours they are capable of, is, to be Miniſters to, and Attendants upon God: This is the Honour of Angels, and it is their Glory, that they do it with the greateſt Freedom: And would we be like them, let it be our greateſt Ambition to imitate them herein; endeavouring to get our Souls as the Chariots of *Aminadab*, running with all Chearfulneſs the Race of God's Commandments.

[OCTOBER 7. 1690.]

SERMON *XXXVI.*

II. INCONSTANT Natures were ſuch as were made Perfect by Degrees, in their material & formal Principles. Theſe are expreſſed under the Name of *Earth*, Gen. 1. 1. Theſe were not made & finiſhed in an Inſtant; but Succeſſively: Here then are *Two Things* to be conſidered, 1. The Material Principle of Theſe. 2. The ſe-

veral Forms or particular Kinds of Beings, which were Created out of it.

[1.] CONCERNING the *Material* Principle, called *Earth*, *v.* 1. *Waters & Deep*, *v.* 2. Take these Conclusions.

(1.) THERE was a *Pre-existing Matter* of Inconstant Natures. I mean a Matter which was first made, in common, for them all, before they had any particular Forms: so that they were not made Perfect at first, nor yet Individuated; which is the Foundation of all the Differences between Constant & Inconstant Natures: These are therefore compared to a Garment, *Psal.* 102.26. which is first in the Wooll, *&c.* Hence, *Gen* 1. we have this Matter described, *v.* 1, 2. *God created the Earth*; *and the Earth was without Form & Void*: And the several things that were made out of it, in the sequell. That there is such a common Matter is evident, by the Transmutation of things, as Elements, and Nutriments, which could not be if they had not one common Subject: so that the foundation of all the Changes, and Turnings, Generations and Corruptions, Beginnings & Perishings of all the Creatures in the lower World, is laid in their very Creation.

(2.) THIS *Matter was made together with the Third Heaven and Angels* in the first Moment of Time. Gen. 1.1. *In the Beginning God created the Heaven & the Earth*, &c. because else there had been a Vacuity, an empty Place in the World, without something to fill it up; which is a Contradiction; Place being nothing but a Relation to the second Being, having but a Modal Existence, as the thing is conceived to be in it: as also because the Material Principle is durable, and remains for ever, whatever Changes the Creature goes through in its Forms.

(3.) THIS Matter was at first *without Form, and Void, and covered with Darkness*, Gen. 1.2. And in these things it differed from the Heavens, or Constant Natures.

1. WITHOUT *Form*: Not that it had no Form at all; but it had no compleat Act of those Potential Forms which were afterwards either educed out of it, or introduced into it: It had no Form, because there were no Kinds of Things Created out of it, but all lay in it, as a Mass or Lump without distinction.

2. *VOID*; *i.e.* of Inhabitants: And this follows from the former; for being without Form, it was not Habitable: There could be no Birds in the Air, *&c.* before there was any Air, *&c.* A thing must stand out of all second Causes, before it can be a Subject for another thing; but here were only two, *Efficient* and *Matter*. The two words used in the 2*d. v.* in other Scriptures, do imply the utmost desolation, hideousness, emptiness, and vacuity of a thing: Deut. 32. 10. *A waste howling wilderness*. And so, *Psal.* 107.40. and *Isai.* 34. 11.

3. *COVERED with Darkness*. It was an Abyss, a Chaos, a Place of Confusion: And this also follows from the former; for having no Form, it had no Qualities, which flow from the Form; & hence no Light, which is a Quality: Light therefore was afterward Created: And this Commends to us the Infinite Wisdom of God in bringing so comely a World out of so rude a Heap.

(4.) THIS Matter was *maintained in this State by the Miraculous Power of the Spirit of God* for the space of Twelve Hours. It remained in this formless Vacuity for the space of Twelve Hours, *v.* 2. Darkness is mentioned, to give us to understand, how long it remained without Form and Void: This Darkness therefore is called *Night*, *v.* 5. so that the Time of the Night & this Darkness was all one; which if the World were created in the Æquinox, was Twelve Hours, Joh. 11. 9. *Are there not twelve hours in the Day*. And all this while it was sustained by the Miraculous Power of the Spirit, *v.* 2. *The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the Waters*. The Holy-Ghost is here intended; and this Action is ascribed to him, in allusion to Birds that sit to hatch their Eggs, and to bring forth their Young, and flutter over them to cherrish them in their feeble condition: The first Matter could not exist, with any natural Power, without an Essential Form; it must needs therefore be sustained by a Miracle. He did, as it were cherrish the first Matter, and prepare it for its several Forms.

USE. THE consideration of *the First Matter* may serve to *Humble us*: Let us sometimes look back to our Original, see the formless Lump that we once lay in, and acknowledge it to the Wisdom & Good Will of the Work-man, to make the difference between us and the most deformed: Their deformity is not their fault, but the Creators pleasure: We were hewn out of as knotty & crooked Timber as they. Yea, learn here that we are Brothers & Sisters to Worms, and Toads, and Vermine, Job 17.14. *I have said to corruption thou art my Father*; *to the worm thou art my Mother, and my Sister*. Psal. 22.6. They were made of as good Stuff as we are, only the Goodness of God hath laid out more Curiosity about us.

[2.] NOW let us take a view of the *several Kinds* of Inconstant Natures, which were formed out of this first Matter: And we may follow them in the several Distributions which the Order of their Creation will give us light for; and the First of these is,

INCONSTANT Natures are either *Elements* or *Elementaries*. The former of these are *simple* Natures, the other are *compounded*; these are *Principles*, those things *principled* of them: It was therefore necessary that the Elements should be Created first, because other Beings were to be made of them: These therefore had their Essential Forms made Immediately of Nothing.

THESE *Elements* are distributed according to their Scituation, into the *Upper* & *Lower*; some ascending & moving toward the Circumference, others descending, and tending to the Center of the World.

1. THE *Upper Elements* are those whose Forms being the most agile, do naturally tend to ascend: They have the noblest & most active Forms, and are therefore called the Heavens.

THESE are Two, *viz.* the *Fire* and the *Air*: and we have the account of the Creation of both.

1. THE *Element of Fire* is expressed in it's Creation, under the notion of Light; Gen. 1. 3. *And God said, Let there be Light, and there was Light*. That being an eminent and most obser-

vable

vable Property of it. Light it ſelf is a Quality; & cannot be out of a Subject: The Subject of this Quality, is metonymically intended, & that is *Fire*.

FIRE is the *Higheſt, and Hotteſt Element*, which being Condenſate, will burn and ſhine.

THAT there is ſuch an Element, appears, becauſe there are Four Prime Qualities, of which *Heat* is one, whoſe Subject is *Fire*; from the Influence of this Quality into the Earth, for the generation of Minerals; and becauſe our Fire flies upward towards its own Place.

THIS Element is the *Higheſt*, next the Third Heaven: The *Primum Mobile*, and *Chryſtalline* Heaven placed above it, are Fictions of Philoſophers: The Starry Heavens are feigned to be above it, whereas they are indeed it; though Philoſophers miſtaking it for the Third Heaven, made it Quinteſſential; It is the Element of the *Stars*, as the Water is of the *Fiſhes*: It is moſt Light and Active; Hence Angels are compared to it, Pſal. 104. 4. *Who maketh his Angels --- a flaming fire.* It is the *Hotteſt*. Heat is the Prime Quality; It hath the moſt active and ſtrong Form of all; It acts with the moſt Force which Activity is from it's Heat, by reaſon whereof it diſſolves other Bodies; 2 Pet. 3. 10. ---*The Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat*, &c. And when it is condenſed, or compounded together, it burns and ſhines, both of which we obſerve by Experience: It is therefore to be conceived, that God did ſo condenſe ſome part of this Element, to enlighten the World, and make a ſeparation between Day & Night, for the firſt three Days before the Sun, &c. were made; from hence alſo it is, that the lower World is ſupplied with the Fire, by which ſo many things are done, and without which, the Life of Man would be very miſerable.

USE. WHEN therefore we find any Comfort or Benefit, by any of thoſe Uſes to which this Element ſerves, *Let us Bleſs God for it*; let it lead us to him, and help us to ſtudy, how we may improve it to his Glory; let us uſe this Light, and improve this Warmth, in the Service of God, and not of Satan, and our own Luſts; elſe the more we are benefited by them, the greater will our Guilt be.

2. THE *Element of Air*, is deſcribed in it's Creation, under the Title of the *Firmament*, Gen. 1. 6,7,8. And was the ſubject of the ſecond Days Creation. The Word ſignifies ſomething that is ſpread abroad; Hence that, Iſa. 40. 22. *He ſtretcheth out the Heavens as a curtain, & ſpreadeth them out as a Tent to dwell in.* The Air is an *Higher* Element, enclining to aſcend, being the moiſteſt of all Elements. It is an higher Element, placed next to the *Fire*, and reacheth to the Starry Regions, naturally enclined to move upward: It is one of God's *Aſcentions*, Amos 9:6. *It is He that buildeth His Stories* [Heb. *Aſcentions*] *in the Heavens*. It is the *Second Story* in the World of Inconſtant Natures; tho' it alſo deſcends to fill a Place, and prevent a Vacuity, which ariſeth from its Fluidity. Hence it is the *Moiſteſt* of all; This is it's Prime Quality, enclining it readily to flow every way, and take up the Figure of any other body, and thereby it is ſuitably accommodated, for Living Creatures to move & breath in: This is called Heaven, Ver. 8. *And God called the Firmament Heaven.* The Word ſignifies there, *Waters*, becauſe the Water is there drawn up into Clouds, and thence returned in Rain, &c. It's Uſe is manifold:

IT is the Subject recipient, and diferent of the Light & Darkneſs; The lower World is enlightned from the upper, through it, being *diaphanous*: It is the Subject of the *Meteors*, which are carryed about in it; as the Wind, Clouds, Rain, Snow, &c. It is the Inſtrument of preſerving and cheriſhing the Lives of ſeveral Creatures: We breath in it, and receive Breath from it: It is the Medium of every *Sound*, and thro' which it is conveyed: So that we are beholden to it for the Liberty to exerciſe our nobleſt Senſes of Seeing & Hearing.

USE. HERE is therefore a *great deal of God's Goodneſs* to us to be ſeen, in this Element, Pſal. 19. 1. ---*The Firmament ſheweth his handy work.* It is a piece of Workmanſhip becoming the Author of it: By it he proves himſelf to be God; Iſa. 40. 22. *It is he that ſtretcheth out the Heavens* ---. And all the Kindneſs we receive by it; the Light it brings to us, the Breath we enjoy by it, the Motion we are priviledged with by reaſon of it, the Communication of our ſelves in Speech to one another; call for our Thankfullneſs to God, and bid us to make it to reſound with the Eccho of his Praiſes.

2. THE *Lower Elements*, whoſe Forms being leſs active, are enclined to deſcend toward the Center, are Two, *viz.* The *Water* and the *Earth*, whoſe Creation is jointly deſcribed, *Gen.* 1. 9. And theſe are called God's *Bundles*, Amos 9.6. *And hath founded His Troup* [Heb. *Bundle*] *in the Earth.* becauſe they are bound up together in one Globe.

1. THE *Water* is a lower Element, the moſt Cold, and of a congregating nature.

IT is a *Lower* Element, it naturally deſcends; It is ſuppoſed naturally to be next the Air; But God hath placed it in the Creation together with the Earth; and bound it up with Bars, that it overflow it not, *Job* 38. 8, &c.

IT is the *Coldeſt*. That is its Prime Quality; And for this reaſon it is in Scripture noted by this *Epithet*, Matth. 10. 42. --- *A cup of Cold Water* ---. It is therefore often put in oppoſition to Fire, in reſpect of it's Heat, as being moſt contrary to it.

HENCE it is of a *congregating nature*, which is by vertue of its Coldneſs, which contracts and draws things together; as the Fire ſeparates them. The Benefits of this Element are great; not only in the Compoſition of Bodies, but alſo in that it affords us a great part of our Nutriment: It quencheth our Thirſt, it ſupplies the Earth with Fertility, it affords Traffick and Commerce among Men.

2. THE *Earth* is a lower Element *moſt dry*: Hence from this Quality it received its Name, Gen. 1. 10. *And God called the Dry Land, Earth.* This is the loweſt of all, and therefore is the Center of the World, and by vertue of its Dryneſs, it is inclined to keep its own Figure & Bounds; in which reſpect it is moſt contrary to the Air, which, by reaſon of its moiſture, gives way to every other Body: And by vertue of this it is a

fit Place for the Creatures to walk upon; and hence the usual Name in Scripture, comes of a Word that signifies, to tread upon; but for which Man could have no Habitation in it.

THESE two Elements are so molded together as to make one Globe, usually called the Earth; being a round Body, lying upon its own Center; & that not by a Miracle, but by natural Disposition put into it in Creation, Job 26. 7. *He hangeth the Earth upon Nothing.* See, 38. 4, 6 And these are interwoven, that all the Inhabitants of the lower World enjoy the benefit of them both; the great Sea washing every Continent, and secretly conveying its Waters in the Caverns of the Earth; and by the Clouds, which as so many veins run through it in Springs, Brooks, and Rivers, *Eccl.* 1. 7. *Job* 38. 16. *Psal.* 104. 5. *&c.*

USE, 1. HERE is matter of *Admiration at the Wisdom and Power & Goodness of God.* His *Wisdom* in hanging this Earth upon Nothing, so firm and fast; His *Power* in laying restraint upon the great Body of Waters, that they return not to drown the Earth; and His *Goodness* in so seating & disposing of both, as to make them commodious for the Entertainment of Men, Beasts, Fowls, and Fishes.

USE, 2. WHAT *little Reason hath he to be Proud, who hath most of this Earth in his Possession?* It is but a little in it self, but a point of a point; and it is but little worth, being made to be trodden under Foot, and not to be set up in the Heart.

IN the next place we proceed to consider of the Creation of the *Elementaries*; which are Inconstant Natures, made up of the Elements mixed one with another, Gen. 2. 19. *Out of the Ground the Lord God formed every Beast of the field, and every Fowl of the Air.* By Ground we are to understand these Four Principles. That other things were made of them appears, both by the Quantities of them, which these partake in, (*Job* 4. 19.) as also by the Resolution of them into these: Infinite Wisdom contrived them by several Mixtures, to give different Forms to them, whence proceeds the divers Kinds of them, according to the Creator's Pleasure.

THESE *Elementaries* are wont to be distributed into *Imperfectly* and *Perfectly* mixt Bodies.

1. THOSE of an *Imperfect Mixture* are first in order of Nature in Creation, because God in making of Inconstant Natures proceeded from things more *Imperfect*, to things more *Perfect*. They are called *Imperfect*, not as if they were not Perfect in their Kind; for they were also the Works of God, and good, which is their Perfection: But their Mixture is not so firm, stable and permanent, but soon made, soon dissolved, instable, *Jude v.* 12. These are generally known by the name of *Meteors*; which, though not named in the History of the Creation, yet are to be understood, as the Workmanship of the Third Day; made next to the Elements: Chap. 2. 6. *There went up a Mist from the Earth.* *i. e.* on the Third Day; and now the Firmament attained its End and Use; whence a double Approbation of the Work of this Day, *Gen.* 1. 11, 12. These are a part of God's Creation, Jer. 10. 13. *He causeth the Vapour to ascend, He maketh Lightnings with Rain, and bringeth forth the Wind out of His treasures.* They are Bodies soon conceived; a Cloud as big as a Man's Hand will presently spread the Sky. Their Mixture is very slighty; Snow & Hail do but very little differ from Water: Hence they are quickly dissolved and turned to their Principles, Jam. 4. 14. — *A Vapour appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.* Some of these are *Fiery*, as Sparks or falling Stars, burning Spears, Swords, Arrows, Thunder & Lightning; Others *Airy* as the Wind and Earthquakes; others *Watry*, as Clouds, Mists, Dews, Hoar-Frosts, Rain, *&c.* To these we may add Rainbows, perpendicular Lines in the Clouds, Parelions, *&c.* Their use is to purge the Air; Partly the Nutrition and Generation of the Fruits of the Earth, *Hos.* 2. 21. Partly for Signs, *Luke.* 21. 25. Some are natural, some preternatural.

USE 1. EVEN *these short liv'd things discover abundance of the Glory of God*; both in their *Production & Operation*: These therefore are called upon to *Praise God*; Psal. 148. 8. And how much doth the Psalmist insist on *One* of them? *Psal.* 29. By these God sometimes seems to be rending the Earth in pieces, and setting the World on Fire: These should make us Fear God.

2. THESE shew, *Our Dependance upon God, and how much we are engaged to him for This Part of the Creation*: We cannot live without them: None can bestow them upon us but He; Jer. 14. 22. *Can the vanities of the Gentiles cause Rain? Or can the Heavens give showers? Art not thou he, O Lord our God? Therefore we will wait upon thee; for thou hast made all these things.* They all obey him, and are at his Call; Psal. 148. 8. *Fire & hail, snow & vapour, stormy wind fulfilling his word.* We must ask of him the *Former* and *Latter* Rain; And all the Benefit which acrues to us from them, calls for our thankful and cheerful serving of him.

[NOVEMBER 4. 1690.]

SERMON *XXXVII.*

2. *PERFECTLY mixt Bodies* are such which have the Mixture of the Elements more *close & compact* in them. In the former, they were but tack'd together, but in these they are strongly fastened, and therefore not so readily dissolved again; and hence more durable. These are of Two sorts, *Inanimates* and *Animates*; things without Life, and things with Life: Some have only a Body, others have both a Body and a Soul. And,

[1.] *INANIMATES*, or things *without Life*, are usually known by the general and comprehensive Name of *Minerals*: Which may be Defined; *Elementaries perfectly mixt, consisting only of a Body.* The Creation of these is not vouchsafed an expres mention in the History, *Gen.* 1. But it is implyed & comprehended in the Third Days Work; being made in and together with the Earth: These are Creatures of God, and made

made also to shew forth his Glory; and therefore must have a room allowed them in the Creation; and here it is most proper, being of things perfectly mixt, of the most imperfect Nature: We have accordingly an Account of their Creation and Nature, Job 28.beg. *Surely there is a vein for Silver, and a place for Gold; Iron is taken out of the Earth, & Brass is molten out of the Stone.* These are God's Subterranean Treasures, hidden under ground from the *Vulture's* Eye, and yet are found out by the search of Men's greedy Desire.

OF these *Minerals* some are accounted more *Watry, viz.* 1. *Metals*; and these are either more *Pure*, such as Gold and Silver; These are two adored Metals with which the God of this World seduceth Men into Idolatry; Or more *Impure*, as Iron, Copper, Tin & Lead, which are very serviceable for the Use of Men. 2. *Mineral Juices*, such as Brimstone, Allom, *&c.*

SOME are more *Earthy*, as, 1. *Stones*; some whereof are esteemed *Precious*; and whether for Colour, Rarity, or curious Composure, are adornized and used for Ornament; Or *Common*, which lye in the Streets without being regarded. 2. Precious kinds of *Earth*, such as *Terra Sigillata*, *Armenia*, &c These were at first made in the Earth, and its womb was then impregnated, and made fruitful of them, which are continually generated by Influence of the Sun, on the Places naturally adapted for them.

USE 1. HERE also *the Wisdom & Goodness of God* further commend themselves to us. His *Wisdom* in the various mixing the same Matter into so many Forms & Kinds; some so excellent, others so mean; Wisdom in putting into each of these a particular Goodness, and making it some way or other serviceable: Some for Ornament, others for Improvement, and Utensils, for the Comfort & Convenience of Man; Some for the advantage of Commerce; Others for Medicine: The course Iron, dull & heavy Lead, are as necessary as the purer Gold and Silver: Pebbles have their service not less than Jewels. His *Goodness* also in laying in so liberally of this Provision for the Use of Man; not meerly for his Necessity, in such things without which his Life would be very uncomfortable; nor meerly for his Convenience, in these portable Metals by which Traffick is rendred more easy; but also for his Delight, in pleasing their childish Age with such things, as when they are come to perfect Age, they will as much despise, as Men do Children's baubles.

USE 2. SEE here the *different Esteem which God & Man put upon these things.* God would not so much as give them a Name or Mention in the Works of Creation, but passed them over with silence: But Men make their greatest Discourses about them, either repining at the Want of them, or boasting themselves in their Enjoyment of them, or contriving how they may compass them. God laid them low, placed them in the Bowels of the Earth, to be trodden upon; But Man adores them, sets them up in his Heart, and worships these, advancing them as high as God, and setting them in his Throne, Psal. 135. 15. *The Idols of the heathen are Silver & Gold, the work of men's hands.*

[2.] *ANIMATES*, or things *with Life*, are such things as were Created with both a *Body* and a *Soul*. Life is properly the Act of the Soul upon the Body; It therefore consists in the union of these two; Gen. 35. 18. --- *As her soul was in departing, for she died.* Life then consists in Union, which Union is made by an Act; for which reason Life is called an Act, which is the Principle of Operation: Here then we may consider something in general of the Nature of a *Soul*; It is a *Quickning Spirit*, affording *Nutrition* to a thing, and *Self-Motion* in its proper place.

1. IT is a *Spirit*: Not Immaterial as some, for then it would be God; Nor yet are Souls of any Inferiour Being Quintessential, but Elementary, made of the more refined Particles of them; and are therefore called Spirits.

2. A *Quickning Spirit.* Hence we oppose Quick & Dead: When Soul & Body are united, they are said to be *Quick*; when separated, *Dead*: And the more Spirits, the more Quick.

3. THAT which affords *Nutrition* to a thing: It useth the bodily Organs fitted thereto, whereby it attracts that Nourishment which is needed, and makes use of it for Preservation and Augmentation: There is a Power in the Creature to do this; and this discovers a Principle of Life.

4. IT gives to the Creature *Self-Motion* in its proper place: It gives it Self-Motion; Meteors are moved, but not by themselves, but an adventitious Impulse: *Life* principally consists in Self-Motion, *Death* in the Cessation of that Power; Other things may move when moved, but these have an internal Principle of it: And it is in its proper place: Elements move towards their place when out of it, but when they come, there they rest; but this is not Life, but a Principle of Gravity & Levity: But Living things have a Spring of Motion in their proper places; which is an Effect & Discovery of Life.

NOW Living things may be distributed according to the Kind of Life which they live; and so, they are either such as have a *Simple*, or such as have a *Compound* Life: An account is given of both these, *Gen.* 1.

I. THOSE with a *Simple* Life are first to be handled; for the *Compound* Life supposeth the *Simple*, as being made out of it by Composition.

THINGS that enjoy only a Simple Life are of Two sorts: They are such as only have a *Vegetative*, or only a *Motive* Life: Of these,

1. *VEGETATIVES* are the First; and are therefore first named in the History, being Created on the Third Day, together with the Earth, *Gen.* 1. 11, 12. and they are of the two the more Imperfect. These are called by the general name of *Plants*; and may be described, such things as have only a *Vegetative Life*: They grow up of the Earth, that at first by a Divine

Fiat

Fiat brought them forth, and that with a Principle of Vegetation in them, Ver. 11. *Whose seed is in it self.* Which Principle is the *Vegetative Soul*; and in it there are several Faculties suitable for this sort of Life: There is the Faculty of Nutrition, Attractive, Potentive, Concretive, Expulsive: There are Organs fitted for this Service; the Root, Body, Bark, &c. Hence Augmentation & Generation: By the former the Plant grows to it's Stature; by the latter it propagates its Kind. *Plants* are of Two sorts, the *Herb*, and the *Tree*, ver. 11. The *Herb* is a lesser and more tender Plant; and hence is of a shorter Duration, continuing for the most part but One Year or Two; and then either dying altogether, or into the ground; and comprizeth under it Grass, Flowers, Corn, and all such as we strictly call Herbs or Weeds: The *Tree* is of a more solid substance, and consequently more durable, and for the most part outgrows the former; and to this Head doth belong Shrubs of all sorts; And Trees whether for the Nourishment of Man, or for the Nourishment of Beasts, or whether such Uses as are serviceable for the Nourishment of Mankind, Building, Fire, &c. And upon this Shelf of plants, God hath set the greatest part of the Furniture of this lower World.

USE 1. *HOW much of God we have here to contemplate.* Every Spire of Grass sets God before us: Upon the Earthly Carpet is set the wondrous Glory of God: Some things have only a *Being*, and they say that *He is*; Others have *Life*, and they proclaim that *He is the Living God*, yea a mighty *Fountain of Life*, there being so many sorts of Living Beings, and so many Millions of every sort, that derive their Life from Him. And how admirable is His Wisdom in Framing of these things, as well as his Power in Producing of them: The Earth had not brought forth one Blade of Grass, had He not impregnated it by his Word: He made these at first, and still *causeth the Grass to grow*, Psal. 147. 8. He keeps the Wheels of Nature still a going: Hos. 2. 21, 22. *---I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth, And the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, & the oyl, & they shall hear Jezreel.* Hence they are called His, Ver. 9. *---My corn, ---my wine, --- my wool, and my flax ---.* And there are more Mysteries of Wisdom in the most despicable Plant, than human Wisdom can dive into: Who can contemplate all the Wonders of Generation, Growth and Perfection of Plants, without Wonder? What admiration is to be had in observing the Variety of Colours, fragrant Odours in Flowers, the neat Fashion and party coloured Bravery in them, excelling *Solomon* in all his Glory? And there is never an One of them but stands and laughs at Men and Women, who are at so much cost to trigg up themselves, and are at last out shone by one poor Flower, that is in the Morning and withers before Night.

USE 2. WHAT cause hath Man then to *acknowledge God's Beneficence, in providing for him such sorts of Creatures.* Here we have our Food & Delight, our Preservation and Pleasanties: It is God Himself that made these things; It is His Earth that they grow upon, His Rain that makes them, His Sun that nourisheth them: The works of Creation and Providence do meet in every Harvest: God's Efficiency is at work in Heaven, Earth and Sea to provide us with our Livelihood; and yet what a stately Magnificence doth he use in providing to Superfluity; the wild Beasts have a large Range afforded them. When God spread his Table on the Earth, he intended not to give his Bread by Weight, or Drink by Measure. How then ought we to honour God with our Substances? And how unreasonable a thing is it, that when God is thus providing for his Creatures, they should be taking up Arms of Rebellion, and drawing their Swords against him? Let Sinners think on it and be humbled; and remember these are His Creatures, and He can starve you when He will: And if you abuse these things unto Luxury, they will but feed you as Oxen against the Slaughter.

2 NOW let us consider those *Animates* that have a Simple *Motive* Life; & those are called by the general name of *Lights*, Gen. 1. 14. Lights are *Animates*, endowed with a *Locomotive* Life.

1. THEY are *Animates*, or Living things, consisting of a Body and Soul. Philosophers have been astonished at their swift Motion, and hence supposed them to be fixt unto their Orbs, and moved by Intelligences; as if Infinite Power and Wisdom could not put into them a Power of Self Motion, as well as Create another Power to move them: But that they are Living Beings appears, partly by their Order of Creation; they were made among Living Creatures; and how immethodical a conceit is it, that God should first begin to Create one sort of *Animates*, and then after that to return to make another sort of *Inanimates*? Partly from the Nature of their Motion, which is continual; which proves a constant Spring of Action natural to them; for violent Motions are not permanent and regular: It was the Wisdom of the Creator to fit every thing for its End and Use; and that was by putting into it a Nature suitable to its Operation, and those were for Motion and Revolution; and as it is continual, so it is regular: The Sun knows it's rising; and every Star keeps his place according to the Law of Creation.

2. THEY have a *Locomotive Life*. That *Self-Motion* is Life, or an Indication of it, we have already heard; Such do these exert, this is the manner of their Living. Here observe,

1. THE *Subject Place they move in*, is the *Element of Fire*: Said to move in the Expance, *Ver.* 14. by a Metonymy of the Adjunct, the Firmament being next: There are but Three Heavens; the Third is above them: They move not in the lowest, for then they would only diffuse Air by their Motion; whereas their Beams are Fiery, as appears partly by their Light, partly by their Heat.

2. THEIR *Formal Spirit or Soul, being Motive, doth participate of Fire*, which is most *Active*; and

and hence they have their Agility, and a ſupply of Fiery Spirits to continue their Life and Motion: Here then they ſwim as Fiſhes in the Sea, or fly as Birds in the Air, moving in their ſeveral Stations, as in their own Element: Hence called *Stars of Heaven*, Gen. 22. 17.

3. THEIR *Material Subſtance is of the Four Elements*, tho' Fire be Predominant. They are, or belong to the Earth, mentioned *Ver.* 1. i. e. The Firſt Matter, which was Firſt formed into Elements, and then into Elementaries, among which they are placed in the Order of Creation: And they have a Circular Motion alotted them. The End or Uſes of them are ſuch as theſe:

1. TO *Divide the Day & Night*: The Light did it in the Three firſt Days, but it was now ſtampt upon theſe Bodies as their deſigned Office to the World's End; and they do it by ſeperating the Light and Darkneſs in their diſtinct Way and End.

2. TO *give Light* upon the Earth: And for this Reaſon, they have their Names, *Lights*; as being *Light Keepers*, and *Light Carriers*: All of them do more or leſs Illuminate, tho' principally the *Sun*.

3. TO be *for Signs & Seaſons, Days & Years*: For *Signs*, Prognoſticating ſeveral Natural Effects, likely to enſue. *Seaſons*, i. e. ſeveral Times of the Year, made by the Motion of the Sun eſpecially, tho' influenced by other Conſtellations; *Job* 38. 31, 32, 33. *Days*, by the Acceſs and Receſs of Light and Darkneſs; yea by the Revolution or Periodical Circle of the Sun finiſhing his Courſe, and coming into the ſame Point, which conſtitutes a *Year*.

LIGHTS are either the *Great* Lights, or the *Stars*; i. e Some give *more* Light, and ſome give *leſs*: The *Great* are the *Sun* and the *Moon*; The former appointed to Rule the Day, and the latter to Rule the Night; *i. e.* by ſhining on the Earth to denominate theſe, for as long as the *Sun* ſhines on the Horizon, it dazzles the Light of the *Moon* and *Stars*: The other, *viz.* the *Stars*, help to Rule the Night together with the *Moon*, affording ſome Light to the Earth, when the *Sun* doth not appear.

USE. LET us here alſo make a ſtand, and *give God the Glory* of this Part of his Workmanſhip: The Heavens declare abundance of the Glory of God: Theſe glorious Lights diſcover many Beams of His Divine Excellency: Here is *Infinite Wiſdom* in Framing, and ſetting in Order all the Armies of *Stars*; which tho' there be ſuch a Multitudinous Hoſt of them, are yet Marſhalled in their ſeveral Conſtellations, obſerve their Order and Motion, go their Circuit, return in their Courſes, and break not their Ranks: Here is a Bright Ray of *Divine Power* in making ſo many, and ſo great Bodies, many bigger, few leſſer, than the Earth; which ſtrongly move through the Fiery Region continually. The Activity of His Being ſhines through the nimble Agility of theſe, in their Diurnal Motion; the Fixed Stars being reckoned to move *Forty two Million* Miles in an Hours ſpace. *Divine Goodneſs* is Radiant, in hanging up theſe Lights in Heaven, ſo Beſpangling the Roof of the Dwelling, to give us Light, to help us with Influences, to ſerve us for our Good. Obey we Him, whom Sun and Moon obey: Be at His Command, who Commands and the Sun riſeth not, *&c. Job* 9. 7, --- 10.

[DECEMBER 2. 1690.]

SERMON *XXXVIII.*

II. HAVING conſidered of the Creation of ſuch Living Creatures as have a *Simple Life*; it follows to take a view of them that Live a *Compound Life*: And here,

[1.] IN *General*, Things with a *Compound Life* are things which, beſide the forementioned *Vegetative* and *Motive Life*, do alſo Live a Life of *Senſe*. Here Two things,

1. THEY Live *both* the *former* Lives: They meet together in them, whereas they are alone in the other; and this is one Reaſon why they are ſaid to have a *Compound Life*.

1. THEY have the Life of *Vegetation*. *Stars* do not grow, but *Senſitive Creatures* do: They encreaſe in a way of Life: They receive Nouriſhment by Organs fitted in them for Vegetation, and animated by Vital Spirits: Hence they are the Subjects of Nutrition, Alteration, Augmentation; by Vertue whereof they arrive at their deſigned Stature.

2. THEY have the Life of *Motion*: *Plants* move not out of their own Place to ſeek for Nouriſhment, being fixed, and have it where they ſtand; But *theſe* move up and down and ſeek for their Nutrition; They go from Place to Place to get their Food where they can find it.

2. THEY have a Third ſort of Life ſuperadded, viz. a *Life of Senſe*: Whether they have ſo many diſtinct Souls in them, as they have Kinds of Life, or whether they perform all theſe Functions, by one and the ſame Soul; let Philoſophers diſpute. The Soul conſidered as *Senſitive* is nothing elſe but *a Senſible Spirit*, by which our Nature perceives ſenſible Objects, by it's Bodily Organs, which other Creatures do not. In the *Senſation* of the Creature, there are Two things, which will come under conſideration, *viz.* 1. The *Object*. 2. The *Faculty*, together with its acting on the *Object*.

1. THE *Object*. There muſt be an Object for them; for the Act of the Senſes terminates on ſomething without them: It is ſomething which is preſented before them, for them to Act upon, which Object meets with the Senſitive Spirit in the Organ, by which the Object is repreſented unto, and made preſent with it.

2. THE *Faculties* or Senſes are according unto their Internal or External Operation, of Two ſorts, viz. *Inward* or *Outward* Senſes.

(1.) THE *Inward Senſes* are made by the Internal Operation of the ſenſible Spirits; whether on the *Brain* or on the *Heart*: Theſe are,

1. THE

1. THE *Imagination* or the *Fancy*; which takes in the Images of Things, and receives the Impression of them, as they are brought in by the Outward Senses: It is as it were the *Porter*, which takes in the *Species* of things, as they are offered unto it.

2. THE *Cogitation*; which lays together and composeth the Things which are presented unto the Fancy, whereby the *Sensitive Creature* as it were, doth conclude *Sensibly*; and accordingly either embraceth, or avoids the Object: And by this the Creature is capable of forming other Objects; from whence Sensitive Creatures are capable of *Dreaming*, which is nothing but the working of the *Cogitation*.

3. THE *Memory*; whereby the Creature is able to lay up, what Cogitation hath laid together; and to bring them together again unto the Fancy, when there is occasion: And by this the Sensible Creature, having formerly seen an Object and observed it, knows it upon Sight a great while after.

4. THE *Affections*; which are nothing else but the Reflection of Cogitation upon the Heart, by which it is moved according to the Impression it had there made: And by Vertue hereof are Sensitive Beings variously affected with Love, Hatred, Fear, Desire, *&c.* And these appear in some of them unto Admiration.

(2.) THE *Outward Senses* are reckoned to be *Five*, in which there is an External Operation of the Sensitive Spirits: And these are,

1. *TOUCHING*; and this is the most necessary Sense of all, not only for the well Being, but also for the Absolute Being of the Creature: This Sense is defused through the whole Body, and helps it to discern or perceive the things in those Qualities that may be felt: The loss of this is the Death of the Subject.

2. *TASTING*; which the Philosophers call a Kind of Seeing: The Tongue is the Organ, its Object is Savour, its Use is to distinguish of Meats, and Drinks, and is very Serviceable, both for Safety and Delight.

3. *SMELLING*; whose Organ is the Nose, its Object Odours, and is Servicable unto the Preserving of the Creature from Infections, and to refresh the Brain.

4. *HEARING*; It hath the Ears for its Organ, Sounds for its Object, the Air the Medium; a noble Sense, and is therefore called a Sense of Discipline.

5. *SEEING*; which is scituate in the Eyes; having Colours for its Object, Sight for the Medium; and a Sense of great Utility, and Comfort to the Creature; The want of it makes a perpetual Night.

THERE are, besides these, other things which belong unto the Sensitive Soul in these Beings: *Sleep*, which binds up the External Senses from Acting: And *Hunger* and *Thirst*, being an Impression on the Senses through want of Nutriment: But I pass them over. These are some of the Wonders of Creation in this Sort of Beings:

But,

[2.] IN *Particular*, Sensitive Creatures are of Two Sorts, *Brutes*, or *Man*, which doth withal live a more noble Life, as we may hear,

THESE are called by the General Name of *Animals*, but herein they differ; *Brutes* live no higher a Life than what is Sensitive, but Man hath higher Faculties; *Brutes* were first made, being for the Use of Man, and it is fit the Tenement should be stock'd, before the Landlord come into it. Of *Brutes*, some were more *Imperfect*; and these were made on the Fifth day, *Gen.* 1. 20, *&c.* These were of Two Sorts, *Fishes* & *Fowls*; the former were made to live in the Water, where there are innumerable, and the Leviathan is the Glory of them all; the latter to fly in the Air, of which also there are many Sorts, and all these for the Benefit of Man: Others were more *Perfect*, and were created on the Fifth day; they are called by the General Name of *Beasts*; some of them are *Wild*, ranging in the Woods, and Intractable; others Tractable and *Tame*, and easy to be ruled.

THESE are Preparatory Works of Creation, made ready for the Entertainment of Man, who is next to be treated of.

USE, 1. SEE here a World of *Divine Wisdom* shining through those Sensitive Creatures; appearing in,

1. THE *Comely Scituation & Proportion* of all their Organs for the best Advantage for their Operations.

2. THE *Wondrous Harmony* between the Senses and their Objects.

3. THE *Capacitating the Spirits of Elements*, in living Creatures, to put forth such excellent Operations

4. THE *Placing of all these so closely in some Bodies, so Small*, and of so little Dimensions.

USE, 2. SEE here and acknowledge the *Goodness of God*.

1. IN *Providing such Creatures for our Use* and Service: All of them proclaim his Bounty and call for our Thankfulness.

2. IN *the Contemplation of our Bodies*, there is Goodness in every Member & Faculty, in Placeing of them, and fitting of them for their Use, Psal. 139. 14. *I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.*

USE, 3. SEE *the Vanity of those that lay all out upon their Bodies*: This is to be a Slave to Sense, and to live a Life of Brutes; which is beneath a Man.

USE, 4. HERE is a *Lesson against Cruelty to Sensitive Creatures*: They are our fellow Creatures, and as to bodily Composure and Sensitive Life, they stand in the same Order with us: It is God's Goodness hath given us the Use of them; it is our Sin, to be Cruel unto them; that is not an Use but Abuse of them.

THUS have we seen the Creator putting of this lower World, of Inconstant Natures, into a Meetness to be an Habitation for some Nobler Being than was yet made; There still wanted One Sort, which should rent it of God, & pay Him the Tribute of Glory for it: Who therefore, (together with a Life of Sense, by which he might Converse among Men, and use these things,) must have a more Noble Life, for the enabling of him for the Improvement of all in the Actual Service of God: And tho' his Creation belongs unto the Six Days, yet

it

it deſerves a peculiar and diſtinct Remark to be made on it. Hence it comes under another *Queſtion.*

BUT there remains One Thing more in *this Anſwer*, which relates alſo unto the next. Hence,

Eighthly, WE have the *Quality* in which all Things were Created: *All very Good.* This we have aſſerted in *Gen.*1. And that not only at the End of each Day's work, but after all was done: Where we have God brought in, taking a View of the Whole, in every Part, and altogether, and giving the Verdict upon it, *v. ult. And God ſaw every thing that He had made, and behold it was very good.*

HERE then Obſerve in General,

1. THE *Goodneſs of the Creature is, its Aptneſs & Fitneſs for its End & Uſe*, which they ſhould ſerve unto. That which is Uſeleſs cannot be ſaid to be Good: for the goodneſs of a Thing is the reſpect it bears unto its End, and when we ſay it is Good, we muſt be able to ſay for *what*, or elſe we ſay nothing at all. God, who aimed at an End in making all things, could not but propound ſomething in the ſeveral Beings that he made. He were not a wiſe Agent, that ſhould loſe his Skill, and Time, in making a Trifle.

2. *GOD fitted all things for the End He deſigned them to.* For this Fitneſs is the very Form of the Goodneſs of a Creature: He gave them a Nature prompt to their Work: He doth not require Brick of them & deny Straw: He fitted them, by leaving an Impreſſion on their Natures anſwerable to the Laws of Nature, which he laid upon them, to be guided by; ſo that the Law which was their Rule, and their Natural Conſtitution, anſwered one the other exactly: He ſuited their Qualities for their Operations; ſo that we may read in the Nature of their Being, what is the Law or Rule of their Being & Operation; and therefore hence do Naturaliſts deduce the Rules of Phyloſophy, ſo far as their Bleared-Eyes can diſcern them in the things.

3. THIS *Uſefulneſs* of the Creature comes under a double Conſideration.

1. *GENERAL* or Univerſal; and that is in the Ordination of one thing with another, ſo that all tend unto the Perfection of the whole, and the ſhining Glory of God, *Pſal.* 148. For as the Second Being is *from*, ſo *for* the Firſt; and all things Joyntly, as they were made, were fitted to keep Tune in the Praiſing of God.

2. *PARTICULAR*; which is the ſpecial Operation whereby every Kind of Being, & every Individual in every Kind, were fitted to Serve to the great and laſt End, according unto its ſingular Nature & Place it is ſet in, in the Creation: Which Service is double; *Active* & *Paſſive.*

(1.) *ACTIVE*; The Service of Angels and Men, who were fitted for being Active Inſtruments in Serving of God, their Maker, and in their Natures capacitated for the Diſcharge of this High and Glorious Service.

(2.) *PASSIVE*; whereby other Creatures were fitted by way of Paſſive Reflection to exhibit and declare His Praiſe, Pſal. 19. 1. *The Heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament ſheweth his handy-work.* Which we may call, Natural Worſhip, or, the Natural Service of the Creature, which it can't fail in: And it obtains this End, both,

1. BY *the ſhining Impreſſions of the Glorious Power and Goodneſs of God*, which it bears upon it: It carries upon it the Seal & Stamp of Divine Omnipotency and Bounty: It hath not *Cæſar's*, but God's Superſcription upon it, *Pſal.* 19. 1. This is the Declaration which it makes; It is as it were a written and engraven Encomium of the great Architect.

2. IN that it hence *affords unto us Matter and Occaſion of enquiring after the Knowledge of God*; which it doth by bearing ſome Footſteps of his Glory on it, Act. 17. 27. *That they ſhould ſeek the Lord, --- feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us.* Rom. 1. 20. *For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power & Godhead, ſo that they are without excuſe*: The Heathen could acknowledge, that he could diſcern ſomething of God in every Herb, and Pile of Graſs, that grew in the Field: the Natures of Things, curiouſly ſought out, enforced very Ethnicks to acknowledge and adore a Deity.

3. IN that they *Serve as Encouragements unto Men*, in the active Serving & Glorifying of God; being for the Suſtentation and Comfort of our Lives, that we may live unto his Praiſe, 1 Cor. 10. 31. *Whether ye Eat or Drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the Glory of God.* 1 Tim. 4. 3, 4. *Every Creature of God is good, --- created by Him, to be received with Thanksgiving.* So that when Man ſerves God with Chearfulneſs, then do the Creatures chearfully ſerve him, and ſo attain their End, and Advance the Glory of God.

USE, 1. SEE here, the *Vanity under which the Creation groans*, was not from the Creation; it was then very Good. Goodneſs & Vanity are Direct Contraries: and this tells what an horrible Deformity the Sin of Man hath brought upon the World: When therefore we ſee all things out of frame, remember it is not from the Unskilfulneſs of the Workman, but the Confuſion which Sin hath hurled upon the Works, that the curious Inſtrument is ſo diſordered; which hath broken ſome, and diſplaced other of the Wheels of it, whereby it is now full of Confuſion: And let it help to make Sin vile, & odious unto us.

USE, 2. SEE here, how *poor a Plea that will be another day, to ſay, I would have Served God, and I could not.* It is true fallen Man is become an Impotent Thing to Good; he is fallen ſhort of his End, the Glory of God: But the fault is not to be charged upon God: All the Creatures, and ſo Man was at firſt made very good: ſo they came out of their Makers hand, by vertue whereof they were fitted for his Service. If Man be now Impotent, it is becauſe he hath befool'd away his Stock, and made himſelf a Bankrupt: which is ſo far from excuſing him of not doing the Duty he was appointed to, as that it adds unto his Guilt, and he muſt be called to an Account for it at the laſt.

[DECEMBER 30. 1690.]

SERMON XXXIX.

QUESTION X.

HOW did GOD Create Man?

ANSWER.

GOD Created Man, *Male* and *Female*, after His own *Image*, in Knowledge, Righteousness, and Holiness, with *Dominion* over the Creatures.

WE have, in the former Head, observed how the lower World was furnished, with all things suitable to make it a fitting Place of Habitation, to entertain some more noble Being; who might receive Homage and Tribute from other Creatures, and actually return it unto the Glory of his and their Creator. In the next and last Place therefore follows the Creation of *Man*; who as to his Bodily and Sensible part, participates in the same *Genus* with his fellow Animals, being a living Creature with a Compound Life; but as to his better part is an Immortal Substance, and Akin to the Inhabitants of the other World And since there was a Counsel called at his making, it deserves a special & particular Remark to be made on it. For a more full and distinct discovery of this Piece of God's Workmanship, these things may be considered. 1. The Thing Created. (1) In its special Nature. (2) In its Essential constituting Parts. 2. The Time and Order of his Creation. 3. The Different Sex in which Man was Created. 4. The Adjunct Perfection. 5. His Prerogative. 6. His End.

I. *THE Thing Created*; in which there are Two things to be considered, both included in the *Answer*.

(1) IT'S *Special Nature*; God Created *Man*, *i. e.* He made him a Man. It points us unto the *Species* or Kind of Being; and this is that whereby God made him a Reasonable Living Creature: In which Description we may observe,

1. THE *Author* from whom he hath his Being. *viz.* *GOD*: He did not give Being unto himself; but the same hand that made all the other Creatures, made this last Creature too: he owes his Being unto the same Original, Job 35. 10. *God my Maker.* Psal. 100. 3. *It is he that made us.* Acts 17.26. *He hath made of one Blood all Nations of Men.*

2. THE *Manner* of his Making; and,

1. IN *Respect to God* that made him: It is otherwise introduced in the History, than the Creation of any other Being: Concerning others it is only said, *Let them be*, and it was so; but as to Man, God doth as it were consult in himself about making of him: there is a Divine Deliberation how or in what manner to make him, *Gen.* 1.26. *Let us make Man.* It is spoken after the manner of Men, but it tells us, That there was something peculiar in and about this Creature to be remarked.

2. IN *Respect unto Man* that was made, *viz.* his special Nature; He made him a Reasonable living Creature. He is a *Creature*, and so he partakes with the common Kind with all Second Beings: He is a *Living* Creature, and hereby he comes nearest to things that have Life, and having in him a Principle of Vegetation, Motion, and Sense; wherein God's Wisdom & Goodness to the other Creatures appeared in providing a suitable Governour to set over them, and giving them a King of their own Kind: But then he is a *Reasonable* Creature, & herein he differs from, and excels the Rest, and doth more nearly resemble the Life of God; for according to our manner of conceiving, God lives a Life of Reason: He therefore often calls himself a Man, in Scripture, because He deals with Man in a Reasonable way: And Angels are called Men, because they have a Life of Reason. Now Man was made a *Reasonable* Creature,

1. BECAUSE *he had not been otherwise capable of the Image of God*: For that shines forth only in Rational Beings: other Creatures have a Shadow of the Divine Perfection on them, by an Impression on them, which they passively receive; and not the Image which they are Incapable of, which afterward appears.

2. BECAUSE otherwise *he could not have been a suitable Ruler over his fellow Creatures.* Government requires Wisdom & Discretion: Hereby it is that Man is capable of guiding them according to the Rules of right Reason: By this he is Wiser than they are, Job 35.11. *He maketh us wiser than the Fowls of Heaven*: Able to discern their Ends & Uses, & accordingly improve them serviceably, to the Glory of God, and his own Comfort.

USE, 1. THIS calls *for Homage & Submission from Man* unto God. The Rule of Creation demands his Obedience: Remember that any time you Commit any Sin, you rise up against your Creator: Remember Man, thou didst not make thy self, and therefore that thou art not thine own Lord & Master: thy Tongue, Hands, & Heart are none of thine own, and therefore thou oughtest not to live as thou listest: Quicken thy dull Heart unto Duty by this; I receive my whole Being from God, and therefore why should I not be wholly for Him?

USE, 2. SEE *what an Excellent Being Man was* as he came out of the Hands of his Creator. He must be a rare piece of Workmanship, about whose making God should call a Counsel & enter into Deliberation: God made all things in wondrous Wisdom; but here was a Result of all God's Creating Wisdom gathered together in One: There were many Beams of His Wisdom, Power and Goodness scattered among other Creatures; here they are all contracted in *this little Model*: Look into the Third Heaven, and you may see an Inhabitant of that Place dwelling in an House of Clay: look into the lower World, and you may see the Four Elements comprized in his Bodily Frame; the Life of Plants in his Vegetative, Stars in his Motive Soul, Brutes in his Sensitive, *&c.*

&c. See how curiouſly and wonderfully he is made: And have a care of ſpoiling the Frame that was ſo exquiſitely Compoſed, of undoing that Creature which God would not make without Conſultation.

(2.) HIS *Eſſential conſtituting Parts* of thoſe things which go in to make and denominate him ſuch a Being; and they are his *Body* and his *Soul*. Theſe may be called his Conſiſtence, becauſe they did conſiſt, or ſtand together, in his Creation. Would we know how God made Man, the Anſwer is, Gen. 2.7. *The Lord God formed Man of the Duſt of the ground, and breathed into his Noſtrils the breath of Life, and Man became a living Soul.* We may take a ſhort view of each.

[1.] THE *Body* is a conſtituting Part of Man, made of the Elements, and fitted with ſuitable Organs for the Operations of the Reaſonable Soul.

1. IT is a *Conſtituting Part*; it is Eſſential and Integral in him: The Soul doth not make the Man, without a Body joined unto it; but both theſe in Union conſtitute the Man: The *Body*, though not ſo noble a part, yet is as abſolutely neceſſary to his Being as the *Soul*.

2. IT was *made of the Elements*; and ſo agrees with the Bodies of other Creatures. Gen. 2.7. *--Of the Duſt---.* A *Synechdoche*. The Spirit of God uſeth the Phraſe, *Duſt*, to ſhew unto Man his mean Original; but the *Four Humours* in his Body, ſhew the *Elemental Conſtitution* of his Body.

3. IT was *fitted with Organs ſuitable for the Operations of the Reaſonable Soul*. It was therefore curiouſly contrived for this Purpoſe, *Pſal.* 139. 14, 15. We have before taken notice of theſe *Organs*, as ſuited for Senſation; and therefore need not make a particular Account of them, only as they are the ſuitable Inſtruments of Reaſon, for which End they are adapted for the Functions of this moſt excellent Soul. Here then is the *Head*, the Chief and more Noble Part, being the Principal Seat of the Rational Soul; where alſo are placed the *Inward Senſes*, and accordingly the *Brain* is divided into ſo many Cells, or ſeveral Rooms, which are as it were ſo many *Shops*, in which the Inward Senſes do work: Here alſo are all the Organs of the *External Senſes* except *Touching*, which is all over the Body: This is the Work-houſe of the Underſtanding, and the Throne of Reaſon: Here is the *Face* which is full of Majeſty, and puts an awe upon other Creatures, a Principal diſtinguiſher of Men, whereby one is known from another; and herein appears the curious Wiſdom of God, in giving every one a diſtinct Face, that among ſo many *Millions* there is not *Two* in all Points alike, but eaſily diſtinguiſhable: Here are the *Eyes*, the Soul's *Looking-Glaſſes*, to take in Viſible Objects, and to turn every way: Here are the *Ears*, by which we receive Diſcipline, taking the Word of God, and Means of Faith: Here is the *Heart*, which is the Seat of the *Affections*, and by which the *Will* doth exert its elicit *Actions*: Here are the *Hands*, Organs ſuited to perform the Devices of the Soul, wherewith many Works are wrought, and Man is enabled to provide for his own Supply: And here are the *Feet* which carry the Body according to the Direction of the Soul; and there are but *Two*, becauſe Man was made to go upright, and move Heaven wards in all his Operations: And all theſe Organs were made to be at the Command and under the Government of the Nobler Part which follows,

[2.] THE *Soul* is another conſtituting Part in Man, being an *Immortal Spirit* of Life, endowed with the Faculties of Underſtanding & Will, by Vertue whereof, Man is a Cauſe by Counſel. Here obſerve,

1. IT is the *other Conſtituting Part* in Man. Man conſiſts of *Soul* and *Body*; where either is wanting, it is not an entire Man.

2. IT is a *Spirit of Life*. Job 32. 8. *There is a Spirit in Man, and the inſpiration of the Almighty, giveth him underſtanding*. It hath leaſt *Matter* and moſt *Form*: It is Materiated, or elſe it would not ſtand ſeperated without a Miracle: There is no pure *Act* or *Form* ſtanding alone, that being a Property *Incommunicable* of the Firſt Being. It hath the Properties of a *Spirit* in it: It is moſt Active; it has a kind of Ubiquity; it is from one end of the Earth to another in a little Time; it is never out of Action; it Sleeps not in or with the Body; that is at work when the Senſes are bound up; it is of wondrous Strength; Men can kill the *Body*, but not annihilate the *Soul*.

3. IT is an *Immortal Spirit*. Man by reaſon of it, is called a *Living Soul*, Gen. 2. 7. i. e. *Immortal*. There was no pre-exiſting Matter of which it was made, being made immediately out of *Nothing*: There was no Time in which the *Nature* and *Form* ſtood ſeperable. It is void of contrary Qualities: The Mortality of the Creature ariſeth from the Mixture of its Matter, the contrary Elements maintaining a War in the Body, which tends to Diſſolution; there are no ſuch in the Soul. It hath therefore in it, a natural Apprehenſion of, and Deſire after Immortality: Brutes have no ſuch Thoughts, nor do they ſee beyond Time; but Man graſps after Eternity: Hence ſome Souls gain apparent Strength under the ſenſible Dangers of the Body; 2 Cor. 4. 16. *Tho' our outward man periſh, yet the inner man is renewed day by day*. And the Scripture gives us a clear Teſtimony for this, Exod. 3. 15. compar'd with, Matth. 32. 32. *God is not the God of the Dead, but of the Living*. 1 Pet. 3. 19. *The Spirits in Priſon*. Eccl. 12. 7. *The Spirit ſhall return to God that gave it*.

4. IT is endowed with the *Faculties of Underſtanding and Will*. It hath an *Underſtanding*, which Brutes have not, by vertue whereof it is able to Read the Book of the Creature, to ſee into the Nature of things, to diſcern the Beams of Divine Wiſdom ſhining in the Frame of the World, and treaſure up the Knowledge of it within it ſelf: By this alſo it can invent curious Works, having a framing as well as diſcerning Wiſdom. *Exod.* 31. begin. It ca:

govern Inferiour Creatures with Discretion, *Jam.* 3. 3, 4. It is able to reflect upon it self, and read its own Knowledge. 1 *Cor.* 2. 11. It can communicate that Knowledge it hath unto others: And that which is its best Advantage is, that it is capable of knowing God to Eternal Life. It hath also a *Will*, whereby it is able to chuse or refuse what it apprehends to be Good or Evil: This Faculty can set all the Powers of Soul and Body on work; it can determine concerning the Acts of them all at its Pleasure: It hath the highest Object, viz. *Goodness* it self, and the best Rule, viz. *Divinity*.

5. BY this *Soul* Man becomes a *Cause by Counsel*. Man can both propound to himself his own End, and make choice of the Means or Way leading unto it: He can deliberate with himself about these things, and take that which likes himself, and leave that which is not grateful unto him: None can either compel or hinder him in his Choice, but he can follow the Dictates of his own Understanding: From whence it follows, that all his humane Actions are Voluntary & Deliberate.

USE 1. FROM the Consideration of our *Bodies*, in respect of their *Original*, we may gather *matter of Self-Abasement*. This God laid as an humbling thought upon *Adam*, Gen. 3. 19. *---Dust thou art, and unto Dust shalt thou return.* Think of this, and be Proud if thou canst: When Bodily Excellencies are ready to puff you up, and you admire your selves for your Comely Features, exquisite Proportion, Strength, *&c.* look down to the Ground, and remember from thence thou wert taken, and what hath Dust and Ashes to vaunt it self of. Let it show all such their unaccountable Vanity, who lay out their Time, Pains and Cost to Adorn and Gild over a Lump of Mudd and Clay, and to help to Cure us of this Folly.

USE 2. FROM the Contemplation of our *Soul*,

1. THINK not *that you have Provided sufficiently for Your-selves, or those that Depend on you, when you have laid in only for the Outward Man.* Remember there is a *Soul*, a more Noble and Excellent Part, which must also be cared for, and must also have a Supply laid in for it, or it will Perish. Think of the solemn Caution given by our Saviour in that respect, Matth. 16. 26. *What is a Man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own Soul.*

2. BE exhorted *to carry it in your whole Deportment, as those who have Immortal Souls.* Bless God for them: Acknowledge his wondrous Favour in giving them to You; by Reason whereof you are more excellent Creatures than any else that were Formed out of the same Lump of Clay, being hereby capable of more Noble and Excellent Employments, and of a better State, even of Everlasting Blessedness, of Communion with God: Do nothing unbecoming your *Souls*; consider their make, and let Noble Actions adorn such a noble Nature, as you are made to participate in: Do not then neglect them, or take no Care of them. but above all things lay in a suitable Supply for them: Take heed that they do not miscarry at last; if they do, the *Body* a well as the *Soul* is undone for ever: Never then take up satisfied, or rest contented, till you have secured your *Souls* under the Wings of CHRIST, and thereby laid in for them an Eternal Portion, fit for Immortal Souls to Live upon; when all the things of Time shall come unto an End.

[JANUARY 27. 1690.]

SERMON *XL.*

II. THE *Time & Order* of Man's Creation. After God had made an End of Creating all other Kinds of Beings, He last of all made *Man*; God finished His *Six Days* Works by Creating this Creature: There is a great deal of Wisdom and Goodness of God shines forth in the Order of the Creation: Now there are Two Reasons why *Man* was made *Last*,

1. BECAUSE *the World was to be His Tenement* and He the *Landlord*; and the Creatures were to serve Him. Though all things were made ultimately for the Glory of God; yet in the Order of their Being, there was a Subordination of them, and they were to serve God, in serving of Man. The very Angels of Light were not wholly exempted from this Employment: Heb. 1. 14. *They minister to the heirs of salvation.* This therefore is not improbably supposed to be the Tryal upon which Apostate Angels fell from their Stations. The Earth was for him to dwell in *A while*, and Heaven for his *Eternal Abode*: The several Creatures were for his Comfort and Delight: God therefore prepared and furnished all for his welcome Entertainment; every thing was made ready for his Coming: So that when he was made, he found an Habitation every way furnished & fitted for his Entertainment; and all this to lay him under the most forceable Obligation to serve his Munificent Creator. See that, *Psal.* 8. 4, *&c.*

2. BECAUSE *Man was made nextly for God and his Service*, and to employ the other Creatures in it. There was no other sort of Being made after him, to shew, that he was made for no other Created Being. The Creature is to look forward; and there was nothing stood between Man and God, to give him to understand, that nothing should intercept his Heart, but that he ought to make God his immediate End; And that by his improving of other things for the Glory of God, he should help them to serve to their ultimate End: This therefore is that which Man, who had lost it by the Fall, is restored again unto by the New Creation. Isa. 43. 21. *This People have I formed for my self, they shall shew forth my praise.*

USE. THIS shews us the *Folly and Ingratitude of sinfull Man*, and consequently how *Vile a thing Sin is.*

1. IT is *Great Folly.* How degenerate are we become in that we have made our selves Slaves to the Creature, which was made to serve Us. This is to look backward and not forward; and by this means, there is a Rout and Disorder brought

brought upon the whole Creation; & thus things are obſtructed and diverted, and ſo made to loſe their End, as much as in us lies. Other things look forwards as far as they can towards their Laſt End; but Man who ſhould bring them to God, and offer them unto Him, hath turned them, and Idolized them, and thereby robbed God of his due Glory: and what a madneſs is it to make himſelf a Servant to his Servants.

2. HIS *woful Ingratitude.* What could God have done more, to oblige a Creature to be Faithful unto Him, and cheerful in His Service? And that yet after all this he ſhould depart from his Obedience, and take up Arms of Rebellion againſt his Creator and Benefactor muſt needs be matter of greateſt Aſtoniſhment; Iſa. 1. 2. *Hear; O Heaven, the Lord hath ſpoken, I have nouriſhed, and brought up Children, and they have rebelled againſt me.* And ſhall not this ſerve to abaſe us deeply?

III. THE *Different Sex* in which God Created Man, *Male* and *Female*, Gen. 1. 27. I ſhall here only make a few *Remarks*.

1. ADAM *was Firſt made as the Head of Mankind.* There was ſome Diſtance obſerved in the Creation of theſe Two, becauſe God would give to the *Man* the Priority, in the Covenant that paſt between them, and a Superiority in the Relation between him & the *Woman*. 1 Tim. 2. 13. *For Adam was firſt formed, then Eve.*

2. MAN's *Neceſſity required that he ſhould have one of his Kind for his ſuitable Converſe*; Gen. 2. 18, 20. *And the Lord God ſaid, it is not Good that man ſhould be alone, I will make him an help meet for him*, &c. Man was made a Sociable Creature, and Solitarineſs was neither ſafe nor comfortable for him; now the *Beaſts* were before him, and not fit for Rational Communion; the *Angels* were Inviſible, and therefore not ſuitable for familiar Converſe; no Being was ſo fit as one of *his Kind.*

3. MAN's *Conveniency required, that this Companion of his ſhould be a* Woman: no other could have anſwered all the Ends of Human Society. *Men* were not made as the *Angels*, all the Individuals at once; but were to be Propagated in their Generations: ſuch a one therefore could only be a *meet help for him*, Gen. 2. 18.

4. GOD's *Deſign of treating with Man, required that there ſhould be but One Man, and One Woman at Firſt*: becauſe he would Indent with Mankind in a Covenant in *One Head*; for which reaſon all were to proceed from *One Original*: Our Firſt Parents were One Fleſh, and were the Root from which all Men were to ſpring; and therefore muſt be but *One.*

5. THE *Woman was taken out of the Man*; Partly that all might derive Originally from *One*, Partly that ſhe might be the more Dear and Precious to him, and Beloved by him as a piece of himſelf: Gen. 2. 22. *The Rib which the Lord had taken from Man, made he a Woman.*

USE 1. LEARN hence, *That Marriage is Honourable.* Heb. 13. 4. *Marriage is honourable in all*, &c. God provided for this at Firſt, and Himſelf Solemnized the Firſt Marriage that ever was: They then that ſpeak reproachfully of it do both impeach God's Wiſdom and Truth

USE 2. THIS may *tell Man & Wife when they attain the End of their Creation*, viz. When they afford each to other all that needful Help, which was the Reaſon of their being Made: When they Love one another entirely: When they ſeek the Temporal and Eternal Good of each other: When they carry it ſuitable in their Place, and Live together as the Joynt Heirs of Salvation: If they do otherwiſe, they turn that into a Curſe which was provided as the beſt outward Bleſſing of Mankind.

IV. THE *Adjunct Perfection* which was beſtowed upon Man in his Creation, viz. *God made him after his own Image, with Holineſs, Righteouſneſs & Knowledge.* The Perfection of a thing is, when it is made compleatly fit to attain its End: thus was Man Made: Eccl. 7. 29. *God made man upright* ---. I call it his *Adjunct Perfection*, becauſe it was not eſſential to his Humanity, but ſeperate from it, that remaining entire: but tho' it was not Natural, yet it was Con-natural, or due to his Nature at Firſt, with reſpect to the End that he was made for: This will more fully appear in the Conſideration of the *Nature of this Image*, of which there are divers Notions among Divines: I ſhall here conſider it under the Notion of that which ſome call the *Moral Image*, to which I think that in ſtrictneſs ought to be reſtrained: And it is thus Deſcribed;

THE Image of God *on Man, was that Moral Rectitude which was imprinted on his whole Nature, making him in his Manner & Meaſure fit to Reſemble, and able to Serve God.*

FOR a more full explaining this Deſcription, we may take diſtinct Notice of the ſeveral things contained in it.

1. IT is *Man's Rectitude*, or his *Moral Goodneſs.* For the Goodneſs of a thing is its Perfection, by which it is rendred capable of ſerving to the End and Uſe for which it was made. Every Creature was made *Good*, Gen. 1. 31. *Man* was made a Moral Agent, a Cauſe by Counſel, and therefore muſt have a Moral Goodneſs in him: And it is contrary to the Wiſdom of God, to make a Creature for an End, and not to fit it to Serve thereunto.

2. IT was an *Imprinted* Goodneſs or Rectitude. For the Image of God was not properly Man's Nature, or the Faculties of his Rational Soul, as ſome have thought; becauſe thoſe remain not only in Fallen Man, but even in the Damned themſelves; whereas the Image is loſt in *Adam's* Poſterity, and is therefore reſtored and renewed again by the Grace of God in *Regeneration*: It was then a Stamp and Character of Divine Goodneſs left upon the Nature of Man, making him able to perform the Service that was required of him: and it was not implanted by the Rule of Nature, but by the Rule of Divinity; neither was it from the Principles of Nature, for then it was inſeperable: Hence it may in ſome ſenſe be called *Natural*, in other *Supernatural*; *Natural*, as it is due to the Nature of Man made for ſuch an End, without

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which he could never have attained it; and *Supernatural*, being a more Glorious Excellency than the bare Principles of Nature can exert.

3. THIS Rectitude was imprinted upon the *Whole Nature*. All his Faculties and Powers both of Soul and Body, received the ſtamp of it: Man therefore, and not this or that part of him is ſaid to be in the *Image of God*, Gen. 1. 26. Nor indeed would it elſe have been ſufficient for the Deſign of it; for tho' the *Soul* and Powers are mainly concerned in Serving of God, yet the *Body* was to be the *Soul*'s Inſtrument in the Performance of it; and therefore God requires Service from the Whole Man; 1 Cor. 6. 20. *Glorify God with your Bodies & Spirits*. And the *Body* in particular; Rom 12. 1. ---*Preſent your Bodies a Living Sacrifice*, &c. The Whole then muſt be furniſhed and fitted for it.

4. IT was that, *whereby Man was fitted to reſemble, and enabled to ſerve God in his Manner and Meaſure*. He could imitate God in his Glorious Moral Perfections; he could take him as his Pattern and Work after Him; and for this Reaſon are the People of God bidden to imitate the Divine Perfections; Matth. 5. ult. *Be ye perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect*. 1 Pet. 1. 15. *Be ye Holy, for I am Holy* This is to be like God, this is to be Perfect, 1 Joh. 4. 17.--- *Becauſe as he is, ſo are we, in this World*. Man had the Impreſſion of the Intellectual and Moral Vertues of God upon him, whereby he was able to reflect them: There are the Footſteps of God's Attributes upon the Works of Creation, but Man is a *Parelion* that receives thoſe Beams upon him, and returns them back again to the Glory of his and their Maker. He was not only able to Read, but alſo to Write after His Copy, and comes as near as was poſſible; 1 Pet. 2. 21. *Leaving us an example, that ye ſhould follow his ſteps*. 1 Cor. 11. 1. *Be ye followers of me, even as I alſo am of Chriſt*. And in ſo doing, he was able to Serve God; which is nothing elſe but an Application of theſe Divine Vertues to the Rule given to direct the Employment of them: Only we muſt obſerve that he could only do it in his *Manner* & *Meaſure*: His *Manner*, that is as a Creature which muſt have a Rule to direct it, and Habits of Vertue in him to enable him, and theſe alſo ſeperable from him: And in his *Meaſure*, this *Likeneſs* implys not an Equality or Identity of Nature and Ability: It muſt be the Meaſure of a Created, and not an Increated Perfection: God is *Infinite*, Man is *Finite*, and all his Perfections limited: However it was ſuch a Meaſure as anſwered his End; and a vaſt Meaſure it was: We read, Pſal. 119. 96. *I have ſeen an end of all Perfection, but thy Commandment is exceeding broad*. This ſhews that Man had a vaſt deal of Created Grace in him, becauſe by Vertue of this Image he was able to keep it all, in its full Latitude. Now this Image is ſaid to conſiſt in *Knowledge*, *Righteouſneſs* and *Holineſs*: Such as it is in their *Renovation*, ſuch it was in *Creation*: But this is in *Knowledge*, Col. 3. 10, *Righteouſneſs & Holineſs*, Eph. 4. 24.

1. IN *Knowledge*: This refers to the *Underſtanding*, and comprehends under it all the Intellectual Vertues fitting him to diſcern, approve of, and regulate himſelf aright to the doing the Will of God. He had a Sanctified Underſtanding, diſcerning the Rule, and the Excellency of it, it's ſuitableneſs to his Nature, and the Infinite Wiſdom of God ſhining in it: He had a Spiritual diſcerning of all that was needfull to his Happineſs: This fallen Man hath loſt; 1 Cor. 2. 14. *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God*, &c. And thus *Agur* complains, Prov. 30. 2. *I am more bruitiſh than any Man, and have not the Underſtanding of a Man*: Which argues that *Adam* had a vaſt Meaſure of it.

2. IN *Righteouſneſs & Holineſs*: Theſe refer to the *Will* and *Affections*, and influenced the whole Man: and ſo it was a Power and Inclination to cloſe in with God entirely as his Chief Good and Laſt End, and ſo of fulfilling the whole Law: In thus doing he was to be Happy. The Law of God is divided into Two Tables, in the one is required a full cloſing of the whole Man with God, in the other a ſubordinate Love to our Fellow-Creatures Matth. 22. 37, 38. *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind; this is the firſt and great Commandment; and the ſecond is like unto it, Thou ſhalt Love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf*. The Principle enabling Man to do the *former*, is called *Holineſs*; that which fits him to the *latter*, is called *Righteouſneſs* in Scripture. Now this *Principle* in the *Will* not only enabled, but alſo enclined the Man to the exerciſe of theſe: It diſpoſed it to make ſuch a Choice, and renounce whatſoever was contrary; to Chooſe the Good, and Refuſe the Evil, by a Free, Full and Perfect Elicit Act: In the *Affections* and outward Man, it was that which enclined him to an entire Subjection to the Commands of the Sanctified *Underſtanding* and *Will*, without the leaſt Reluctancy, or being preſt to Obey them; ſo that he was in a Readineſs for every Good Work. The Body as well as the Soul, the Senſible as well as the Rational Powers were fit for their Buſineſs, and there was no Pravity or Diſorder in this whole Frame; but he was every way fitted, both to Will, and to Do, according to the Diſcretion of his Maker. That Man at Firſt had ſuch a Power and Principle as this is, needs no other Evidence, than that leſs than ſo, could not have fitted Him for his End, or denominate him Good, in the Station he was put into, under the ſpecial Government of God.

USE 1. THIS calls to *Soul humbling conſideration, of the great Loſs that we have ſuſtained by the Fall*: Was it thus with Man when he newly came out of the hands of God by Creation? How fearfull a Change then hath the Apoſtacy made in the World? Where is there any thing of this to be found in the Natural Man? He was once an Ornament to the Creation, but now a Diſgrace: He was once the Delight of his Maker, but now hateful to Him;

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once he was able to Glorify God and be Happy, now he can do nothing but fall ſhort of his Glory, and is become Miſerable; and for aſpiring to be like his Lord, is made a Servant to his Servants: That once orderly Frame is now full of Confuſion: Reaſon is dejected at the feet of Senſe; God is rejected, the Creature made Choice of; Holineſs and Righteouſneſs hated, Sin loved; *Man* is Metamorphiſed into a *Beaſt* or *Plant*, if not worſe, and become the very diſmal and doleful Ruins of himſelf: And can we think of this without Confuſion of Face.

USE 2. THIS tells us *what is the great Good which we ought to ſeek after the Recovery of*: We have Loſt a great many things, but this is the Jewel of the greateſt Value, *the Image of God*; whereby only we can be able to attain our End, and be made Happy: Poor *Man* labours in vain to recover out of his Miſery by any other Attempts: till this be reſtored we are unprofitable Creatures, and muſt needs be Miſerable: Bleſſed be God who hath through Chriſt made it a *Poſſibility*, and in the Goſpel pointed us the Way how it may be obtained: What have we then to do but earneſtly and reſtleſly to ſeek it of him, by the Renovation of his Spirit.

[MARCH 24. 1690.]

SERMON *XLI.*

V. THE *Prerogative* which God beſtowed upon Man in his *Creation*; *He gave him Dominion over his Creatures.* Some make this to be part of the *Image of God*, and therefore they diſtinguiſh it into *Internal* and *External*; and reckon the Power given to Man over the other Creatures to be the *External*: but we ſhall find in the Hiſtory, that there was ſomething diſtinct from, and coming in upon the Image; *Gen.* 1. 26, 28. Here take theſe *Concluſions*:

1. *GOD hath abſolute Lordſhip over all Creatures.* He Made them, and he may Order or Diſpoſe of them according to His Diſcretion, appoint them to what Service He ſees meet: The Right of Creation is ſuch as makes them wholly Subject: He that gives a thing its Being, may allot its Service too: Pſal. 100. 2, 3. *Serve ye the Lord*: *Know that he hath made us.* If it be *of* Him, it is *for* Him.

2. *GOD made Man nextly and Immediately to Serve Him Actively.* Man was made for Moral Obedience, to Glorify God by a Rational Conformity to his Commands; and for that Reaſon he gave him a *Principle of Reaſon*, and Adorned it with His *own Image*, that he might be compleatly fitted for that Service, as we heard in the *Former*.

3. *GOD to Encourage him in his Obedience, made the other things nextly for Man.* This eſpecially reſpects the *Viſible Creation*, or Creatures in the *Lower World*, enumerated, *Pſal.* 8. 1. *&c.* Beſide the *Laſt* End of things, here are *Subordinate* Ends: All was for God ultimately; but there is an Order of Beings, in which one is for another, and ſo they come to be for the Laſt: And here God would have other things to Serve Him in Serving Man.

4. HENCE *GOD gave to Man the free Liberty of Uſing thoſe things for his Comfort*: And this is one part of his Dominion over them. They are for his Uſe, and were therefore at his Diſpoſe: God beſtowed them as a Gift upon Him, *Gen.* 1. 29. So that by Vertue of this Donation he might Uſe them at his Diſcretion.

5. *THE Creature was deſigned to Serve God, in Serving Man.* Man was not the Laſt End of any thing; it was all for God: Prov. 16. 4. *The Lord made all things for Himſelf.* Man was therefore to Improve the Creature ſo as it might Glorify Him: he was to bring to Him the Tribute from every other thing; to gather up his Rents in the World, and Pay them in faithfully to Him: nor can the Creature attain its End but by being ſo uſed.

6. *GOD for this End endowed Man with Giſts fitting him for this Government.* This was done, Partly in making him a *Reaſonable* Creature; by the Exerciſe of which Reaſon he was able to know the Nature and Uſe of theſe things, and accordingly to Improve them: But Principally by Vertue of the *Image of God* which He conferred upon him; which fitted and diſpoſed him to apply theſe Rational and Moral Powers of his to the right End, which otherwiſe he could not have done: Man then had a Spirit of Government in him at the Firſt.

7. *GOD having thus fitted Man, gave him a Charter of Government over theſe Creatures*: We have it expreſſed, *Gen.* 1. 28. God delegated to Man a Power under Himſelf, whereby he became Vicar, and had Authority over the Works of his hands; Pſal. 8. 6. *Thou madeſt him to have Dominion over the works of thy hands*, &c. Hereby they all come to be in Subjection to him: and for the Specimen of this Authority, He brought them all to *Adam* to give them their Names: *Gen.* 2. 19. Now the Impoſition of Names is a Note of Authority.

8. HENCE, *During Man's Integrity, All the Creatures were in entire Subjection to him.* They all came and did him Homage when they received their Names from him; and God put into them a Paſſive Obedential Diſpoſition. Even ſince the Fall there is a Fear & Dread upon them; Gen. 9. 2. *The Fear & Dread of you ſhall be upon every Beaſt of the Earth*, &c. But before there was a Spontaneous Subjection; there was ſuch an Inſtinct in them.

USE 1. HENCE then we may Infer, *How Unreaſonable a thing Sin is.* That when God had Made Man ſo glorious a Creature, and beſtowed ſo much Bounty and Honour upon him, given him together with his Image to enable him, alſo a whole World to encourage him to Serve his Maker; he ſhould for all this fall from his Allegiance, and revolt from his God, is the moſt unaccountable piece of Ingratitude that can be thought of: Did the *Prophet* ſo expoſtulate with *David*, 2 Sam. 12. 7. *Thus ſaith the Lord, I anointed the King --- Wherefore haſt thou deſpiſed the Commandment of the Lord*, &c. May not God ſo expoſtulate with Man.

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2. THE reason *Why the Creation groans under its Servitude.* It doth so, (*Rom.* 8. 22.) not because Man makes use of it for his Service, for that it was Made for; but because he doth it not for God's Glory, but to his dishonour; so that the Creature is abused by being diverted from its Last End, to the contrary, and therefore it is said to suffer Vanity: And let all that abuse it to their Lusts consider of it.

3. THAT *the Creatures Rebellion against Man should humble him.* It was not so at First: When therefore some Creatures Serve us unwillingly, others do us Harm, and others with-hold their Service from us; it serves to convince us of our Rebellion against God, and shew us what a wofull Mischief the Apostacy hath brought Man under.

4. THAT *Cruelty against the Creature is unbecoming Man.* It is our Fellow-Creature, made for the Glory of God, as well as We, became ours by God's Donation, made to Serve us not to be Abused by us; put under our Dominion, and therefore to be govern'd according to the Rules prescribed by God: For Man to use Cruelty unto the Creature, is for him to degenerate from a Rightful Prince and become a Tyrant.

5. HOW *Preposterous a thing is it for Men to make themselves Slaves to the Creatures.* What is this but to become a Servant to those things which were made to Serve him? Let us be ashamed of it, and endeavour to recover our Dominion; *i. e.* Let us in Heart be above them, no longer to Serve them, or our Lusts by them; but making them Serve us, in helping us in the Service of God.

VI. IT follows that we consider Man's *End*; (for tho' it be not mentioned in the *Answer*, yet it is to be inferred from it.) God makes nothing in vain; and by the Manner of his make, the Nature that was given him, the Perfection that was bestowed upon him, and the Rank he was placed in among the Creatures, we may gather what his Special End was; and accordingly take it up in *This Description*:

IT was that, whereby He, as the Head of the Lower World, was to direct himself, and improve the other Beings, to the Glory of his, and their Creator: This may be dilated in the following *Propositions.*

1. MAN was the *Head of this Lower World.* He was the Chiefest of all Visible Creatures; There were none above him, but God gave him a Lordship and Dominion over them; and this plainly saith, That he could not be for them as his End: The End is Superiour to the thing which serves to it; it must not look beneath but above itself for its End: If these were made for Man then he could not be made for them.

2. HENCE, Man was made *Immediately for God.* All things by the Law of Nature are to serve for some *End*, else they should have their Being in vain; for of that which hath no End, there is no Use. Now the *End* of the Creature must be something *without it self*: herein it differs from God; as he is *from* no other, so He can be *for* no other, but must be his own last End; He depends upon no other, and therefore can serve no other: but every Creature is *from* another, and must therefore be *for* another; it depends elsewhere, and for that Reason must pay its Service elsewhere: Man therefore because he is a Creature cannot be his own last End. Again the *End* of a Creature is something *better than it self*: the End is more Noble than the Means: it cannot then be any thing beneath it: and upon this score Man may not look downward on other Creatures as his End, because they are beneath him. And upon the whole he can have no other Immediate End but God: not the things of the World, because they are put under him; not himself, because he is a Creature; not the Angels, because tho' he was made a little below them in dignity of Nature, yet he was not subjected to them in the order of Gubernation, yea they were to be ministring Spirits for him: God alone is his Sovereign & above him; he is therefore for Him and for no other.

3. *GOD's End and Design in the Creation is His own Glory.* Prov. 16.4. *The Lord hath made all things for Himself.* i. e. The Declaration and Manifestation of His great Name; that He might be known in the World as such a God, and reverenced accordingly; and but for this no Creature had ever been made, Rev. 4.11. *For thy pleasure they are and were Created.*

4. HENCE, *Man's next End & Work was to Direct himself Immediately to the Advancement and Declaration of this Glory of God.* This was to be his proper Work & Employment; it was the Business he was to be constantly occupied about: That which is the End of Mans Renovation, was certainly the End of his Creation; and what that is, see, Isai. 43.21. *This people have I formed for my self, they shall shew forth my Praise.* That is therefore declared to be properly Man's wisdom, Job 28. 28. *Unto man he said, the fear of the Lord that is wisdom*, &c. How he was to Glorify God will be considered afterward under the Head of *Government.*

5. HE was also *to Improve the other Creatures in this Way and to this End.* It was not enough that he himself Served God, but he must also lead them to this Service.

1. THE *other Creatures though they were nextly for Man, yet ultimately for God.* God in giving Man the Dominion over them, and Use of them, doth not give away his Right to, or Property in them: tho' they were by this Means Subordinated, yet they did not lose their respect to their Last End: God should then have parted with his Prerogative which his Holiness will not admit of: they are all His still, and Man himself too: And if he be not his own but anothers, so then is all that he Possesseth: God expects a Glory from the World; He expects a Tribute to be paid Him from all his Creatures: His Works must Praise Him, as well as his Saints Bless Him.

2. HENCE *all the Service that they do for Man is intentionally in order to the Glory of God.* I do not mean that the Creatures themselves have any such Active Intention, for then they must be Rational; but I intend, according to the Natural Order, and Subordination of Beings, in which there was an Impression of the Rule of

Nature

Nature upon them, which leads them all in their blind Obedience to aim at the Glory of God tho' unknowingly: They do therefore diſcover that of God to Man which ſhould direct and ſtimulate him to Glorify God by them and for them; *Pſal.* 19. beg. Man may therefore ſee a great deal of God in their Natures, and the Benefit he hath by them.

3. HENCE *whatſoever Service Man received from the Creature, he was to reflect it back to the Honour of the Creator.* He was to Govern as God's Lieutenant in the World: All the Service which Man hath paid him by the Creature, is the Creature's Obedience to God; it herein follows the *Rule of Government* imprinted on its Nature; it Serves him becauſe God hath ſet him over it, and that can go no further: It therefore now remains Man's Buſineſs to receive this Homage, and bring the Acknowledgment of it to God: We are bidden to *Honour God with our Subſtance*: And thus Man attains his End, as he is ſet above the other Creatures, and helps them to attain theirs.

USE 1. AND will not this give us occaſion to *See & Lament the Miſerable Eſtate of Man by the Fall*, who is thereby *diſabled from Serving to his High & Glorious End.* When we conſider what we were made for; and conſider how utterly we are come ſhort of Ability to perform any thing of it; yea are fallen to be quite Croſs to it; and inſtead of Serving God we Serve our ſelves and our own Luſts; Inſtead of laying our ſelves out for his Glory, we do all we can to Diſhonour Him; and refuſe to pay Him any of the Homage or Tribute that is due to Him: What Tears are ſufficient to bewail this forlorn Eſtate? How unhappy are all they that are ſo, and neither ſee nor bewail it? Were their Eyes opened, and their Hearts touched, they would not but cry out of their own Wretchedneſs. Rom. 3. 23. *All have ſinned and come ſhort of the Glory of God.*

USE 2. THIS tells us *what Multitudes there are in the World, that Live in Vain.* Vanity is the *Loſs of an End*: All they who do not Serve for the End they were made for, muſt needs Live in Vain: Well might the Pſalmiſt ſay, Pſal. 14. 4. *Have all the workers of iniquity no Knowledge?* How few are they that know or think what they came into the World for? but ſuppoſe it was only to Serve their Carnal Appetites, to drench themſelves in Sinfull Pleaſures, to enſlave themſelves to the Creature, and Live to the World and the things of it; as if Man's whole Buſineſs was to Eat, and Drink, and Play: And whoſoever you are that riſe no higher than this; Know it, that you are *Vain* Creatures; you are good for nothing.

USE 3. SEE here *to whoſe Account all the Vanity of the Creature is like to be charged another Day*; viz. of *Sinful Man.* There is an *Univerſal Vanity* which like an overflowing Deluge hath covered this lower World; and all theſe Creatures ſuffer under it: The Apoſtle tells us it is not the Creature's Fault, that doth not patiently ſuſtain it, but groans under it; (*Rom.* 8. 20, 21, 22.) that Acts up to its Ability, Serves to its End; but being to paſs thro' the hands of Sinful Man, it is there ſpoiled: *That* ſtands pointing to God and his Glory, but *Man* takes it, and makes it Serve himſelf; yea & Arms it in Rebellion againſt his Maker. Let Sinners then think of the heavy Account they have to give in, when all the Creatures that have Served them in Vain, ſhall teſtify againſt them; And all the Vanity which hath been brought upon them, ſhall be laid to their Charge: Let this awaken Sinners to Bewail and Repent of their Folly, and ſeek God's Pardon in Chriſt: And let it teach us all to ſee to our ſelves how to Uſe the Creatures of God; that they be not Abuſed, but Improved to his Glory; that ſo they may not riſe up in the Judgment againſt us.

[APRIL 21. 1691.]

SERMON *XLII.*

QUESTION XI.

WHAT are GOD's *Works of* Providence?

ANSWER.

GOD's Works of Providence are, His moſt Holy, Wiſe & Powerful *Preſerving* and *Governing* all his Creatures, and all their Actions.

WHEN GOD had Made a World, and Furniſhed it, He did not now leave it to it's own Guidance; nor did He ſo put it into the Hand of any, tho' never ſo *Noble* a Creature, as to lay off the Care of it from Himſelf: But having Made it for *an End*, He ſet a *Second Hand* to it, for the Managing of it unto *that End*, for which it was Made; and this we call *His Providence.* God doth not do like Human Artificers, *Carpenters, Shipwrights*, &c. who Build *Houſes* for others to Dwell in, *Ships* for others to Sail in; and having ſo done, *look after them* no more.

IN the Inquiry into the *Nature* of *God's Providence*, as it is in the *Anſwer* pointed unto us, we may 1. Make it appear, *That there is a Providence.* 2. Inquire into the *General Nature* of it. 3. Take Notice of it in the *Parts wherein it exerts it ſelf.* We are to make it appear,

I. THAT *there is a* Providence of God *Managing the Affairs of the World.* Tho' the Denial of this be implicit Atheiſm, and a meer *Ethnick* could ſay, "He that Queſtions, or makes "any Doubt about a *Providence* in the World, "ſhould be Anſwered with *Stripes*, and not with "*Arguments*: Yet becauſe there are that ſuſpect the Being of it, & that ſuppoſe all things managed

by a tumultuous & disorderly Casualty; others are puzzled with some Knots which they have no Skill to unty; and it being a main Principle in Religion, and a Foundation of a Christian's Comfort thro' all the Vicissitudes which go over him in this World of Change: It may not be amiss to establish the Truth of this Doctrine against the Cavils of Vain Minds. The Truth is, the very Nature of a Deity being granted, the Being of a Divine Providence cannot be denied: As therefore we formerly argued for the proving *a God*, because there is a *Providence*; so may we with a like force Infer a *Providence*, because *there is a God*: For any to acknowledge either of these, and deny the other is to make himself Guilty of a *Contradiction*: But let me add Two or Three evident Discoveries of it. That there is a *Divine Providence* appears,

(1.) *FROM the* Wisdom & Order *which appears in the Management of all the Creatures that are in the World.* They are most Wisely Acted and Guided to their *Ends*; even such Creatures as have no Principle of Reason to Guide themselves. If we look into the whole Frame of Second Beings, among so many Creatures, there are no Rational Agents, but *Angels* and *Men*; all other Creatures are void of Knowledge and Understanding, and yet are they Guided by exact Wisdom to their *several Ends*; not by their *own*, for they have it not; not by the Wisdom of *Superiour Creatures*, for what Agency have they in this Guidance? It must needs therefore be by the Wisdom of God. When Creatures Act as if they foreknew the Times and Seasons, (*Jer.* 8. 7.) this is not to be attributed to Man's Wisdom, which can no Influence them: Hence that Challenge, Job 39. 26, 27. *Doth the Hawk fly by thy wisdom, and stretch Her wings toward the South? Doth the Eagle mount up at thy Commandment, & make her nest on High?* They Act by a Rule which they know not, and as regular as if they knew it: This saith that there is *One* who both Knows their Rule, and Guides them by it; & that is *God*, and this is *Providence*. Some *Philosophers* observing this, ascribed to the World a *Soul*, making it a great *Animate*; and so seeking to come at God, they fell short of him. The Truth is, the *Soul of the World* is *Divine Providence*, guiding every thing by the Rules of Infinite Wisdom. God is not mixed with the Creature as a part of its *Essence*; but he is with every Creature as an *Efficient*: To see such a World of Creatures in their several Ranks and Stations, so discreetly Ordered, so Wisely Marshalled, and so regularly Marching, each one in its Place, and without fail to reach their great *End*; and yet the greatest part of them blindly, without any Skill or Discretion, not knowing whither they go, and yet going Right; declares evidently what Hand it is that leads them.

(2.) *FROM the* Supremacy *which appears in the wonderful Disposing & Controling all the Affairs and Actions of Rational Beings.* Hereby it appears, that the Wisdom of *Angels* and *Men* is not the Supream Agent in the World, but that there is *One* who is above them; Dan. 4. 17. *The most High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.* Which Truth is more than Manifest by all the Defeatments of the strongest Policies of Men, and overuling them to Ends contrary to the Intention of the Designers; yea also tho' the Powers of Darkness have been in the Combination: All Ages give their Evidence to this by manifold Examples: Men are so Skilfull and Cautious, that they think certainly their Designs must be effected; they have foreseen and antedated as they suppose, all possible Obstructions: But now the Wisest of Men, who think there is no Wisdom like theirs; when they have done their best are strangely frustrated; as Eccl. 9. 11. *The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill, but time & chance happeneth to them all.* If Men did all, then he that hath *most Strength* would get the Day, *&c*: But because it is not so, there is some unseen Cause, some controling Power that secretly defeats them; and often to their greatest Confusion and Astonishment: Yea the Powers of Darkness are hereby also Confuted; and God useth Men and Devils to do His Work, when they never mean it; Isa. 10. 6, 7. *I will send him against an hypocritical nation; and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets: Howbeit, he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so,* &c. It were endless to count the Examples which might be produced for this: It is most eminent, in that none ever designed to subvert any of God's Predicted Counsels, but befooled themselves, and were made to confess that God was above them; and this is *Providence*: *Joseph*'s Brethren, *&c.* are a Pregnant Instance.

(3.) *FROM the* Necessity *of a Divine Providence*: Which thus appears,

1. *THERE is a* Care *necessarily incumbent on God to Provide for* His own *Family.* God is a Living, most Wise, and Powerful Agent: The World is *His*; He hath a great Concern in it; and how should He neglect it? He would never have made it, if He had not intended to look after it: The very *Relation* He bears to it, as *Creator*, Infers that of a *Providence*: He hath made it our Duty to take Care for those of *our Own*; and tho' He be under no necessary Natural Obligation to the Creature, whose very Being is Arbitrary; yet Hypothetically He stands concerned, and cannot with His Honour omit it: He made the World and every thing in it, to be a *Glass* in which His Glory was to be represented; His great Wisdom, Power & Goodness were to shine forth in it; and that He may have the Glory of these, He must set a *Second Hand* to Uphold and Order it; else will He lose all His Glory; and how can it consist with His Holiness to suffer His Great Name to be so Dishonoured? Certain it is that without this *Providence* of His, it had been better if He had never made the World: For,

2. *SHOULD*

2. *SHOULD He neglect the Affairs of the World, all His Work would soon be spoiled.* As the Creature could not make it self, when it was not; so neither can it *Uphold* or *Guide* it self aright now it is made.

1. *IT cannot* Uphold *it self in Being.* The same Hand that *Made* it, must *Maintain* it in Being, at his own Cost and Charges. That all things are Provided for is plain; how else do they continue in their Being? But it is above the Creature's Power, and therefore God must do it. Every Creature was brought into the World, leaning on God's Hand, and it hath not yet learnt to stand alone: The whole World is a sucking Infant depending on the Breasts of Divine Providence: the *Fowls* of the Air have no fore-Provision, yet there is a Provider for them: Helpless and shiftless Creatures have their Food in due Season. Give an Answer to that *Quære*, Job 38. ult. *Who provideth for the Raven his Food?* and Deny a Providence if you can. That Man is not his own Provider and Preserver, tho' he be in the Use of Means, appears from this one thing, *viz.* Who can say and make it good, *I will this Night go to Bed, and rise in Health in the Morning: I will Sow my Field, and Reap such a Crop; I will make such a Venture, it shall return with such Profit?* Man's goings are of the Lord; and because he can't Command them himself, it is a Demonstration that he is under the Power of another, in whose Hands is the Breath of his Nostrils, and whose are all his Ways.

2. *IT cannot* Guide *it self Aright*: The Creature would lose its Way, if it were not Conducted by a Superiour Hand; especially since Man by Sin hath fallen from his Rules, and lost his Way: Except God be Glorified by the Creature, it is spoiled, because that was the End it was made for: That Man doth not of himself since his Fall actually Glorify God is evident; Rom. 3. 23. *All have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God*: That the Creature is by this Means diverted from its proper Use, and Armed in Rebellion, is no less true; and that is the Reason of the groaning of it, (*Rom.* 8. 20.) If therefore God Himself did not Rule, Guide and Conduct the Affairs of the World by His own Hand, all the Design would be utterly frustrate, and the Creature sink under Vanity.

(4.) *THE strange Preservation of the* Book of God, *and the* Church of God *through all Ages, in despite of all Attempts against them.* If there were no other Arguments to prove a *Providence* of God but this, it were enough to confute all Gain-sayers. The *Book of God* hath been spited by Satan, and hated by Ungodly Men; and how many Attempts have they made to Raze those Records? Yet have they out-lived all Essays; when many other Volumns of less Antiquity, which Men have prized, and Satan had no special Malignity against, have perished; and scarce so much as any Moth-eaten Fragments left of them at this Day: And whose Care could this be but God's? Is there not then a *Providence?* The *Church of God* hath ever been a *little Flock*: Earth and Hell have always been Combined against it: the Gates of Hell have been Contriving how to Extirpate it: That hath always been the Consult, Psal. 83. 3, 4. *Come let us cut them off from being a Nation*, &c. There hath been a *Plot* carrying on ever since *Cain*; and how comes it to pass that it hath not taken Effect? Nothing obvious to Humane Sense or Reason could have prevented it: The Wit, the Wealth, the Power hath been on their Side; nor was it any Pity or Tenderness that held their Hands, No: but the Wise Man resolves it into the true reason, Prov. 21. 30. *There is no Wisdom nor Understanding, nor Counsel against the Lord*: And the Psalmist points God's Israel whither they ought to referr it; Psal. 124. beg. *If the Lord had not been on our side, they had swallowed us up quick*, &c.

(5.) *THE* Little Objections *that Vain Men make against it, and* Scruples *that Good Men have sometimes made about it, are the issue of brutal Folly.* Those that Men call dark Providences are so; not in regard of themselves, but our Eye-sight: one Drop of Spiritual Eye-salve, will Clear them up to us: There is no Flaw in them, but a Crack in our Understandings. The Psalmist that was a while exercised with the Frenzy, when he came to himself, confesseth himself to have been a *Beast*, Psal. 73. 21. Some say if there be a *Providence*, how doth the Scripture refer all to *Time* & *Chance*; Eccl. 9. 11. *Time and Chance happeneth to them all.* Luk. 10. 31. *By Chance there came*, &c. But this is easily Answered: The Word of God intends by it nothing else, but an *Event* falling out unexpectedly in respect to Men, tho' not besides the *Intention* of God. The Wise Man's Scope is to shew by an Enumeration of Instances, that the Issue of Human Affairs, is to Man, *Casual* or *Contingent*, by God's Wisely putting in unseen Occurrences, to disappoint their most Rational Hopes: A Man is furnished, and what shall hinder him? Prepared for the Battle, and why should he not get the Victory? Why God puts in something which they dreamt not of; and this Confirms, and doth no way Confute the Doctrine of *Providence*. The Word in *Luke* is of the same Import; and only signifies, That the Man came not Designedly, but Providentially: In respect of *Second Causes*, some things are *Necessary*, some *Contingent*; but this makes nothing against the Wise Determining all by the *First Cause*. Some there be who suspect *Providence*, because Wicked Men, and the Haters of God enjoy so much *Prosperity*, and Godly Men suffer so much *Adversity*. The Observation of the Wise Man, (*Eccl.* 8. 14.) hath made some to *stumble*, others to *break their Necks*: The Psalmist himself was almost at that unhappy Conclusion, Psal. 73. 13. *Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain*: But this is meer *Ignorance*. The Considerations, 1. That there is a Time in which the Attributes of common *Mercy*, *Goodness*, and *Patience* must have their *Declarative Glory* upon some who are only capable hereof in this Life, because after-

wards He that *Made them, will have no Mercy upon them*: 2. That the *Graces* of God's People must have a *Time of Trial, by manifold Temptations*, that they may be *found to Praise*; which can be but in this Life, because after that *They Rest from their Labours*, and *Tears are wiped away*: 3. That there is a *Day of Judgment* coming, in which all things shall be Adjusted; when the Wicked's *Prosperity* shall encrease their *Misery*, and Godly Men's *Afflictions* shall add to their *Felicity*: This will take off all that can be suspected on this Account. The Temple gives sufficient Satisfaction to this; Psal. 73. 17. *I went into the Sanctuary of God, then understood I their End.*

USE. TO excite us to *endeavour a full Confirmation & Establishment in the Belief of this Doctrine*; That there is a *Divine Providence* which Orders all the Affairs of the Creature. And to move us hereto, Consider,

[1.] *IT is of* necessary Influence *into our whole Life.* We must either firmly believe the Providence of God, or punctually deny our Christianity. For,

1. *WHITHER should a Christian repair for all his Relief, in all his Straits & Exigences, but to God?* He professeth himself to have no other Trust or Confidence; he hath renounced the God of *Ekron*, & whither then should he go but to the God of *Israel*? And how shall he go in Faith, if he misdoubts his *Universal Providence*?

2. *WHAT hope can he Comfort himself withal, that he shall enjoy* Supply & Safety *in this World, but from the* Providence *of God*? All the World are his Enemies, they are set against him; if they can Ruin and Undo him, they will: He cannot go to them with any Expectation; if there were no Providence, they would soon Dispatch him; and if he does not believe it, he must needs Despair; he could not stand up against them without it.

3. *HOW shall he exercise the Graces of* Patience & Contentation *without it*? If this one Argument should fail a Child of God, I dare say that he can find no other Bottom to build the Exercise of these Graces upon; and that more especially in Times of sorest Trial: How can he Sanctify God in the Fires; Rejoice in the *Want* of all things; Uphold his Profession in *Integrity*, when he is *sore broken in the Place of Dragons*; Suffer cheerfully the *Loss* of Estate, Liberty, yea Life itself, in the Defence of the *Truths of Christ*; If he doth not believe that there is the Wisdom & Power of God Managing of those Affairs? What was it that stopt *David*'s Mouth? Psal. 39. 9. I *was dumb, I opened not my mouth because thou didst it.*

[2.] *THERE is no* Truth *which Satan more endeavours to undermine our Belief of than* This. He is on all occasions seeking to raise some Scruples & Doubts in our Minds about it: He looks upon this as one main Pillar of our Faith, and if he can once *shake* it, he hopes he shall without great Difficulty *overthrow* the whole Building: If he can bring us to Dispute against *Providence*, he knows that our Religion doth soon come to an End: Hence 'tis that God's People, have found such Temptations strongly assaulting them in Hours of Trial; *Doth God indeed Care for us? Hath He not forgoten to be Gracious? Is he not mindless of our Trouble? Doth he regard tho' we Perish?* And the more such Tumultations we find within us, the more should we engage our selves strenuously to fortify against them.

[3.] CONSIDER *That the Doubting of this Truth, is the Cause of many* Exorbitances *in our Lives.*

1. IT leads to *Atheism* it self. He that first Questions whether there be any *Providence*, will not be long before he Doubts whether there be a *God*: For to think of a God without this Relation to the Creature, is a great Absurdity: And this was the Atheism condemned in them, Ezek. 8. 12. *They say the Lord seeth us not, the Lord hath forsaken the Earth.*

2. IT is the Root of all the *Wicked Dealings* in the World. Men think God is not Careful about them, and therefore they may do what they list: He that Denies a *Providence*, will not be afraid of Committing any *Abomination*; Ezek. 8. 12. *Hast thou seen what they do in the dark, every one in the Chambers of his Imagery?* &c.

3. IT is the Reason why Persons seek to Live by *Unrighteous Courses.* If they suppose that God is not concerned to Provide for his Creature, then they must Provide for themselves; they will be their own Carvers, and move by Rules of their own devising, and such as gratify the Lusts of the Flesh.

[4.] CONSIDER *How* Advantageous *the Firm Belief of this Truth is to a* Christian.

1. IT will make us *Mindful of God*; when we observe how Mindful He is of us: It will help us to see God in all that goes before us.

2. IT will make us *Thankful for every Mercy*: When we see the Hand of God reaching it down to us, it will teach us gratefully to Accept it of him, and study Returns, *Psal.* 116. 12. *What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits towards me?*

3. IT will help us to *Rely upon God.* He that Doubts of Providence cannot place his Dependance upon God: But when we know that we can have nothing but what comes from him, that will direct us to go to Him, and wait at His Footstool: It will animate our Prayers, and make us to go to Him in Earnest.

4. IT will teach us to *Walk Righteously.* It will be a Caution to us, to have a Care of Provoking Him; to study to Please Him, and carry it in all things so as to enjoy His Favour, counting it better than Life.

5. IT will teach us to *Glorify God* in all the *Revolutions* that go over the World. When we acknowledge His Providence to be the Conducter of all; this will make all to fall down and Worship Him.

[MAY 19. 1691.]

SER-

SERMON *XLIII.*

II. NOW let us conſider of the *Nature of Providence in General*; which may be gathered out of the Diſtribution offered in the *Anſwer*, in this *Deſcription*:

IT is that Efficiency of God, whereby He doth, after a moſt eminent Manner, take care of, & watch over all His Creatures, in all reſpects, according to His own Counſel. This Deſcription is comprehenſive; And in it obſerve,

[1.] *IT is one part of God's Efficiency*: An external Tranſient Act, the Operation of the Firſt Being with relation to the Second. In Creation there was a Beginning of Efficiency; In *Providence* there is a Continuation of it. Hence that, Joh. 5.17. *My Father worketh hitherto, & I work.*

[2.] *IT is that whereby He takes care of, and watcheth over His Creatures.* This is the ſpecial Nature of it, and that wherein it differs from Creation; that made them, & this looks after them: The word tranſlated, to provide, *Gen.* 22.8. ſignifies, *to ſee*, or *look* to a buſineſs; and this watching, (which is alſo aſcribed to God, *Gen.* 31.49.) implys, That the glorious Attributes of God are always awake, and that they are at work in the Frame of the World, managing of the Affairs thereof, and that with greateſt Warineſs. The World is a great Veſſel; He looks to it and Steers it, takes care that it do not through Negligence ſuffer Shipwrack: Hence the Providence of God is deſcribed after ſuch a manner; Pſal. 33.13,14. *The Lord looketh from Heaven, He beholdeth all the Sons of men; From the Place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth.*

[3.] THIS Care & Watch *extends to all things in all reſpects, and that after a moſt eminent manner.* And herein the Glory of Divine Providence appears: And we may take a diſtinct account of the Excellency of it in a few particulars.

1. IT extends it ſelf *Univerſally.* It reacheth far and wide, throughout the whole Frame of Beings: it graſps within it all the Works of God; and there is Nothing out of the Watch of it: As the whole received its Being from Him, ſo it all comes under His Watch: Hence that, Pſal. 145.15, 16. *The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou giveſt them their meat in due ſeaſon. Thou openeſt thine hand, & ſatisfieſt the deſire of every living thing.* And there are Two Things here conſiderable,

(1) IT reacheth to *all Times.* It is a continued, uninterrupted Providence: There is no Moment in which His wonderful Care is not exerted, or His Powerful Hand is not at work about the Creature. What is aſſerted of his Special Care of his Church, is a Truth concerning his Univerſal Care about the whole World, Pſal. 121.4 *He that keepeth Iſrael, will neither ſlumber nor ſleep.* He ſet this Hand to the Creature as ſoon as He had given it its Being, and hath continued it hitherto, & will do ſo as long as it hath a Being: it is altogether without the leaſt Intermiſſion.

(2) IT reacheth alſo to *all Places.* He views every Part & Corner of the Creation, and pries into every Place: there is none ſo remote as to be out of his Watch; there is no where, where the Eye of Providence doth not view & obſerve, Prov. 15.3. *The Eyes of the Lord are in every place; beholding the evil and the good.* And it is no idle Speculation, but it is Operative: There is no Place ſo dark as to ſhut his Eyes out; Pſal. 139. 12. *The Darkneſs hideth not from Thee.* Hence the Pſalmiſt could diſcover no Place, where to get out of the reach of it, *v.* 7. &c. *Whither ſhall I go from Thy preſence?--- If I aſcend up into Heaven, Thou art there: If I make my bed in Hell, behold, Thou art there:* &c.

2. IT extends it ſelf to *All Things Individually*: not only to the Kinds or Species of things, but each Individual in the Kind, (*Pſal.* 145 15,16.) It is not determined or bounded by ſuch & ſuch Beings, but it determines all Second Cauſes; & is not only the Univerſal, but alſo the Particular Firſt Cauſe of all things. God doth not ſo look to ſome things, as to neglect others; and therefore, what was obſerved of Efficiency in general, is applicable to this part of it; It reacheth to the Greateſt things, (*Job* 7.12.) It Rules over the Kingdoms & Empires of the World, (*Dan.* 4.17.) And it doth not Over-look the Leaſt things, but is concerned in the Numbring of the very Hairs of our Head, (*Mat.* 10.30.) There are no Beings ſo high, but He that is higher than they, manageth them with His Providence; nor any Beings ſo contemptible, but He who Cares for the Works of his own Hands, ſees to them, and looks after their Affairs.

3. IT extends to *all the Accidents* or *Circumſtances* depending upon things: Not only the things themſelves, but all the Contingencies of them. Thoſe things which fall out to the Creature, to an Eye of humane Obſervation, with the moſt Caſualty, that look as if they were meerly Fortuitous, yet they have a moſt abſolute dependance upon His Providence: As is inſtanced in a Lot; Prov. 16.33. *The whole diſpoſing thereof, is of the Lord*: A *Sparrow* accidentally falling to the ground; Mat. 10.29. *Not one of them fall to the ground without your Father.* There can be no Action done by, or Chance befall any of the Creatures, but what are diſpoſed by this all-doing Providence of God.

4. THIS Providence is *very Exact* in Inſpecting and Ordering of theſe Affairs. God exerts a great deal of Carefulneſs therein: There is no Being goes wrong, ſo as to miſs the Deſign He hath about it: There is nothing falls out amiſs or beſides the Scope he Aims at. All things are made by it Serviceable to the Advancement of his own great Ends: Nothing is omitted which is of Conſequence; nothing miſtaken or inſupplied. Among Men, there are great and fair Deſigns which are loſt and miſcarry upon a little Miſtake; many a *Plot* becomes Abortive: but God's *Providence* is ſo heedful in all his Affairs, as to Antedate all Miſcarriage; and without any Indiſcretion, to bring about His Eternal Purpoſes: Job 23. 13. *He is of one mind, and who can turn Him? And what his Soul deſireth, even that he doth.*

5. THE *Exquiſiteneſs* of this Providence farther appears in thoſe *Curious Contrivances, and Secrets of Divine Wiſdom, whereby God adverteth*

His

His Designs in the World. This is set forth, and deciphered in the Prophet's Vision; *Ezek.* 1. The *Wheels* there mentioned, signify the *Providence of God*: The *Rings* of these Wheels are, the several *Turnings* of this Providence: Of these it is asserted,

(1.) THAT they were *High, & Dreadful.* The *Mysteries* of Providence are stupendious and unsearchable: Such things as are too Intricate for the Creature's Skill to Analyse, or to be able to Soar in his Contemplation to the height of them: They afford Matter of Admiration rather than deep Inquisition.

(2.) THAT they were *full of Eyes*: Intimating the Curiousness, Exactness, and great Wisdom, that is Conversant about God's *Providence.* And there are Three Things in special, *to Name no more*, which shew the *Exquisiteness* of God's *Providence* on this Account.

1. THE *Causing of Occurrences, though seemingly never so Cross & Opposite, in the Issue to Work most Harmoniously to the Advancement of His Designs, and fulfilling of His Ends.* Example may be particularly given in the Case of *Joseph*: God designed to make him a *Preserver* of His People; and what strange Changes is he carryed thro' in Order to the Accomplishment of this: And who would have tho't of those foregoing Passages that befell him, that they had the least Aspect towards that Advancement which afterwards he arrived unto? And yet there was never an One but what was a Step towards it.

2. IN *the bringing of Good out of Evil.* In *Creation* God Made something out of Nothing: Thus the World was produced from a *Negative* Contrary, and that was Wonderful. But in *Providence*, God brings *Good* out of *Evil*, from a *Positive* Contrary, which is more Wonderful. *Jacob* thought that those Crosses he met with, made *against* him, (*Gen.* 42. 36.) Yet all proved in the End to have been *for* him. *Asaph* is *Plagued* all the Day long; and he thinks he hath *Laboured in vain*, (Psal. 73. 13.) but the Sanctuary informed him, that the *Counsel of Wisdom*, was Guiding of him unto Glory, in all this *Course* it led him in *Ver.* 24.

3. IN *His having to do with Sin it self*, without any the least *Spot* or *Unholiness*, Wonderful is the Working of God's Providence. Here, He can so permit Sin, as that it shall infallibly *be*; and yet not so effect it, as that it shall be any *Stain* to His Holiness in the least: As the *Sun* is not defiled by shining upon the most Dirty stinking Places, tho' they Stink the more for it's shining upon them; so God is then *most Holy*, when He is giving of Men up to *Sin*, He can so Order it, that *Absalom* shall Commit the most horrid Abomination, without being a *blameable Cause* of it: He can harden *Pharoah*'s Heart; and yet very justly *Punish* him for that Hardness of his.

4. THE *Eminency* of this Providence further appears, In that *He is always intimately Present with the Creature.* It doth immediately reach every Creature with its Influence: Acts 17. 28. *He is not far from every one of us*: *For in him we Live, Move and have our Being.* He is *Omnipresent* with every Second Cause; and at Work Himself with all things that do Work: He is the Great *Efficient*, and Creatures are but His *Tools* that He Works by: (*Isa.* 10. 15.) There is nothing doth or can Stir without Him: It is not *Bread* alone that Nourisheth a Man, but His *Efficacious Word* that goes along with it. The *Action* is the Creature's; It is the *Man* that Believes and Obeys, but it is *He* that Works it in him: Phil. 2. 13. *For it is God that worketh in you, both to Will & to Do of his good Pleasure.* Nor is there only the Immediacy of Vertue deriving from him; but also of His *Presence* with the thing: Go whither we will, *He is there*; Psal. 139. 7, &c.

[4.] AND this Providence doth all this *according to His Counsel.* That which God by an *Immanent* Act did *Decree*, that by a *Transient* Act He doth *Effect*; and that according as He did Decree it: Eph. 1. 5, 11. *Being Predestinated according to the Purpose of Him, who worketh all things according to the Counsel of His own Will.* This is One of those Works in which God *Executeth His Decrees*: And Providence is exceeding *Exact* in following the Pattern laid out in *His Purpose*: Those *Seven Hundred Benjamites* that could Sling a Stone to an *Hair's Breadth*, were not so Exact in hitting the Mark, as *God's Providence* is in answering His Decree: He doth not Vary in the least from it, nor doth one Jot or Tittle of it fail; but all comes to pass precisely as it was intended.

I cannot pass from this Doctrine of *Providence* in *General*, without making some particular Glances upon it, that may be as so many Practical *Inferences* from it, *viz.*

USE 1. THAT *there are no* Fortuitous *or* Casual *Events in the World, falling out by* Fortune, *or besides the Intention of the* First Cause: No, not in the *least Accidents* or *Circumstantial Casualties* which happen to the Creature. *Fortune* was a Blind Idol devis'd by the Heathen; and is by the Devil spit upon the Face of Divine Providence. That there is a Contingency in things with respect to Second Causes, is a *Truth*: But to say there is any thing meerly Casual, referring to the First Cause, is *Blasphemy.* Accidents are Casual to us, because in respect to Second Causes, they are equally like to be, and not to be; but in respect to God they are not so: We are therefore here taught to see a Hand of God in all Casual Events. Men are apt to put them off with a Slight or Contempt, and say, *They might have befallen others, as well as me*: True, as to the things themselves; but if the *Eye* of God Orders all things, then there was a *Finger* of God Disposing of those Casualties to befall us in particular: And this ought to be studied and considered. The Man *Drew a Bow at a Venture*; but God *directed the Arrow* to hit *Ahab*, and Kill him, according as He had Threatned.

2. THAT *we can never be from* out of God's Sight, nor *from* under his Hand. His *Eye* prys into every Corner; His Providence extends to every Place: And it did not only do so formerly, but it doth so still. His *Hand* is at Work in the most

moſt Remote, as well as in the Neareſt Places; for there is nothing Remote to Him: And this tells us,

(1) THAT *there is no Place where we may Sin Secretly.* Atheiſtical Men think to get out of God's Sight, and from his Watch, and there to Sin without Controll: but this is a grand Cheat of themſelves: Hence,

(2) THERE *is no Place that can hide us from the Anger of God.* If we Sin & Provoke Him, any where, there is His Providence at work, and Wo will be to us. *David* was Conſcious of this, and it put an aw upon him, (*Pſal.* 139. 7.)

(3) THERE *is no Place where we may not truſt and rely on God's Providence.* If we be but ſure we be in that Place, and about that Employment which God calls us unto, we may ſecure our ſelves in this, That God is there, and He is taking Effectual Care for us; if it be in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, it matters not, becauſe He is with us to Conduct us, *Pſal.* 23.4.

3. LEARN hence *God's great Condeſcendence and Benignity to the Creatures*, in that *He Himſelf looks after them all.* It is a fond Objection which ſome make againſt God's Univerſal and Particular Providence; that it ſeems to be a Diſgrace to Him, and contrary to His Great Majeſty, to ſtoop ſo low, as to intermeddle with theſe mean things here below, eſpecially the more Inferiour & Deſpicable Creatures: But it may ſuffice to ſay, That tho' among Men Greatneſs and Goodneſs ſeldom meet, yet in God they are inſeparable: And it is ſo far from being a Diſcredit to His Super-excellent Majeſty, that by thus doing, His Power and Goodneſs do ſo much the more appear and ſhine forth. Proud Man may think it matter of ſcorn to meddle with ſuch or ſuch Occaſions; but God doth not ſo, nor will he contemn, ſo as to account ſuch Things unworthy of his looking to as he himſelf hath made for the illuſtration of his Glory by: And this may encourage the Pooreſt & moſt Abaſed Souls to Rely on him, and put their Truſt in his Providence.

4. THAT *there is nothing comes to paſs in the World that could have been otherwiſe, when* all Cauſes *are put together.* If God doth every thing, and that according to His Counſel, which is fixt & unalterable; then there is a Neceſſity, or an Infallibility of the Futurition: There was a Certainty of the thing, altho' this doth not hinder the Contingency of it as to ſecond Cauſes, or put any Violence upon it, to enforce it thus to Act: There is no Fatal Neceſſity laid upon God, as the *Stoicks* dreamt: He Acts with the greateſt Liberty in all: but there is an Immutability in his Nature; and his Will having freely determined and laid out all his Works, He is now engaged, and He will not vary from it, (*Job* 23.13.) Neither is the ſecond Being, eſpecially, rational and voluntary Agents, under any Compulſion, but Act according to their own Choice, and yet no otherwiſe than in Subordination to the Rules of Providence; ſo that if they Act againſt the Rules of Moral Obedience, they are not for this Reaſon to be excuſed.

5. THAT *there is Infinite Wiſdom in all that befalls the Creature in this World.* It is not blind Fortune, but Al-ſeeing Providence that doth every thing: and all which that doth is according to Counſel, & that of Him who is the Alwiſe God: From whence we may infer,

(1) THAT *there is no Liberty for us to dare to lay any thing of Blame upon God, whatever we meet with*: They are Holy Providences, becauſe contrived by Him for His Glory: They are Wiſe, becauſe, deliberated in His eternal Counſel: For us therefore to find fault with them, or Charge folly or indiſcretion upon them, is a daring contempt of God: The conſideration that it is His Doing muſt ſtop our Mouths, *Pſal.* 39.9,22,23.

(2) THAT *we may, in having done our Duty, reſt in God's Providence, let it be what it will.* Tho' Senſe and carnal Reaſon are diſquieted, and ready to Murmur at it; yet, be it never ſo abſtruſe, and dark, this is enough to ſatisfy us, That there is a Hand of God in this Event, and that He brought it to paſs according to His determinate Counſel: And with this the Pſalmiſt ſtopt his own Mouth, and quieted his tumultuous Thoughts, Pſal. 73.23,24. *Nevertheleſs, ---- Thou haſt holden me by my right Hand: Thou ſhalt guide me with thy counſel*, &c.

6. THAT *we are to acknowledge our Being, all our Comforts, and all our Hopes of a well Being, to have their Dependance upon God's Providence.* And this calls upon us to wait upon Him for the Continuance of all to us, with Faith; hence that, Job 10.12. *Thou haſt granted me Life and Favour; & thy Viſitation hath preſerved my Spirit.* Is *Job* Preſerved to the next hour? It is becauſe God extends His careful Providence to him. If God ſhould keep us by Day, and not by Night, the laſt hour, and not this, we ſhould never get thro' it: We could not ſo long ſtand alone. That is an excellent Watchman indeed, that ſo watcheth as not ſo much as to ſlumber: How ſhould we then be continually bringing home the Acknowledgment of all unto God?

7. THIS tells us *that we are to ſubmit all our Concerns and Actions unto the* Providence *of God.* As we can do Nothing without Him; unleſs we have the Concourſe of His Efficiency to enable us to do all our Works, we muſt ſit ſtill and do nothing; ſo muſt all our Dependance be upon His Operation: We have no command of Events, we may do our utmoſt, uſe our beſt Prudence, take Care and Caution, be very diligent, & omit nothing that is rationally tending to further our Deſign; but after all, it will be juſt as God will: This tells us then, that we have nothing to do, but to ſtudy Duty, and faithfully to attend upon it, and then commend it unto God: This Doctrine is the Ground of all ſuch Counſels as are given us, *Prov.* 16.3. and *Pſal.* 37 5. *Commit thy way unto the Lord: Truſt alſo in Him, and He ſhall bring it to paſs.* And this is the only way to keep our Comforts, in a duly compoſed frame of Spirit under all the Viciſſitudes of Providence that paſs over us.

8. IF God be ſo *careful* in His Providence for *Us*, it tells us, *That we ought to be very Careful in Serving of Him.* Whom ſhould we Serve, but Him in whom we Live, Move, and have our Being? All that Good and Benefit we enjoy, all the

Succeſs

Succeſs which we meet with in our Affairs, all the Comforts that we taſte of from one time to another, do with one Voice call upon us to make it our Study & Endeavour to Honour & Glorify this God; and without intermiſſion to purſue the Duties he hath laid us under; and of every good Thing we now taſte, to make it our Buſineſs to inquire with the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 116.12. *What ſhall I render to the Lord for all his Benefits towards me?*

[JUNE, 16. 1691.]

SERMON *XLIV.*

TO the preceding *Deſcription* we may adjoyn, for farther Illuſtration, this *Diſtinction*, viz That the Providence of God is either *Immediate* or *Mediate*. This doth not conſtitute divers ſorts of Providence, but only ſhews a divers reſpect that is to be put upon it; for there are both of theſe in every Providence, that befalls the Creature: only according to the more or leſs appearing of the latter, we are wont to Denominate it: As will appear by conſidering of them.

1. *IMMEDIATE Providence*, is that *whereby God by Himſelf takes Care of all things as their abſolute Cauſe:* And this is fully Expreſs, *Act.* 17.28. *In Him we live, move and have our Being.* He never doth any thing ſo by Means, but that He Himſelf is immediately concern'd, and acting in it: There is nothing done but He is the Doer of it. And there is a *double Immediacy* we are to aſcribe to Him.

(1) *THERE is an Influential Vertue goes forth from Him with reſpect to the Entity which appears in every Effect.* There is no Operation of the Creature wherein this vertual Influence doth not exert it ſelf: hence all things that come to paſs are Attributed to Him: no Creature could do any thing, at any time, if He did not derive the Vertue unto it from Himſelf by which it doth it: Only here we muſt diſtinguiſh, between the *Entity* and the *Irregularity* of the Action; of which we may afterward have occaſion to conſider: But it is on this account that Second Cauſes have the title of Inſtruments put upon them, Iſai. 10.5. *O Aſſyrian, the Rod of mine Anger*, &c.

(2) THERE is alſo an *Immediacy of the Divine Preſence with every Effect that is wrought in the World.* God himſelf is preſent with it, not only by His *Vertue*, but alſo His *Being*: His Omnipreſence hath already been ſpoken to; and we are to obſerve, That He is not an Idle Spectator, but an Agent in all; *Amos* 3.6.

2. *MEDIATE Providence*, is that *whereby God looks after the Affairs of the World, by improving of Secondary Cauſes, in the carrying on His great Deſign.* Tho' both the Being & Operations of Second Cauſes are from the Firſt Cauſe Efficiently, yet they are the next Cauſes of their own Actions Formally: And hence, with reſpect to ſuch Effects as are produced by them, God is ſaid to work *Mediately*, (i. e.) in and by them, becauſe they do nothing but what He enableth them to do by His Influence, as well as Determines by His Decree. And here Three *Concluſions* may be Obſerved,

1. *THAT God could as well Work all without them, as with them.* It is all one to Him as to Ability which way he Works: It is as eaſy to Him to bring about His Projects without the Mediation of Second Cauſes, as by it: for when there are never ſo many of theſe at Work, they muſt be all of them Influenced and Enabled by Him; elſe they can do nothing: If He be with them, let them be never ſo Mean, they proſper; if He be away, be they never ſo Potent, they fail, 2 Chron. 14.11. *Lord, it is nothing with Thee to help, whether with many, or them that have no power.*

2. THAT hence, *God doth not uſe Means or Inſtruments, through any Defect of Vertue in Him, but out of the Abundance of his Goodneſs.* He wants not Vertue, for He gives them all theirs; but He is willing to put ſome dignity of Efficiency upon the Creature; and by the Mediation of Second Cauſes, to render His own Efficiency the more Obſervable. Hence, in the moſt eminent Works of Providence, God uſeth ſuch Means many times as have the leaſt Aptitude or Ability in them to bring them about, Amos 5.9. *He ſtrengtheneth the ſpoiled againſt the ſtrong.* 2 Chron. 24.24. 1 Cor. 1.27, 28. *Judg.* 7.2.

3. *THE Second Cauſe Acts, tho' Mediately, yet as Properly and Really, as if there were no Firſt Cauſe.* The Being and the Actings of the one, do not deſtroy the Being, and the Actings of the other; No, not in the very ſame Actions: God Acts *Efficiently* and *Influentially*; the Creature Acts *Inſtrumentally* and *Formally*: God Acts as the *Firſt & Supream*; the Creature as the *Second*, as a *Subordinate* Cauſe.

USE 1. THIS tells us, *That we are not ſo much concerned to engage* Second *Cauſes as the* Firſt. We are then Strong, not when we are compaſſed about with a Multitude of Secondary Auxillaries, but when we have God on our ſide. The Foundation on which true Faith builds it's Confidence, is not Means or Inſtruments, but God alone; who can afford us Help in all Caſes, either with, or without the Means, as He ſees meet. This may quiet us at our loweſt Ebbs; Dan. 3.17. *Our God is able to Deliver.* It may ſatisfy us when we have none ſhut up or left; (*Rom.* 8.32.) Make ſure of this, and no matter how Many, how Mighty, how Crafty they be who are againſt us.

USE 2. TO *Teach us to diſtinguiſh of the* Good *or* Evil *which befalls us by Mediation of Second Cauſes.* As theſe have an Influence, and are Voluntary, ſo we may obſerve their Good or Ill Will; But as there is an Immediacy of God's Efficiency in theſe very things, ſo we are to Submit and Adore: This diſtinction *David* obſerved in *Shimei*'s Curſing. *In ſum*, As the Action comes from the Creature, ſo we are to reflect upon that in it; but as it comes to us, we are to look beyond the Creature, to Him who doth all things according to His *Holy Counſel.*

III. WE are now to conſider *the* Kinds *and* Parts *of God's Provideace.*

Firſt, THE Kinds *of Providence are Two*, viz. *Ordinary* & *Extraordinary.* God can provide for

for His Creatures in an Ordinary way, or He can go in an Extraordinary Path: He hath more Ways than one to Provide for His Creatures in. We may conſider theſe ſeverally:

[1.] THE *Ordinary Providence* of God is that *whereby He Provides for His Creatures according to the Order He put them into in the Creation.* It is therefore called *Ordinary*, becauſe it is that which for the moſt part God follows in the way of His Providence: And becauſe there is an Order or Method preſcribed in it; we may briefly take it up in a few *Concluſions.*

1. IN His *Ordinary* Providence *God uſeth the Creatures, and ſets Second Beings on Work.* God's Ordinary Providence is *Mediate*; He makes Uſe of Heaven, Earth, many Senſitive and Inſenſitive Creatures, every one in their Places, to be Improved accordiug as His Infinite Wiſdom ſees moſt ſuitable, in the ſeveral Stations they are in: God doth not Ordinarily Provide for, and Maintain His Creatures, without their Inſtrumental Agency in it: He ſets them to Work, & He Himſelf Works in and with them.

2. AMONG theſe Second Cauſes, *there is a certain* Order *obſerved by the Providence of God in the Improving of them.* There is a Subordination of one Cauſe to another; they are Tied together, and follow one the other, as ſo many Links in a Chain, ſo as that one goes before, and upon that another follows in it's Courſe: We have an Account of it; Hoſ. 2.21,22. *I will hear ſaith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they ſhall hear the earth, and the earth ſhall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oyl, and they ſhall hear Jezreel.* And it is God who puts every one of theſe to Act in it's Place. The *Husbandman* muſt firſt Manure his Ground, and then caſt in the Seed; the *Heavens* muſt then Diſtill their Showers, and aſſiſt with their Influences; the *Earth* muſt receive them; and the *Plant* muſt draw them to it, and by Degrees come to Maturity, *&c.* And there are ſo many various Steps and Gradations in theſe things: And God is in the Top of all.

3. THESE Second Cauſes in their Order, *Act from a* Natural Principle; *or according to the* Law of Nature, *which was imprinted upon them in their Creation.* There is a Nature put into the things themſelves by the God of *Nature*, deriving from the Vertue & Efficaciouſneſs of that Word which was left upon them when they were Made, when God ſaid, *Let them be ſo*, and *they were ſo*; which Impreſſion remains on them to Perpetuity, and is their *very Nature*; ſo as that they have in them a Natural Vertue and Diſpoſition, enclining them ſo to Act and exert themſelves in the *Order* which God firſt ſtated them in, when He Made them: And when the thing Acts according hereunto, it then Acts *Naturally* and not *Forcedly.*

4. THE *Law of Nature*, or *thoſe Rules imprinted on the Natures of things, was moſt* Harmonious & Agreeable *to their Natures.* Herein the Wiſdom of God Diſplays it ſelf, in that He put a fitneſs into every Creature to Serve to it's Ends, and conſequently uſeth it in his Providence according to that Fitneſs; ſo that he follows this Courſe in His Ordinary Providence to Guide and Order all Creatures according to the Inclination & Capacity of their Natures: things meerly Natural according to Inſtinct and Rational Beings by Direction of their Reaſon.

5. THESE Rules, *by which God carries on the Affairs of the World in the Courſe of His Ordinary Providence, are* Unchangable. They are ſetled invariable *Rules*: God may go from or beſide theſe Rules if He will; but that is *Extraordinary* Providence, as we ſhall hear; but the Rules themſelves alter not; they are Ordinances made for Perpetuity: Hence ſuch Expreſſions about them; Jer. 31.35,36. *Thus ſaith the Lord, which giveth the Sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the ſtars for a light by night, which divideth the ſea when the waves thereof rore; the Lord of hoſts is his name. If thoſe ordinances depart from before me, ſaith the Lord, then the ſeed of Iſrael alſo ſhall ceaſe from being a nation before me for ever.* Chap. 33. 20. *Thus ſaith the Lord, If you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there ſhould not be day & night in their ſeaſon; Then may alſo my covenant be broken with David my ſervant*, &c. The Rule of the Creature is always one, in the ſame Caſe and Reſpect; that is under an Obligation Natural to go in the ſame Path, and cannot go out of it by it ſelf; God gave it a Law at Firſt, and it abides under it as long as the Sun and Moon endure; and hence it comes to paſs that we are ordinarily able to Judge of Effects in their Cauſes; only remembring that God Rules all.

Use 1. THIS tells us, *That we cannot Depend upon the* Ordinary *Providence of God, but in the uſe of Means.* Hence that Preſcription, Gen. 3. 19. *In the ſweat of thy face ſhalt thou eat bread.* If we will Live in this World, we muſt ſo lean upon the Hand of God, as to be employed in ſeeking our Livelihood; whence we may conclude it neceſſary, that every one have a *Particular Calling*, and uſe Diligence in it. There is no Contradiction between Truſting in God for our Supply, Maintenance, Defence, and uſing all regular Endeavours for the obtaining of them. They that pretend to Truſt God's Providence, in a neglect of regular Endeavours, do not indeed *Truſt* it, but *Mock* it. God indeed would not have our *Secular Employments* hinder our *Religious Duties*, in their Seaſon; but he would have us *Diligent* in our Place. He could *Give us all* without our ſtriking one ſtroke; but He hath appointed another way, and our Faith and Obedience muſt go together; the Diligent Hand makes Rich, but Sloth, and Poverty, and Rags, and Shame muſt be expected to go together.

Use 2. LEARN hence, That *our ordinary Supply and Livelihood, is not in our Hands, but depends on the Providence of God.* It is He who Orders and diſpoſeth of Second Cauſes in their Subordinate Station, according to His own Pleaſure; ſo that when we have done all that we can do, laid out our beſt Prudence and utmoſt Diligence for the advancing of our Deſigns, we muſt ultimately reſolve all into His Providence The Husbandman Plows his Ground, and Sows his

Seed; he hath gone as far as he can at the present, but the Seed may Rot in the Ground, *&c.* The *Merchant* wisely considers and Adventures his Estate, and hopes for a good Return, but how many Casualties are there out of his Hands? All that we have now to do, is to Commend it to God, believing in the Promise, that He will Provide for us in the way of our Duty, and according to His Sovereign Wisdom. If we fear Him, He hath said that we shall not Want; and He hath the Ordering of all Second Causes in His Power, and is able to Command His Blessing upon us, by helping them to Work suitably, and preventing such Casualties as they are in their own Nature liable unto. Whether therefore we succeed, or be disappointed, we must acknowledge it to Him, and not pore too much upon Second Causes.

[2.] THE *Extraordinary Providence* of God is that *whereby He Provides for His Creatures, by skipping over, or inverting the Order of the Natural Course of things.* And this Providence is that which we call *Miraculous.* Not to insist upon this, Let us take up the opening of it in a few particulars,

1. *A Miracle is a Work that is* above the Power *of Second Causes to produce.* It exceeds the force of the Operation of the Second Being; and it is therefore called *a Wonder* in Scripture; for tho' there be some *Wonders* that be not properly *Miracles,* since there may be a secret Natural Influence, the Cause whereof we cannot discern, which is the ground of our Admiration, yet there is no *Miracle* but what is *Wonderful*: Such therefore is a *True Miracle,* as no Second Being can Effect by it's own Vertue; such as for the *Sun* to stand still, and go back; a *Man* born Blind, to have his Sight restored; a *Virgin* to Conceive; a *Dead Body* to be restored; and *Diseases* healed with a *Word*; and many the like: In which though God may use *Men* in the *Operation,* yet they do nothing at all to the *Production* of them, but the whole *Efficiency* is of God.

2. *A Miracle is the* overpassing *of Second Causes.* It is a Working of Effects *Per Saltum,* or *all at once*; and for this Reason it is above the Power of the Creature, which Acts according to the *Laws of Nature,* which are here over-skipped: In *Ordinary* Providence we must Plow, Sow, *&c.* before we can have Bread; but God can skip over all these *Media,* and multiply a few Loaves to the Feeding of many *Thousands*: If the *Corn* had been encreased by *Sowing,* it must have taken a long Time, but He did it at a *Word*; and that, not by making any *New Matter* in the Creation; but by causing that *Matter* to become *Bread* immediately, which in the *Ordinary Way* must have past through many Successive Changes before it could have come to that.

3. *GOD is the only* Author *&* Efficient *of Miracles.* Men may be *Moral* Causes of them, by *Prayer*; as *Elias,* when he Prayed for *Fire,* &c. and for the restoring of the *Dead Child*'s Life: Or when God *useth* them as such by whom he will shew the Miracle; as *Peter* and *John* in healing the *Impotent Man*: But *Physical* Causes they cannot be; No, not so much as *Instrumental*: Hence they deny it to *themselves,* and ascribe it to *Christ,* Acts 3.12,13. *Ye Men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness, we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our Fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus.* And their being done in *His Name,* proves Him to be God. Whenever a *Miracle* is wro't, that is the *Finger* of God.

4. *MIRACLES are a plentiful Testimony unto the* Divine Omnipotency. There is nothing which doth more bespeak the Almighty Power of God than these; it Commands Men to say, that he can do every manner of thing; and His Power is not limited: Christ therefore gives that as a Reason why the Man was born Blind, Joh. 9.3. *That the works of God should be manifest in him*: There was a *Miracle* to be wro't in him.

5. *MIRACLES have been usually wrought by God for* Signs. They are *sensible Signs*: The working of them, if we consult the Scripture, was on purpose to be an uncontrolable Conviction of something to Men: Sometimes to Ratify His *Promises, Exod.* 4. *beg.* Sometimes to convince them of *Apostacy,* 1 *Kings* 13.3,4,5. Sometimes to establish a *Doctrine,* as the Miracles wrought by Christ and his Apostles. God was not wont to Work Miracles meerly for themselves, but for some *Spiritual End,* as every where we may observe in Scripture.

USE 1. HENCE then, *Satan by himself, or Instruments, can Work no Miracle*: His Signs are called, *Lying Wonders,* 2 Thes. 2. 9. He knows the Nature of things better than we do, and can therefore apply them to Operations that we are not able to see into, so as to see the Reason of the Connection between the Causes and Effects whence we are astonish'd at them; but his Signs are usually *Lying*; *i. e.* meer *Impostures,* & jugling *Tricks,* that have no Reality in them, but a deception of our Senses.

USE 2. THIS may teach us *to Depend upon God, even then when there is no possibility of Help doth appear from Second Causes; or according to the Order & Course of Nature.* If *Ordinary* Supply fails, God hath Magazines *Infinite,* to Relieve the Necessities of His People out of; and altho' *Miracles* do not so frequently appear as formerly, because the *Gospel* is Ratified to Men; yet thus far may & ought the People of God to Trust & Confide in Him, *viz.* To Believe and Rejoice in Him, when the *Fig-tree* doth not Blossom; as knowing, that as His *Fidelity* cannot *Lye*; so His *Omnipotency* is not grown *Weak*: Nor hath God said, He will not *Work a Miracle* for His People, we know that He can; & tho' we are to Serve His *Ordinary Providence,* yet we are not to cast away our *Confidence,* when *Springs* are dried up; but conclude, that either God hath reserved some *Means* which we foresaw not; or to besure that His Right Hand will appear some way or other for His People's Safety & Help.

[JULY 14. 1691.]

SER.

SERMON *XLV.*

Secondly, THE Parts *of Providence are alſo Two*, viz. *Conſervation* and *Government*. Theſe are both pointed to in the *Anſwer*. God both *Preſerves* the Creature in its *Exiſtence*, and *Guides* it to its *End*; and in theſe *Two*, the whole of Divine Providence manifeſts it ſelf. The former of theſe is *Conſervation*; all things are made for an *End*; they are led to it by *Gubernation*; but they cannot be ſo led, unleſs they be continued or preſerved in their Being: Of this then take this Deſcription:

[1.] *CONSERVATION* is that Part of God's Providence *whereby He upholds all things in the Hand of His Power*. In the clearing of this Deſcription take theſe *Concluſions*,

(1.) *THERE muſt be a Conſervation of the Creature by God*. There is a Neceſſity of His Upholding all Second Beings; for if He did not hold them together, they would fall in pieces: If He did not bear up the World and all Beings in His Hand, they would Sink, and return to their Ancient Nothing. He is the alone Fountain of Being; all the Being which the Creature hath, it received from Him, and it muſt be continued by Him, it would elſe tire, give out, and never come at it's Journey's End. The Influence of Providence, is the Maintenance of it's Being. This Part of God's Providence is by the Schools, not unfitly call'd, *God's Manutenency*. It is His Hand underneath that holds it up; it depends upon Him for it's Continuance, Exiſtence and Operation. The bare Ceſſation of Divine Providence, reſpecting the Creature, without any other Operation, would reduce every Second Being again unto Nothing: If God puts His Hand from under, it falls and ſinks. Pſal. 104. 29. *Thou hideſt thy face, they are troubled; thou takeſt away their breath, they die, and return to their duſt.* Job 10. 12. *Thou haſt granted me life and favour; and thy viſitation hath preſerved my ſpirit.*

(2.) *THIS Preſervation which God affords to the Creature extends it ſelf*,

1. *TO the* Eſſence *of all things*: i. e. The *Matter* and *Form*: This is it that holds them together: God ſuſtains the Cauſes and Operations of them by His Hand, upholds their Union, that they fall not aſunder; in which He makes uſe of a common Rule, or the Impreſſion of a Natural *Appetency* after *Self-Preſervation*, put into and maintained in the Creature, by which it avoids things *Deſtructive*, and craves ſuch as are *Conſervative*.

2. *TO the* Accidents & Qualities *of things*; *the* Faculties & Vertues *of Second Beings*. God hath united theſe to their Subjects by a neceſſary Connection, and holds them together, ſo as that they do not ſeperate; and this is according to an Ordinance or Decree, appointing to each it's ſeveral Nature and Qualities.

3. *TO* Univerſal *Beings or Kinds*. He keeps up all the ſeveral ſorts of Beings which He made at the Firſt; ſo as that there is no one of them that *ever* was, but *ſtill* is in the World; and ſhall be as long as the World ſtands, notwithſtanding all the Hazards which ſome of them do run of being utterly Extinct: And the *Species* would eaſily be loſt, did not He take Care of it by a Wonderful Providence.

4. *TO* Singular & Individual *Beings*. Theſe He alſo looks after, and continues their Being to them by His Providence, during ſuch a *Time* and *Seaſon* as He ſees meet. He hath their Times in His Hand, and He hath bounded them; but ſtill He keeps their *Matter* and *Form* together, and preſerves their *Natures* and *Operations* ſo long as till His Good Pleaſure hath Determined that they ſhall ceaſe to be; until they have ſerved their appointed Time, and His Providence for the attaining of that End which He intended them for, and then they are Diſſolved.

(3.) *THE Way in which God continues His Creatures in Being & Action is* Various. And here we may take notice of thoſe *Two* that are moſt obſervable:

1. *SOME things God continues in a* Permanent *State*. There are ſome Individuals which are to laſt from the *Beginning* of Time to the *End* of it, *Permanent* and without *Succeſſion*: There are the *Conſtant* Natures, *viz.* the *Third Heaven* and *Angels*, which are for *Perpetuity*; they are deſigned for an *Æviternity*, and muſt be ſuch as they are for ever. And there are ſome *Inconſtant* Natures, which muſt endure as long as the Frame of them is to ſtand, until it be folded up as a Veſture, and the whole lower World be Changed, which is till the *Day of Judgment*; as the *Sun*, *Moon* and *Stars*, and the Bodies of the *Elements*: And theſe may be ſaid to be Preſerved more *immediately*, inaſmuch as we are not acquainted with any Secondary Cauſes or Mediate Helps in their Preſervation: They are Subject only to God, and there is no Second Cauſe, but only His own Almighty Power which continues theſe in Being and Act; Maintaining the *Subſtance* of them, ſo as that they abide: And tho' the *Elements* go through ſo many Changes by Generation and Corruption of *Individuals* that are Made out of them, there is not one *Jot* of their Subſtance diminiſhed, from what it was at Firſt: And tho' *Conſiſtent* Natures endure ſo long, yet they do not wax Old or Decay.

2. *OTHER Beings God continues by a more Mediate Providence in a* Changable *State*, and that both with reſpect unto the *Generals*, and the *Individuals*.

1. *RELATING to* General *Kinds*: And theſe God continues by the Means of the Propagation of *Individuals*. God intending a *Succeſſion* of Individuals, and therein the Continuance of the *Species* of Beings, by Singulars taking their Turns, abiding their Generation, and then going off again to make way for Succeeding Generations: He hereupon left the Impreſſion of a *Prolifical* Vertue upon the Nature of ſeveral Beings, by Vertue of a Creating Word; See, *Gen.* 1. 11, 22, 28. And upon account of this *Generation* it is, that the *Corruptible* and *ſoon Dying*

Creature is *Eternized*; and the Kinds Live in those *Individuals* which are upon the Stage, when innumerable of those that *formerly* were of them, do now *Cease* to be: One Generation *goes*, &c. for ever; i. e. Till the *Last* Generation; or till the *Consummation* of all things.

2. *AS for* Individuals; God's Providence Preserves and Continues them in a *Treble* manner, by *Provision*, by *Influence*, and by *Protection*.

1. *BY* Provision *of Supplies for the Sustentation of His Creatures.* The Creature is a Dependent Being; it must be Maintained or else it would Perish; and this Maintenance we are now in Consideration of, is *Mediate*; it stands in need of a New Supply to be brought in unto it, that it may Live upon, and be Preserved by: Now God takes Care that there be such a Supply provided for, and afforded to the Creature in a way of *Constancy* and *Continuance*: And herein God's Providence appears Wonderfull both to *Man* and to *Beast*. In the greatest *Famine* that ever came upon the World, God hath laid up Store sufficient in His Providence, for the Preservation of *every Kind*, so as to keep them alive. There are many Creatures in the World which are very *shiftless*, and have no fore-cast of their own; they have not the Wisdom of the *Ant*, to lay up in *Summer* for the *Winter-Store*; fore-see not hard Times, and therefore have laid in nothing before-hand; and yet God gives a Supply to these, that the *Kind* doth not Cease, but the *Individuals* are Supplied; they find something which may Uphold and Continue their Being unto them. There are some things that do not *Spin* and *Toil*, and are yet *Richly Clothed*, (Matth. 6. 28.) That do not *Plow* nor *Sow*, and yet they Live, and how? *Your Heavenly Father feedeth them*; (Ver. 26.) That do not lay in for themselves, but only gather that which God hath made ready for them; (*Psal.* 104. 28.) That cannot look after themselves, and are cast upon *Providence*, and yet they Live; (*Job* 38. *ult.*) And altho' *Mankind* are more *Instrumental* in the making of Provision for themselves, in that God hath taught them to understand how to make use of the Means for a Livelihood; yet is the *Success* of all their Labour entirely Subservient to, and Dependant upon God's Providence, which only can give the Blessing to, or with-hold it from their Endeavours. He therefore is the First in this Order of Causes; (*Hos.* 2. 22.) Hence that Expression, Hab. 2. 13. *Is it not of the Lord of hosts that the people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity.*

2. *BY* Influence: I mean by the *Commanding of His Blessing* upon the *Provision* which He hath thus made for, and brought unto them, so as that it doth effectually reach the *End* it is appointed for. As there is a *Creating* Wisdom of God appears in His putting the Vertue into Creatures suited to the *End* and *Use* they were designed for; so His *Providence* further Works in causing the Creature to *Exert* the Vertue which is in it, and enabling all the Organs of *Nutrition* to perform their Functions, so as to derive that Vertue for the *Preservation* of the Subject. Hence we read, Matth. 4. 4. *Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* And see the Expression, Isa. 3. 1 *Behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts doth take away from Jerusalem, and from Judah, the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water.* There is *Bread* and there is the *Staff* of it. No Being can do us any Good further than He Influenceth it: There is a Vertue which goes from Him, that makes the Creature to Live by it. An *Appetite* to Eat, is as much from God, as the *Food* it self that is suited to it; and that it turns to *Nutriment*, and not to *Putrefaction*, is of His Care for us: He gives us *Cloaths* and makes them to *Warm* us.

3. *BY* Protection: i. e. *Defending* or *Safeguarding* us from those Harms which would else overwhelm our Beings: The Individual Creatures are many ways exposed to Destruction, especially some of them. This *Protection* therefore is very Essential in the *Conserving* Providence of God; and it exerts it self in defending them,

1. *FROM* Natural Diseases: All Living Creatures since the Fall, in this lower World, are become liable unto them; and by them they are usually brought to their Dissolution: Here therefore this Providence exerts it self, Partly by *Preventing* these Maladies from siezing them; Partly by *Providing* and *Blessing Means* for their Recovery out of them; God Provides *Physick* for His Creatures, as well as *Food*, and applies it to them: Partly by a *Natural Sagacity* put into the Brute Creatures to apply to their Remedies: Partly by giving *Skill* to Rational Beings; and God's Providence is here often very Observable.

2. *FROM* Violence: The Creature is liable to Assaults, and it's Life is endangered thereby; and there are some that are a Prey to almost every thing; and yet there is such a Care taken, that such as these are *Preserved*; this is of God, and He doth it, Partly by putting an *Instinct* into the Creature it self, so as to know such Creatures as are Inimical to it, and seek its Life; and giving it Discretion to use Means to shun and get out of the Danger; yea and to secure it self from the Invasion: Such a piece of Wisdom is commended in a *Brute*; Prov. 30. 26. *The Conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks.* Partly by *Limiting* and *Restraining* the *Rage* of Voracious Creatures, so as to keep it within their due Bounds: And there is an observable Passage in God's Providence of this Account, *viz.* That *Ravenous* Creatures, are unaccountably stinted in their Increase, so that there are but *Few* of them in Comparison of the Numerousness of *Innocent* and *Serviceable* Creatures: And this is a Fruit of God's Care in preserving of His Creatures in their Being.

(4.) *THIS* Conserving *Providence of God, is a Kind of* Creation. *Creation* and *Conservation* differ only in this respect, In *Creation* all things are *New Made*, and are considered as having no Pre-existence; but they by it came

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Firſt out of the Hands of God; whereas in *Conſervation* they come under the conſideration of having a *Preſent Exiſtence*, which yet is ſo weak and inſufficient in it ſelf, that it would every moment fall back again into Nothing, if it were not held up by a Divine Hand. The ſame Vertue which exerted it ſelf in it's *Production*, is always emanating from God unto it for *Suſtentation*; it is the Second Hand which God ſets to his own Work; ſo that we may call this Preſervation a continued or extended Creation: Hence they are put together, Neh. 9. 6. *Thou, even thou art Lord alone, thou haſt made heaven, the heaven of heavens with all their hoſt, the earth and all things that are therein, the ſeas and all that is therein, and thou preſerveſt them all.*

(5.) THE Preſervation *of all things is an Act of Divine Omnipotency.* Hence in the Deſcription it is called that *whereby He upholds them in the Hand of His Power.* And indeed what leſs than an Increated Power can be acknowledged in it, by thoſe who ſeriouſly conſider and ponder it? When we look upon this great World, and the innumerable Beings that are contained in it, and conſider what an abſolute Dependance theſe all have upon God, and how ſhiftleſs they are all of them in themſelves, ſo that if they were not every moment underpropt and born up they would immediately be Annihilated; how ſtrong an Hand muſt we conceive that muſt be, which is always under them and holds them up, and neither faints nor is weary under ſuch a weight? And therefore the Apoſtle takes notice of this Attribute as ſhining out eminently in this reſpect; Heb. 1. 3. *Upholding all things by the word of his power.* This Doctrine then affords us precious Matter of Contemplation; and there are ſeveral Uſeful, Practical Inſtructions that we may draw from it. To name *Four*,

1. IT *tells us the* Reaſonablneſs of that Petition in our Prayer, *Give us this Day our Daily Bread.* Whom ſhould we ask our Daily Proviſion from, but Him who keeps us in His continued Providence? It was that which preſerved us in the laſt Hour, and if it withdraw we cannot Live to the next Hour. Man is not his own Upholder, no not for one moment, nor in any reſpect, further than *Inſtrumental*: We have an excellent draught of this Providence in Pſal. 116. 8. *Thou haſt delivered my ſoul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.* And, 66. 9. *Which holdeth our ſoul in life, and ſuffereth not our feet to be moved.* We could not have the next Meals Meat, did not God make it ready for us: All our Labour and Pains would not do it; our own Comforts would all Steal away and be gone from us, if He did not keep them for us: He is our *Carver* and our *Treaſurer* too, we are of His Family and His looking after: He ſpreads our Tables for us; and it is His Goodneſs that gives us Food and Raiment: He that Cloaths the Lillies, Cloaths us alſo: He ſaves us and defends us from all Harm: We ſhould every moment run ourſelves into Miſchief, if He did not preſerve our ſteps for us: How many are there that would make an end of us, if He did not Preſerve us: And is there not good reaſon then, why we ſhould ask theſe Alms at his Hands, and beg of Him our Supply and Protection: If we knock at any other Door we may come away empty handed and aſhamed; for if He with-hold, none can ſhow any Favour to us: And if we have theſe things, yet He only can make them Serviceable unto us; ſo that we muſt be always going to Him: And it is his Honour to have all the World as ſo many little Children, continually coming to Him as their Father for all they Want: Other Creatures do ſo according to their Capacity, and ſo ſhould we; *Job* 38. ult. Pſal. 145. 15, 16. *The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou giveſt them their meat in due ſeaſon. Thou openeſt thine hand, and ſatisfieſt the deſire of every living thing.*

2. IT *tells us alſo* how unreaſonable a thing *Sin* is. *Daniel*, when he would ſet forth *Belſhazzar's* horrid Iniquity, ſo as that it might appear more heinous, aggravates it from this Conſideration, That it was againſt God's *Preſerving* and *Protecting* Providence; Dan. 5. 23. ---*And the God in whoſe hand thy breath is, and whoſe are all thy ways, haſt thou not glorified.* In every *Sin* that you Commit, you Arm your ſelves in Rebellion, not only againſt your *Maker*, (and yet how grievous a thing is that) but againſt your *Preſerver*: You War againſt the God that gives you Life and Breath every moment; You ſet your ſelves in Array againſt Him that Feeds and Cloaths you; That you *Now are*, you are beholden to this Providence of His; and yet you deny and ſeek to rob Him of the Glory of it; tho' if He ſhould withdraw *His Manutenency* for the leaſt Inſtant, in that very Article of Time, you muſt needs periſh; yet by every Sin you are provoking Him ſo to do. All Sin is an Abuſing of this Favour of God, which is our Life, to his Diſhonour? And what unaccountable Madneſs is this: Well may God Expoſtulate with Sinners on this Account, as Deut. 32. 6. *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O fooliſh people and unwiſe? is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee and eſtabliſhed thee?* Sinners, Think of it, there is none that ever did ſo much for you, as God hath done, and none that ever you did ſo much againſt, as Him: In every Sin, you ſet your ſelves to Deſtroy Him, who, if he did not Preſerve you, you could not be.

3. IT *tells us that we ought to ſee & acknowledge our* Preſervation *to be from* God, *and not from* ourſelves. As he *Made* us, and not we; ſo he *Keeps* us, and not we: He holds us up; he Defends us: All our Care and Prudence could not have kept us till now. He looks after us in the Womb; and when we hung on the Breaſts; and he hath not intermitted this Care to this Day. And whom is it that we Confeſs this to? Who hath the Thanks & Praiſe of it? Here is Conviction enough againſt *Atheiſm*, if rightly conſidered. Let every one of us reflect and conſider, Had we been kept to this Day, through all the Changes that have gone over

us,

us, if there had not been a God that hath done it for us? And do we not Confeſs this unto Him? How Bruitiſh & Sordid a thing is this? God gives us every Day freſh Matter for Thanksgivings. And here we ſee the Reaſon why the World is yet ſtanding upon its Legs, and is not reduced to a *Chaos*, yea a *Non-entity*: Pſal. 103. beg. *Bleſs the Lord, who healeth all thy diſeaſes. Who redeemeth thy life from deſtruction: who crowneth thee with loving kindneſs, and tender mercies. Who ſatisfieth thy mouth with good things.*---.

4. *LEARN hence then, what* Strong Engagements *and* Bonds *there are lying upon us to* Serve God: *and to Devote our whole Life, and Time, and Subſtance, and all that we have, and are, to His* Service. If we look over all the Paſſages of this *Conſerving* Providence which has been applied to us; we ſhall find our ſelves obliged to him, forever to be His: for whoſe ſhould we be, whom ſhould we Serve, but that God by whom we are what we are, and from whom we receive all that we have? Give me leave then to Preſs this upon Old and Young, as a Potent Argument to quicken us all to be Devoting our ſelves unto God. Conſider then,

1. DO you *Live?* Is the Breath of your Noſtrils continued to you? Is there any Difference between you and thoſe that are gone to the Place of Silence? Are you not to this Day cut off from the Land of the Living? You are beholden to God's Preſerving of you for it: It is in Him that you Live; your very Life depends on him; if He ſhould hide his Face, you would be Troubled, yea Deſtroyed; there would need no more to bring you to your Grave; you would Periſh without his ſtriking a ſtroke.

2. HAVE you *Meat, Drink and Cloathing?* Are you Maintained and Supplied? It is all His that you have, (*Hoſ.* 2. 8.) It was he that ſat Second Cauſes on Work for the Producing of them, all thoſe *Wheels* had elſe ſtood ſtill; and he diſpoſed them to you by a particular Providence, or you had never had them: He ſpreads your Table and ſets on your Meat every Day.

3. DOTH your *Food Nouriſh you?* Do your *Cloaths Warm you?* Do you find theſe things Inſtrumental for your Preſervation? Do you feel any Comfort in and by them? Now remember, He put that Vertue into them, and he makes them to let it out to you; He could take it away, or bury it up, and then it ſhould do you no Good at all.

4. ARE you *kept from* Diſeaſes, *or recovered out of them at any Time?* It is He that doth it. Some of you have eſcaped when others have been overtaken: Sickneſs hath been round about you, and hath not come to you; others have been taken by it, and God hath Moderated it unto them, or ſhewn his Power in bringing them up from the Gates of the Grave. Theſe things as caſual as they ſeem to be, are the Diſpenſations of God's Careful Providence over you, elſe you were open to Sickneſs and Death.

5. ARE you *kept from the* Violence *of Men or Beaſts?* This is alſo from Him; no thank to your ſelves: How many eminent Deliverances of this Kind have ſome of us enjoyed? And did not God Tye up the Mouths of Beaſts, and Curb in the Spirits of Men, what Deſtructions would be every Day? But God keeps us from Killing one another; and ſo He continueth our Lives: And now what is the Voice and Language of all this to us, but to aſhame us that we have done ſo little for, ſo much to the Diſhonour of, this God; and put us upon it the more earneſtly and early to engage our ſelves in his Service, and to do it with Joy and Chearfulneſs in conſideration of thoſe uncountable Benefits of his *Conſerving* Providence; that He is daily Lading us withal.

[AUGUST 11. 1691.]

SERMON *XLVI.*

[2.] THE other Part of Providence is *Government.* As God *Created*, ſo He *Preſerves* the Creature for ſomething: He hath ſome great Deſign in holding up the World, which may Countervail all the Coſt he is at upon it. He doth it that the Creature thus Made and Kept, may attain its End. Hence there is alſo *Gubernation.* The ſame Hand that *Keeps it up*, alſo *Guides* it.

Firſt, OF *Government in General*, take this Deſcription; It is that *whereby God Directs & Leads the Creature in the Right Way, for the Attainment of its End.*

FOR the clearing of this Deſcription let us obſerve theſe things:

1. THAT there is ſuch a *Providence* as This, *Directing and Ruling the Affairs of the World, in Ordering all the Actions of the ſeveral Creatures, will appear Neceſſary.* For, as they could not *Make*, nor *Preſerve*, ſo neither can they *Govern* themſelves. There is not Wiſdom nor Strength enough in the beſt Created Being, to ſteer it ſelf aright to it's Haven: Except He who Made this great Veſſel, and Upholds it, be alſo it's *Pilot*, it will never ſhape a True *Courſe*, but be Loſt. He holds the *Card* and *Compaſs*, and ſits at *Helm*: And though Rational Beings are called upon to Eye the *Pole-ſtar*, yet did not He direct theſe, they would alſo miſcarry: There are ſo many By-paths in the Wilderneſs, through which they Travel, that if He did not Lead them, they would miſs their Way and be Be-wildred. God having *Made* a World, doth not leave it to be managed by another, as the *Shipwright* doth his Ship. He only knows every Nook and Corner, every Rock, and Shelve, and Quick ſand; and how to carry it Clear of all, into the *Port* it is Bound for. All Beings are *from* Him, and *for* Him; and He muſt *Conduct* them. The Glory that God gains by the Creature is by it's attaining its End: Should that be miſs'd he would be a Loſer; but this He will not be, for want of His taking Care for the bringing it about.

2. *THE*

2. *THE work of Gubernation concerns the Actings of the Creature*, or the Operations of Second Beings. In Conſervation, we obſerved, that God upholds thoſe Principles whereby they are capable of acting; now in Government He directs the Acts themſelves: whatſoever is done or performed in the whole World, all the motions and various turnings of the Creatures, theſe are they into which, and every particular accident of which, Divine Gubernation hath an influence; He is therefore ſaid to *work all things at pleaſure*, Eph. 1. 11.

3. *THE right of Divine Government is founded in Creation, and Conſervation.*

(1) *IN Creation.* There is nothing beſides God but is a Creature of God, and ows obedience to Him becauſe he made it: Creation gives a right of Sovereignty to the Creator over the Creature: if all the Being which the Creature hath is from Him, then it's Being is His, and at His diſpoſe: This will declare Him to be an Univerſal, Supream, and everlaſting Monarch, (*Pſal.* 100 *beg.*) thoſe are therefore put together, Rom. 11. 36. *For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things.*

2. *IN Conſervation.* If you maintain any Perſons, you expect that they ſhould ſubject themſelves unto you. You will not allow him his maintenance, who denies you his ſervice. The whole World are kept at his charge, and therefore hath he reaſon to challenge the rule over them. If all eyes wait on him for their meat, it is fit they ſhould ſo do for their work too. This the Pſalmiſt acknowledgeth on the account of one act of Conſervation, Pſal. 116. 16. *O Lord, truly I am thy ſervant, I am thy ſervant, Thou haſt looſed my bands.*

4. THAT which Divine Government employs it ſelf about is, *to guide the Creature to its End.* He carries on all Beings to their End, & ſo rules them as that none miſſeth it. There is a peculiar Subordinate end, and there is an Univerſal, general and laſt end; the Creature may miſs the former, but not the latter; There is the end of the *Precept*, and the end of the *Decree*. Reaſonable Creatures, as will afterwards more fully appear, may loſe the *former*, but not the *latter*. God's Glory is his own laſt End, which he will always attain by every Second Being in ſuch a way as ſhall exactly anſwer his alwiſe purpoſe about it. And from this no Creature is able to withdraw it ſelf, but when it moſt ſets it ſelf againſt it, it then ſerves to it. Gen. 50. 20. *Ye thought evil againſt me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to paſs, as it is this day, to ſave much people alive.* For the order of Divine Government is certain, indiſſoluble, unchangeable.

5. THE way of Divine Gubernation is *by a Concurſe or Co-operation of the Firſt Cauſe with all Second Cauſes*, guiding them according to their natural Principles, and manner of working. Concerning this Concurſe we may take theſe Concluſions.

(1) *THERE is an Operation of ſecond Cauſes.* For where there is no Operation of the Creature, there can be no Co-operation of God. Government reſpects the Actions of the Creatures according to their innate Principles. If a Man will do any thing with an Inſtrument, he muſt not only make it, and ſuit it, but alſo improve it: if that doth not work inſtrumentally, the Man doth not work by it. We muſt not think that God only works, at the Preſence of ſecond Cauſes, and theſe ſtand by, and do nothing at all. That there is a formal Principle in the ſecond Cauſe, proper for its own Operations, is evident from, Gen. 1. 11. *God ſaid, let the Earth bring forth*, &c. Were the Libertine Opinion a Truth, then either the Creatures have no Principles of Activity in them, or the Principles, together with the diſpoſitions they have to act, are put into them for nothing; which is inconſiſtent with the wiſdom of their Creator, who made nothing in vain. Yea ſuch a Notion will remove all goodneſs from the Creature, contrary to *Gen. 1. ult.* yea the difference between things; and utterly vacate the Notions of Good & Evil; render ungodly actions as laudable as the moſt holy, and ſubvert the Reaſon & Equity of the Puniſhment of wicked men. But the Scripture moſt frequently aſcribes Efficiency to ſecond Cauſes; Acts 1. 23. *They appointed*, &c. 1 Cor. 3. 9. *For we are labourers together with God.*

(2) AS the Creature works, ſo *God Co-works with it.* The Firſt and Univerſal Cauſe works together, or is at work with all the actions of ſecond and particular Cauſes: Act. 17. 28. *In him we live, move*, &c. which concurrence is ſomething diſtinct, both from Creation, and Preſervation. In Creation, the Principles by which it worketh are infuſed into it: In Conſervation they are upheld and maintained; but now, when the Creature is ſo accommodated for its work, it goes not forth to its Action without the compliance & concurrence of the Firſt Cauſe, bringing forth of theſe Principles into Operation. There is ſuch a Negative Imperfection attending upon the Creature, as that it cannot go alone, but it muſt be led; like a tool, which when it is never ſo fit for work, depends upon him who is to uſe it for its Operations: As a Child which muſt be led by the hand or elſe it will fall. Pſal. 139 10. *Thy hand ſhall lead me, and thy right hand ſhall hold me.* All Beings from the Firſt, depend upon the Firſt Being, not only for Entity, and Vertue, but for Operation too, Dan. 5. 23 *Whoſe are all thy ways.* Prov. 21. 1. *The kings heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it witherſoever he will.* As he makes the Eye & Ear, ſo he makes them to ſee and hear too, Prov. 20 12. *The hearing Ear, and the ſeeing Eye, the Lord hath made both of them.*

(3) THE *Neceſſity* of this Concurſe with a ſecond Cauſe will appear, *from the Abſolute Dependence of the Creature upon the Creator.* For if that be dependent, its Activity muſt be ſo too; and it is an Impoſſibility, that the Creature ſhould be any other than a dependant Being, and therefore muſt receive its Activity from this Concurſe.

(4) THIS *Concurſe* with the Creature is,

1. *LEADING to all it's Operations.* The concurrence of the Firſt Cauſe, is the firſt Cauſe of the activity of the Second; for in order of Cauſes, the firſt muſt move before the ſecond can ſtir; the ſecond depends upon the firſt, and therefore muſt be acted by it, Act. 17. 28. *In Him we move.*

2. *SUPERIOUR to it.* They are not co-ordinate Cauſes, drawing together, but the concurſe of the firſt is above, and directive to the ſecond. A co-ordinate Cauſe works of it ſelf, and is equal in Operation to that which joyns with it. (As two Maſter workmen, equally undertaking a buſineſs;) ſuch are not the Creature and God: a ſubordinate Cauſe depends upon its ſuperiour in reſpect of Operation, which is the place of all ſecond Cauſes as they refer to the Firſt: they are therefore called *God's hand*, Pſal. 17. 14.

3. *IMMEDIATE*: And that not only by Reaſon of vertual *Influence*, but alſo of infinite *Omnipreſence*, which toucheth all Beings, and reacheth all their Actions, (as hath been already obſerved under the Conſideration of Efficiency in general.)

4. *DETERMINING the Action in reſpect of the Event.* And hence it is ſaid to guide, and direct the Being. The Eternal Decree of God, having fixt & determined concerning what ſhall be acted, and all the ſeveral circumſtances of the Creatures Operations, (as hath formerly been evidenced;) hence by His Active Providence He muſt determine them. Natural Agents are blind, and ſee nothing before them, but act as they are acted, and therefore are neceſſarily determined by Divine Providence. Job 35. 11. *Who teacheth us more than the beaſts of the earth.* That Rational Agents are alſo thus determined appears, becauſe elſe there would not be an Abſolute Subordination of the Second Cauſe to the Firſt, and ſo God muſt be fruſtrated by the Creature in reſpect of his Decree: He therefore makes them to do what they do not mean, Iſai. 10. 6,7. *I ſend him: He meaneth not ſo.* They fulfill his determinate counſel, Act. 4. 27,28. *Againſt thy holy child Jeſus, — Herod, Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and people of Iſrael were gathered together, to do whatſoever thy counſel hath determined.*

5. THIS Co-operation of God is *according to the Creatures Principles, and its manner of Operation.* It is *according to its Principles:* God having in Creation given, and in Conſervation upholding of theſe Principles; ſuch as of burning in fire, &c. He co-operates with them, and keeps them working in their own kind. And according to their *manner of working.* There are ſome *Natural* Cauſes, and ſome *Free* Cauſes; He doth not make meerly Natural Cauſes to act freely, or by counſel; nor yet doth He lay any compulſion or conſtraint upon free Agents; but all ſecond Cauſes work like themſelves. The Sun ſhineth Naturally, and yet He makes it to ſhine, (*Matt.* 5. 45.) Reaſonable Beings act freely, and according to their Voluntary Choiſe, and yet He alſo works with them, Joſh. 11. 20. *For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, and that they ſhould come againſt Iſrael in battel, that he might deſtroy them utterly* —. God turns no ſecond Cauſe, ordinarily, out of its own Bias, except it be in Miracles. As when *Balaam*'s Aſs reproved the Madneſs of the Prophet, and ſuch like; and in Monſtrous Productions, in which alſo he hath a glorious deſign.

6. *IF God at any time ſuſpend this Co-operation of His, the Creatures operation ceaſeth upon it*: It ſtands ſtill and moves not during this ſuſpenſion. And this is the very way in which many miraculous things have come to paſs. Thus *Jordan* ſtood ſtill and ſlowed not, to give *Iſrael* a Paſſage: thus the *Sun* ſtood ſtill in the Heavens, and went not in its race, for at leaſt twelve Hours, to give God's People an Opportunity to deſtroy their enemies: Thus the *Fire* did not exert its heat to deſtroy the Three Worthies, who were caſt into it: But theſe things have been particular exceptions from the common Rule of Providence, & ſerve, as to prove the neceſſity of this Concurſe, ſo the arbitrary Government of God in the management of it: and that there is an Extraordinary, as well as an Ordinary Providence.

USE. LET me draw a few *Inferences* from hence.

1. IT tells us that *there is an Order in the World.* We are ready to cry out of Confuſion and Diſorder, and it may be a great truth, in reſpect of the Actions of the Creature compared with the Law of the Creator, or the Moral Law; the Creature may greatly ſwerve from that: but we muſt diſtinguiſh between the order of the *Decree*, & the order of the *Command*: and if we refer unto the Decree of God, all things fall out according to the Ordination of that; and thus the Wiſdom of the Firſt Cauſe ſhines forth in the very folly of the Second. If God rules & guides all the Actions of all Beings to His own holy Ends, they cannot but be guided according to an unerring Rule of Order, which his Providence Eyes in all the diſpoſures of the Creatures; and the Eye of Faith ſees beauty in all, even there where humane Reaſon judgeth there is nothing but confuſion. Man was not of the counſel with God when he eſtabliſhed His Decrees; and hence in this life he cannot follow Him in the ſeveral paſſages of His Execution thereof, but is forced to acknowledge His paths to be in the deep. Rom. 11. 33, 34. *O the depth of the riches both of the wiſdom & knowledge of God! how unſearchable are his judgments, and his ways paſt finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counſeller?* The way of God's Government is a profound Sea, we cannot trace or find it out. Eccl. 8. 17. *Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the ſun: becauſe though a man labour to ſeek it out, yet he ſhall not find it; yea further, though a wiſe man think to know it, yet ſhall he not be able to find it.* But ſtill this we muſt ever conclude, that if God ſets at helm, He is an exact Steers-Man.

2. SEE

2 SEE here a *Reason why all Beings attain their last End.* As well Rational as Irrational are so directed & managed as they serve to the advancement of the Glory of God: It is because He guides them, and over-rules their Actions, by his active Co-operating Government; all Beings else would fall wofully short. When we see a World going right, & blind Creatures acting discreetly, and keeping of their way, we may hence be pointed to observe, who is the orderer of them; they see not nor know their mark, but yet they hit it; it is because He that guides them sees and knows what He would have them serve unto: That then the Creature attains its End is to be acknowledged to His Efficiency.

3. HENCE we are to acknowledge God in all our Actions. In *Prov.* 20.12. it is said, not only the *Eye* & *Ear*, but the *seeing Eye*, &c. *i. e.* the *Faculty* with the *Operation*, as well as the Organ. That we have Eyes, Ears, and all the Organs of Sense and Reason, we owe it to God, and not only so, but that these perform their Functions, and execute their Offices, He deserves the acknowledgment of this also. There are who have Eyes, and see not, if God but withdraws his Concurse. (2 *King.* 6.18,19,20.) There are many Naturals born: You must not suppose that your Eyes and Ears, and Tongues are your own, as if you could see, &c. when you please.

4. IT tells us *whom we must go to, to work all our works in us and for us*, viz. to God: we must ask His direction, and beg of Him his guidance. When the Apostle calls us to work, he tells us who must co-work with us, Phil. 2.12,13. *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do* ——. In every business, whether Civil or Religious, that God calls us unto, it concerns us to look to Him for his Assistance; for if He lead not, what can we do, Psal. 127.1. *Except the Lord build the House, they labour in vain that build it.* And this also gives us a sufficient Reason, why we are not to undertake any thing, but with a subordination of it to Him, according to Jam. 4. 15. *Ye ought to say, if the Lord will, we shall Live, and do this, or that.*

5. LEARN hence a *Reason for our being Contented with the Administration of the Affairs of the World.* God sits King, and rules over all, and therefore let us be quiet; let us not find fault with God, or go about to pick an hole, either in His *Wisdom*, so as to Question the Prudence of his Administration; (when we so do, it is either for want of Insight into the depths of Divine Counsels, not knowing what designs are in the womb of Providence ready to be brought forth; or want of Eying the right End, not considering that what crosseth the Creatures design may serve to God's glorious End, which is also the Creatures last end:) or in his *Justice*, remembring that He is righteous in all; and if the Reason of the Equity of some of his ways appears not to us, the Error is in our Judgment, and not in His Government. Give Him the Glory of His Providence; and when the Creature acts amiss, with respect to the Law, going contrary to the Command, yet let us see the over-ruling Hand of God in this also, and remember that what He hath Determined shall come to pass, and He will without fail have His Glory out of it, and let that satisfy us; let Reason subject it self to Faith, and we shall never suspect God's Government.

[SEPTEMBER 8. 1691.]

SERMON *XLVII.*

WE have been considering of God's Governing Providence in general: It will not be amiss,

Secondly, TO take a *more distinct account of the Kinds of it.* Especially since so much of the Catechism is taken up about one of them. Now these Kinds of Government are Two, viz. *Common* & *Special*: the *next* Question introduceth the latter of these; we may therefore look upon the former under *this*. The Scripture gives us light for this Distribution: As the whole World is God's Kingdom, so there are some common Laws respecting the Realm in General, and others which are particular to some Corporations. The Reason of the Distribution is this; there are two sorts of Creatures, some are Irrational, others Rational: Among Second Causes, there are some that work by Nature, others by Counsel: both these being made for God's Glory, must serve to this End; and so must have a Rule to guide them thereunto: And a Government exercised over them that they may so be. Hence a Double Gubernation, the one leading of Natural, the other Rational Agents to their Ends.

I. THE first of these to be treated of, is *Common Government*, because it is more General; and of it we may take up this Description, *Common Government is that whereby Natural Agents are by suitable Rules guided to their Ends.* I shall endeavour to clear up this Description in the following Propositions.

1. THAT *all the Actions of Natural Agents are designed by God to serve to some End.* God doth nothing in vain: There is no Second Being but was made for something: accordingly there is no Action of any Being, but doth in some respect tend to the great End which the Wise Artificer, who framed it for Operation, aims at by the Creature The Sun shines not, the Fire burns not, the Creature stirs not to no purpose: the stamp or impression of Divine Goodness left upon things, in the Creation, declares that they were made for something; and the consideration of the Infinite Wisdom of Him who hath made and guides them, will assure us, that they are in all their Motions going home-ward; how else can it be that He should not lose His Glory by them, and they fall short of the goodness that was put into them?

2. HENCE it follows *that all the Natural Actions of all these Creatures are guided by some Rule of Government.* Or, that there is a Rule according to which they are to be managed. An End appointed, supposeth a Rule prescribed; because it is a necessary Medium to the right

attainment of that End, and not miſſing of it. It is by its regular moving that the Creature hits the mark, and doth not fall beſides it : Its End is the proper Butt to which all theſe Arrows are directed, and if they reach it, they muſt fly right, and therefore they muſt be ſhot right, which requires a Rule, unleſs we ſhould ſay that all things attain their End by a meer caſual or fortuitous Event, which is a reproach to the Providence of God, and a groundleſs conjecture in reſpect of the Creature.

3. HENCE alſo *they are of Neceſſity guided and governed by God for the attainment of this End.* There is the Eye of Wiſdom fixed upon the End, and the Hand of Power conducting them to it: The neceſſity of this appears,

(1) BECAUSE *their End to which they attain is to them unknown.* It is *above* them ; they ſerve to it, but they can tell nothing of it ; and it is a *moſt noble* End, *viz.* The Glory of God : They muſt therefore be guided, by an Omnipreſent, Omnipotent, Alwiſe Agent, who can be no other but God himſelf, elſe they would certainly fall ſhort. Natural Agents have but a paſſive impreſſion of their Rule upon them, imprinted in Creation, on the Kind, and ſtamped, in its production, on every Individual ; they neither diſcern their Rule nor their End, for only Rational Agents can do ſo ; and yet they exactly attend the Rules they cannot Analyſe, and reach the End they have no acquaintance withal. There muſt therefore be One, who hath the Idea or Platform of this in his breaſt, wiſely and ſteadily to ſteer the whole courſe of this Creature accordingly.

(2) FROM the *Reaſon and Order, which there is to be ſeen in the carrying on of the whole Affair of the World of Natural Agents.* The Creature is *Irrational*, but all the Actions of it are *Rational* ; i. e. Conſentany to the Rule of right Reaſon, (*Prov.* 30.24 to 29.) which they would not be, if they were not under the guidance of a moſt Rational Agent. By the regular motion of the Ship, we infer that there is a Wiſe Skilful Pilot at Helm.

(3) FROM *the Natural Inclination in all Natural Agents, to promote the common good of the Univerſe.* That there is ſuch a diſpoſition rooted in the ſeveral Creatures, is to be obſerved ; that they are more engaged to preſerve the Univerſe, than for their own preſervation ; ſo that they will act contrary to their own Natures, rather than the whole ſhould ſuffer : Thus the Fire will deſcend, the Earth aſcend to prevent Vacuity : and whence can this be, but from the Care of the Univerſal Governour?

4. IN the *Way and Manner of God's Governing the Natural Agent*, we are to conſider,

(1) *THE Law of Nature* ; which is nothing elſe but the Impreſſion of the Will of God upon the Creatures Nature, from the beginning ; by vertue of that Creating Word, *let it be ſo* : It is that ſtamp of Divine Wiſdom the footſteps whereof are to be found in its Natural Conſtitution. Job 38. 12. *Haſt thou commanded the morning ſince thy days ; and cauſed the day-ſpring to know his place?* And v. 33. *Knoweſt thou the ordinances of heaven? canſt thou ſet the dominion thereof in the earth? Ordinances*, i. e. Statute-Laws imprinted on them, according to which they act. So, Jer. 33. 20. *Thus ſaith the Lord, If you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there ſhould not be day and night in their ſeaſon. Covenant*, i. e. The Character which God hath given them, according to which they are to be governed.

(2) *A Inclination or promptitude natural in the Creature to act in conformity to this Law.* And this is a Principle or Natural Power which is twiſted in the Nature of the Creature, and in the ordinary courſe inſeparable from it : and this is ſomething diſtinct from the Law it ſelf ; for as that diſpoſeth it, ſo this impowers it, to yield Obedience to the Law : it gives it an Aptitude and Readineſs to comply with theſe Rules. So, Job 5. 7. *Yet man is born unto trouble, as the ſparks flie upward.* Pſal. 104. 19. *The ſun knoweth his going down.*

(3) A *Natural Inſtinct* which is left upon Animals, or Creatures endowed with ſenſe. By vertue of this they are inſtigated to put forth thoſe noble Acts, which carry in them a very great reſemblance, as if they had an active principle of Reaſon in them ; as if they underſtood the Reaſon and Tendency of their own Actions ; which yet it is certain they do not. The Scripture therefore Metaphorically aſcribes to them *Wiſdom* & *Diſcretion*, Prov. 30. 24. And ſends fooliſh Men to School to them, Prov. 6. 6,7,8. *Go to the Ant, thou ſluggard, conſider her ways, and be wiſe*, &c. And upbraids man with them, Jer. 8 7. *Yea, the ſtork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times, and the turtle, and the crane, and the ſwallow obſerve the time of their coming, but my people know not the judgment of the Lord.*

(4) AN *Obediential Power* in the Creature rendring it capable of ſubjection, or paſſive Obedience to the will of the Creator. And all Creatures ſtand in this ſtate of ſubjection, being at all times capable and ready to receive the irreſiſtable impreſſions of God's Power, to be and to do whatſoever His Pleaſure is to uſe them in and for : Job 38.31,32. *Canſt thou bind the ſweet influences of Pleiades, or looſe the bands of Orion? Canſt thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his ſeaſon, or canſt thou guide Arcturus with his ſons?* Pſal. 148. 8. *Fire and hail, ſnow and vapour, ſtormy wind fulfilling his word.* Mat. 2.9. *The ſtar went before them*, &c.

5. THIS common Government of God is exerciſed upon the Creature, *by a Sovereign Predetermination of all the Actions of it.* Rational Agents as well as Natural, come under this predetermination, but becauſe it is common to all, I therefore mention it under common Government. And here we are to obſerve, that God doth not only predetermine the *Event*, but alſo the *Actions* themſelves in order thereunto. In which obſerve,

(1) THAT there is a *previous Motion or Divine Influence exciting the Creature to its Action*, ſo far as concerns the bringing it forth into act.

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It is certain that the ſame Power and Goodneſs that Created the *Sun*, muſt alſo give Being to the motions of it: All Creatures muſt lye ſtill, if God ſtirs them not; they are meer Pictures which let out no Vertue or Efficacy till he excites it. And therefore the inſenſible Ceſſation of the Influence of the Firſt Cauſe, gives a full ſtop to the Operation of the Second. God not only gives to, and maintains in, the Creature a vertual Power, but he alſo draws it forth; (*Acts* 17. 28.) ſo that his Pleaſure fore-determines whether it ſhall Act or no.

(2) THIS Pre-determination *applies all the Actions of the Creature unto the proper* Objects, about which they are to be employed. 2 Sam. 16. 10. *So let him curſe, becauſe the Lord hath ſaid unto him, Curſe David.* It is true, He uſeth them in their natural way, but he fixeth all their particular Actions to the determinate and individual Object, according to His own Purpoſe. The Creature's Nature, tho' it hath it's ſpecifical inclination, yet it hath an indifferency with reſpect to Individuals. The *Bear* is naturally a *Beaſt of Prey*; but that *Two* of them ſhould come in the way of thoſe Children who mocked the Prophet, and deſtroy *Forty-two* of them; or a *Lion* in the way of that Prophet who diſobeyed the command of God, and Kill him, & not the *Aſs* on which he rode, nor devour either of them, theſe things were determined by God's Sovereign-Influence.

(3) THIS Pre-determination, *overules, orders and diſpoſeth of all the Actions of ſecond Cauſes at pleaſure.* This will be evident if we conſider,

1. THAT *when God pleaſeth, He controls and countermands their Actions*, ſo as they do not put forth their natural Activity: This withdrawing binds the Creature under an utter impotence of putting forth it's natural Actions; but this was obſerved before under the general Deſcription of Government, when we diſcourſed of the *Divine Concurſe.*

2. *WHEN the Creatures do Act, they Act at His Command.* They are not at their own uncontrolable Liberty, but do all in Subordination to Him, Pſal. 78.26. *He cauſed an eaſt-wind to blow in the heaven: and by his power he bro't in the ſouth wind.* Now this is done by a Divine Impulſion terminated on the Creatures, from whence God is called the Father of all the Actions done by them; Job 38. 28, 29. *Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of the dew? Out of whoſe womb came the Ice? and the hoary froſt of heaven, who hath gendred it?* And tho' *Job* can neither ſet the Creature on work, nor control it in it, yet He doth both, *Ver.* 31, 32. and 34, 35. *Canſt thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee? Canſt thou ſend lightnings, that they may go, and ſay unto thee, Here we are?* Theſe Interrogations are to ſhew the difference between God's Power, & his: and this is a certain truth, that juſt ſo many drops of Rain, Hail, & Snow, as fall, juſt ſo many puffs of Wind as blow, are ordered and commanded by Him; hence, Prov. 30. 4. *Who hath aſcended up into heaven, or deſcended? who hath gathered the wind in his fiſts? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath eſtabliſhed all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his ſons name, if thou canſt tell?*

3. *HE ſets Bounds to all the Actions which the natural Agent doth perform.* It goes juſt as far as His Influence carrys it, and no further. Though they have a natural tendency to progreſs, yet this influence is as a chain and bar, which ties them up, and keeps them in. With what an impetuous rage would the ſwelling Sea, eſpecially when raiſed by Tempeſts, overflow the dry Land? But He keeps it within Limits by his powerfull word of Command. Job 38. 8, 9, 10, 11. *Who ſhut up the ſea with doors, when it brake forth as if it had iſſued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkneſs a ſwadling band for it, And brake up for it my decreed place, and ſet bars and doors, And ſaid, Hitherto ſhalt thou come, but no further: and here ſhall thy proud waves be ſtayed.*

4. *HE determines the Time of the Creatures continuing in Action.* He hath laid out for it, how many turns it ſhall take upon the Stage, and when it ſhall withdraw again. All the Creature's times are in His hands, He is the Maſter of this enterlude; at his bidding they come, and at his bidding they retire, Pſal. 104. 29, 30. *Thou hideſt thy face, they are troubled; thou takeſt away their breath, they die, and return to their duſt. Thou ſendeſt forth thy ſpirit, they are created: & thou reneweſt the face of the earth.* And they cannot go beyond theſe limits, for ſo much as one moment.

5. *HE brings about His own Ends of glorifying His Name out of all the Actions of the Creature.* Every thing that the Irrational Creature doth, it doth it Blindfold, it is led it knows not whither. It doth not, it cannot reflect and ask it ſelf, to what purpoſe it is and acts; yet as a natural Stream, it keeps to its own Channel, and deviates not, till it hath paid it ſelf a due Tribute to the Ocean of God's Glory, *Pſal.* 19. begin.

(4) THIS pre-determining influence *inſinuates it ſelf into all the Actions of the Creatures of all kinds.* We are here ſpeaking only of Natural Agents; and it were an endleſs task to examine all the Actions of all Creatures in particular: In *General* be it obſerved;

1. THE *ſmalleſt Things* do not eſcape it. God counts it not below Him, or any diſparagement to His lofty Majeſty to look after, and curiouſly to manage the leaſt and moſt inconſiderable things: a *Sparrow* dies not, one *Hair* of our head falls not off, but at His Order, *Math.* 10.29,30. There is not a *Gourd* grows, nor *Worm* that eats it, but at his Command, *Jonah* 4. 6, 7. A poor *Bird* cannot build a Neſt to lay her Young in, till He gives Order about it, *Pſal.*104.16,17.

2. THE *greateſt Things* are not above it. The mighty Wheels of the World are managed by Him: This Government is the Spirit which is in the Wheels turning them which way it hath a mind: This makes the Sun to ariſe, and go down; this makes all the Celeſtial Bodies to keep their

place, Order, and Time in all their Motions as exactly, as if they knew it.

3. THE most *Fortuitous Things* do not escape it. In the greatest Casualties He is an absolute & determining Agent: Those things that are done without any counsel of the Creature, do without fail accomplish His counsel. An Arrow shot at random is carried and guided by His Providence, to accomplish His threatning in *Ahab's* ruine, 1 *King.* 23. 34.

IN Sum, that there are so many diversifyed and unaccountable events of Second Causes is hither to be assigned. If a Reason be ask'd, Why this Creature doth but look into the World, and then retire back to its first Principles, when another is allowed a long continuance of Action upon the stage. Why this day is clear & serene, to morrow stormy & tempestuous; why it Rains upon this piece of ground,& that on which it Rains not withers; why this Year bringeth forth handfuls, the next is barren; why this Figtree blossoms,and bringeth forth ripe Figs, that blossoms not, or is blasted,or the fruit falls off untimely; why Locusts, Caterpillars, and Palmer-worms come at this time, and not at another; why bread and water at one time afford nourishment, at another time none; (and many such things as these are:) though a *Moral* reason of these things may be rendred,yet a satisfying *Physical* reason none can, but all must issue and resolve into this Arbitrary Government of God, who acts as a great Monarch, who gives not an account of His matters to the Children of Men, but holds the Creature in a full Subordination to His absolute pleasure.

USE, 1. LEARN hence, *that our only way to get any good by the Creature, is to be faithful in Serving God.* The Creature is not to be trusted in by us, for it is not at its own dispose, it cannot help and do for us at its own pleasure; the exertion of the Vertue that is in it for our good is from God: He is the Ruler of all; we must therefore go to Him for all we want, Isai. 45. 11. —— *Concerning the work of my hands command ye me.* If He be against us, Second Causes cannot be for us, for they all obey His word of command: if He will, He Seals them up; He gives them, or witholds them at pleasure; nor can our Industry forestall his Providence; and He hath promised them only to those that serve Him uprightly, and threatens to take them away from such as disobey Him, *Deut.* 11. 13 to 18. Let us not think to prosper by Evil doing.

USE, 2. SEE here *what great Reason we have to serve the Lord with Fear and Trembling.* How ought we to serve Him, whom all the Creatures do serve? And there are two Arguments may be drawn from the Present Doctrine, which loudly call upon us to the practice of this Duty, *viz.*

1. IF *Unreasonable Creatures do fulfill His Word, how much more then should we?* We upon whom God hath laid more and stronger bonds, whom He hath given Reason and Understanding unto, whereby we may know His Will, & read His Mind. Sin therefore makes us worse than irrational Creatures, *Jer.* 8. 7. *Job* 35. 9, 10. We may go to all the Creatures, and learn lessons of Obedience from every one of them; none of them ever rose up against their Sovereign. And when we see all in order but our selves, may it not shame us?

2. IF we rebel against God, and forsake His Service, *all Creatures are ready to execute His revenge upon us.* They do but wait for His Word: They are His Armies,and you can look upon no Creature,but it may make you afraid; for if God speak it,the most contemptible may dispatch you; He can send a Fly to Summon the greatest Emperour in the World before His Tribunal, and it shall do it.

USE, 3. IT calls us to *see God at work in all the Actings of the Creatures.* And let us follow God in all,and see how wise a Steers-man He is who sits at the Helm, who so sees to the great Affairs of the World, as not to neglect the least, and so looks after the least, as withal to be careful of the greatest; who counts all the drops of Rain, and blasts of Wind; who causeth all their Motion, and causeth all Motion to run down into His Praise: Let Him then have the acknowledgment of all, even then when Natural Causes miscarry in respect of our Expectation; when we see them that rise early, to eat the bread of sorrow; him that is admirably wise, to want bread; him that sows much to reap little; see God in all, *Hab.* 2. 13.

USE, 4. LET it *teach the Children of God to Trust in him at all Times*, and to believe that it shall go well with them, which way soever Second Causes seem to be carried; and learn to say as he, Hab. 3. 17, 18. *Although the figtree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoyce in the* LORD, *I will joy in the God of my salvation.* Suppose the Heavens should be broken into thousands of Pieces, and the Earth be dissolved into Heaps, should all things seem to run into a Chaos,yet remember, it is your God that Rules the World, and is doing all for His Glory; and He cannot forget, or neglect to take care for those who are the Apple of His Eye, and Signet on His Hand. Think, in greatest seeming confusions, all Second Causes are as God employs them, and all shall work together for good to them that love God.

OCTOBER, 6. 1691.

SER-

SERMON *XLVIII.*

QUESTION XII.

WHAT ſpecial Act of Providence did God exerciſe towards Man, in the Eſtate wherein he was Created?

ANSWER.

WHEN GOD had Created Man, He entred into a Covenant of Life with him, upon Condition of perfect Obedience; forbidding him to Eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good & Evil, upon Pain of Death.

WE have been conſidering of God's *common Government*, by which He leads Natural Agents to their End. It follows,

II. THAT we proceed to Diſcourſe about *His ſpecial Government*, which reſpects Rational Agents, and the way in which God conducts them to their End. The Queſtion under conſideration points us to that which is the foundation of this Government reſpecting Man, and unto which all the *After* Tranſactions mentioned in the former part of the *Catechiſm* do refer; and therefore calls for a more exact Explication: And to make way then to a clear Inſpection into it, ſomething may be premiſed,

Firſt, CONCERNING the *General Nature* of *Special Government*; and it may admit of this Deſcription,

SPECIAL Government is that *whereby God Guides His Reaſonable Creatures, to an everlaſting State of Happineſs or Miſery, according to the Tenour of the Moral Law.*

THAT we may rightly take up, and not be miſtaken in this Deſcription, let us diſtinctly conſider the ſeveral things contained in it. Here then obſerve theſe following Propoſitions, which will lead us to the Things:

1. THE *Reaſonable Creature comes under a double Conſideration*; *either as it hath ſomething in* common *with other Natural Agents, or as it hath a* ſpecial *Nature diſtinct from them*: And hence it is a Subject both of *common* and *ſpecial* Government. So far as all Creatures hold any thing in a Community, ſo they come under God's common Governing Providence. For this *ſpecial* doth not include thoſe *common* conſiderations reſpecting this Subject. The general Laws of the Realm include under them all priviledged Places, or Corporations, conſidered as Subjects of the Kingdom; but their Charter-Privileges have ſomething in peculiar. Conſider *Man* in the natural reſpects wherein he agrees with other Beings, as Vegetable, Motive, Animal; and ſo all his natural Actions reſpect the former Gubernation; but look upon him as a Reaſonable Creature; and thus he is a Subject of ſpecial Government.

2. THE *proper Subject of ſpecial Government is the Reaſonable Creature*: Such as being Cauſes by Counſel, are capable of chuſing their own Actions; that can act upon Deliberation, and either Elect or Reject. Theſe being the nobleſt Kinds of God's Creature, and made after God's Image, were appointed to ſerve to their End, after another manner. For, being capable of the Active Act of the Rule, and not only a bare paſſive impreſſion of it, they muſt therefore have another and an Higher Rule, and be govern'd after a ſingular and ſpecial manner; for God Rules His Creatures according to their Nature: Now only theſe Beings are capable of this Government, or ſuited unto it, both becauſe they only are capable of the Rule, other Beings are not ſo: Theſe only can know God, and chuſe Him and love Him, *&c.* which the Rule points to; and alſo becauſe theſe only are capable of the conſequent Rewards of Eternal Happineſs and Miſery; other Creatures cannot be Happy, becauſe it is a thing above their Conſtitution; and they cannot be forever, becauſe they Periſh; but theſe may be happy, and they abide to Eternity.

3. THE *Rule of ſpecial Government is the Moral Law.* This may at firſt ſeem doubtfull; but to make it out, let theſe things be obſerved,

(1.) *WHERE there is Government there muſt be a Rule.* This belongs to the very Nature of it: To Rule a Subject without a Rule to direct, is Tyranny, and not Government among Men; and tho' God's Will be His Rule, yet God hath in Himſelf an Idea of that which He will manage the Creatures by, and it is wiſe and juſt. Government is for an End, and therefore it muſt have it's Rule, how elſe ſhould it reach it's End?

(2.) *THIS Rule is properly called a Law.* And the Reaſon is, becauſe it refers to Government; and it bears the Denomination of a Law in two reſpects,

1. IN *reſpect to Him that* Governs. It is the Ground upon which he proceeds in this Adminiſtration, and to which he refers himſelf in it: He makes it his own Law, to which he reſtrains himſelf; and it is the Rule of his Juſtice in all his proceedings: We read, Gen. 38 21. *Diſcern, I pray thee, whoſe are theſe.* And there muſt be a Law to diſcern between right and wrong in a Judge. God therefore obligeth Himſelf to this.

2. IN *reſpect to the* Subjects, *or them that are* Govern'd. It ſets them their bounds, which if they come ſhort of, or go beyond, they become guilty of Tranſgreſſion. Hence, Sin hath that Deſcription, 1 Joh. 3. 4. —*Sin is the tranſgreſſion of the Law.* He being under the Authority of the Rule, it becomes a Law to him, and he cannot decline from it without Sin; becauſe he is obliged to conform himſelf entirely to it.

(3.) THE

(3.) THE *Excellency of a Law, and consequently the Wisdom of the Lawgiver appears, in its being suited to the Nature and Condition of the Subject.* The design of a Law being to Govern the Subject suitably to it's End, and that respecting it's Actions; it must needs have respect to it s Nature; for the Operation is according to the Being of the thing: and therefore Creatures of different Kinds or Natures, must have differing Laws. That cannot be a Law to one, that may be to another. *Law* is founded in the highest Reason; but to require the same of an *Unreasonable* Creature, that may be of one that is *Reasonable*, is a thing unreasonable: See, *Job* 35. 10, 11.

(4.) HENCE, *Man being a Moral Agent, it was fit that he should have a Moral Law to Govern him by.* Without this, his *Moral Actions*, which are only truely and properly Humane, would be under no Government; and hence they would serve to no End, and so be in vain, which is not to be conceived; for so God would lose the Glory of the Service of His noblest Creatures, in their most excellent Endowments. This Moral Law is therefore usually called by Divines, the *Law of Nature*; not in a *larger* sense respecting the whole Nature of the Creature, but *restrainedly*, relating to the Nature of Man, because it was fitted to his Nature, and the Reasons of it are to be read in the Light of Nature, so far as it remains in him: It is therefore called a *Good Law*, in *Rom.* 7. 12.

(5.) GOD *at first gave Man this Law for his Rule.* It was that according to which He required him to conform Himself. The *New Edition* of the Moral Law upon Mount *Sinai*, drawn up into *Ten Commandments*, was nothing else but a *Transcript* of the Law given to *Adam* at First; which fallen Man had lost the Sense of in a great measure; and therefore the Relicts of it are intimated to be in the Hearts of those very Heathen who never had a Copy of that which was given by *Moses*, Rom 2. 14, 15. *For when the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another.*

(6.) THIS *Moral Law was given to Man to be a perpetual Rule*: And that both for his *measuring his Actions* by, and God's *measuring out his Rewards* of them according to it. It was to be perpetual. There was a Ceremonial Law given afterwards, which was to be transient, but this was to abide as long as this Government of God continued; and for this Reason our Saviour hath that Assertion, Matth. 5. 18. *For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one title shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.* We therefore read; Psal. 19. 9. *The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever.* Psal. 119. 89. *For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven.* This is an Unchangable Law through all Generations.

(7.) HENCE *all the after Transactions between God and Men refer to this Law.* Here was the foundation unto which all must be reduced: This was it which did Necessitate the introduction of a Surety, upon Man's falling behind in his respect to it; this must be considered in all the Parts of the New Covenant, as that which must be answered either by or for Man, and may in no case be baulked; and the Reason of that must needs be, because it was the first standing unalterable Rule of special Government: Not that it did exclude the *New Way* to Happiness by Christ, but made it necessary, hypothetically; which else it had not been.

4. *THE State unto which the Reasonable Creature is conducted by this Government*: *It is an* Everlasting *State.* This will be evident, if we consider,

(1.) *THAT the Subjects of this Government are to abide for ever.* They are *Angels* and *Men*: *Angels* in respect of their entire Being; and *Men* in respect of their Souls, are immortal Substances: And though their mortal Bodies must suffer Corruption, yet they shall be raised again to incorruption, Matth. 22. 30. *For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels of God in heaven.* 1 Cor. 15. 42. *So also is the resurrection of the dead, it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption.* They shall therefore continue for ever; for it is derogatory to the Infinite Wisdom of the Creator, to make an Immortal Subject, and afterwards to annihilate it.

(2.) *THAT there are* Everlasting Places *prepared on purpose for these Subjects to be disposed in.* And why should Eternal *Receptacles* be provided, unless the Creatures State in them were commensurable for duration? But that there are such, the Scripture plentifully informs us, Joh. 14. 2. *In my fathers house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you: I go to prepare a place for you.* Isa 33. 14. *Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who shall dwell with everlasting burnings.* Yea we are told that they shall be here forever, Matth. 25. ult. *And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.*

(3.) *THAT God will have some* Everlasting Monuments *of his own Infinite Glory, in whom the shine of his Divine Moral Perfections, shall be illustrious for ever.* We are told that God will have it so, Rom. 9. 22, 23. *What if God willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory?* Other Beings, tho' their *Matter* perisheth not, yet their *Substances* are resolved into their *Principles*, and they are no more, and the whole *Species* of them will ere long cease; but *these* must remain, that God's Glory may be seen in them Eternally; *they* perish, but *these* must endure.

5. *THE*

5. *THE Condition into which they are brought, respecting this Eternity is* twofold, *viz.* either of *Happiness* or *Misery*. Some are appointed and led to a State of Eternal Life and Glory, others to a Condition of Eternal Death and Punishment, Matth. 25. ult. *And these shall shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.* Some shall have the Beatifical Vision and Fruition of God forever; 1 Pet. 5. 10. *The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus.* Others shall be cast forever from His Presence into Everlasting Burnings; 2 Thes. 1. 9. *Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.* Here observe,

(1.) THAT *there are two glorious Attributes of God, which he intends principally to exalt in His Reasonable Creatures; and they are His* Mercy *or* Grace, *and His* Justice. These are won't to be called his Moral Perfections, and for that Reason Moral Agents are to be the Subjects in whom the Declarative Glory of them is to be manifested; and that God hath designed the Glorfying of these Perfections in this Subject, is witnessed in the forecited, *Rom.* 9. 22, 23.

(2.) THAT *these Attributes may for ever shine forth in them, there must be some everlasting Monuments of each of them.* That *Grace* may appear Eternally, there must be some that must be made endlesly Happy, in such a way, as may render it admirable. And that *Justice* may sit in State, and may triumph for ever, others are ordained to be perpetual Instances of it, by suffering Eternal Punishment. This is one of God's ancient Decrees, and therefore they are said to be *of old ordained to it*, Jude *ver.* 4.

(3.) THAT *this may be effected, they must needs come under the special Government of God.* These things refer to the consideration of Rewards and Punishments, and are to be dispensed with Authority, and God acts in it as a Judge; and therefore they must needs come under a Rule, in which the Creature is concerned as a natural Agent: Hence we read, Rom. 2. 6. *Who will render to every man according to his deeds.*

6. *THIS issue befalls the Reasonable Creature according to the tenour of the Moral Law.* We heard already that it is the Rule of special Government. But here let us farther observe,

(1.) THAT *the Moral Law might be a suitable Rule of Government, it had Sanctions added to it.* There was not only a Directory given, but there was a Promise made unto Obedience, Rom. 10. 5 *For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.* And a Threatning to Disobedience, Gen. 2. 17. *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* Without these it had not been a proper instrument of Government.

(2.) THAT *the Reasonable Creature to whom this Law was given was mutable.* Though he was every way furnished with Moral Powers to obey, yet he was capable of disobeying; as the Event wofully proved: These Sanctions therefore were a suitable Moral Obligation on him, to practice Obedience, and avoid Disobedience, Deut. 30. 19. *I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.*

(3.) THAT *whether the Reasonable Creature Obey or Disobey, God will have His Glory by it.* God hath an End in all His works, and he will never miss of it. If the Creature miss of it's Felicity; yet He will not be put by of His Honour: And for that End he hath provided for it by annexing a Penalty as well as a Reward to his Law; that if the one fail, the other may take place: Hence that, Rom 2. 7, 8, 9. *To them, who by patient continuing in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality; eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness; indignation & wrath; Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil.*

(4.) HENCE *all God's proceedings with the Creature in this Government refer hither.* The Moral Reason why one is made Happy and another Miserable, is not because they were Ordained to it; but because they are found the Subjects of these, according to the Law: And therefore the Book of the Moral Law, will be the ground of the Process of the great Court at the last Day: The enquiry will be, whether that be answered, and accordingly will the Sentence pass. The New Covenant only admits that it be answered by a Surety; but it is certain, that there shall be none stand then in the Judgment, but they whom Justice it self shall give an acquittance unto, and declare for them that they have obeyed.

USE 1. WE hence learn, *That Man was neither Happy nor Miserable by Creation.* Creation made him a Subject capable of either, but it put him into neither.

HERE let us observe,

1. *HAPPINESS & Misery do not belong to the Head of* Creation, *but of* special Government. God must lead him to this State, if ever he arrives at it; but God doth not lead him thereto by the Rule of Creation; in that he only gave him a Nature that he might be Happy, and an Ability to comply with the way to it.

2. HAPPINESS *is the attainment of the Creature's End*; *and* Misery *is the loss of his End.* And here understand me not to intend the End of the Decree, which we call, *God's End*; which can never be lost; but the End proposed to Man, in which by Obedience he was to receive the Reward, and this we call *Man's End*, because

becauſe he was obliged by the Precept to aim at it: But Man by Creation neither obtains nor loſeth his End, but is put into a Capacity for either.

3. *HAPPINESS or Miſery are the Reward or Puniſhment of the Creature according to ſome Rule, and the reſpect that his State and Actions bear to the Rule. Happineſs* therefore follows upon *Eupraxy* or *Well-doing*, *Miſery* upon *Evil-doing*; but Man by Creation had done neither Good or Evil: And before he could, he muſt have a Rule given him, which muſt be the Meaſure of it; which belongs to this Government. Man had the Habits of Original Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, enabling him to bring forth the Actions of true Obedience, and ſo to be made Happy: But being mutable, he might miſs and fail: Happineſs was Conditionally promiſed him in the Covenant; but the actual Fruition of it, depended upon his Trial.

USE 2. LEARN hence, *The Excellency of the* Moral Law, *in that it is a Rule of the Happineſs of the Reaſonable Creature*: Iſa. 56. 2. *Bleſſed is the man that doeth this, and the ſon of man that layeth hold on it: that keepeth the ſabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.* Jam. 1. 25. *But whoſo looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man ſhall be bleſſed in his deed.* The Law was not given Man for his Hurt, but Good; he could never have attained Bleſſedneſs without it; he muſt never have known the way of it, if he had not had this Rule to have guided him unto it. Man was deeply obliged unto God for giving him the Law, for without it he had been left in a Wilderneſs, and remained without Felicity forever.

USE 3. THIS tells us, *What Reaſon there is why we ſhould all take great heed to our Lives and Actions.* Let us then always remember that we are under God's ſpecial Government, and that all we do hath a tendency to an Everlaſting State, either of Happineſs or Miſery: And ſhall not this make us Cautious to ourſelves to conſider, that whatever we do is upon an Everlaſting Account; we are not like Beaſts that live a while, and then Periſh and are no more; but we are going to an Eternity, and all we think, ſpeak or do, is upon the Account, and will contribute either to our Weal or Wo: How wary ſhould this make us to ourſelves, and put us upon pondering all our ſteps, and propoſing to our own Souls beforehand, Will this contribute any thing to my own Eternal Bleſſedneſs? aſſuring our ſelves that if it doth not, it will lay in for our endleſs Puniſhment, if Grace prevent not.

USE 4. THIS Truth points us to *the abſolute need of Chriſt's Satisfaction, in order to our Salvation*; and *of the imputation of His Righteouſneſs to us, in order to our Juſtification.* For If the Moral Law be the Rule of ſpecial Government, wo to all the Poſterity of fallen Man, if the Law be not anſwered for them: in a Surety, and the Benefit of the Suretiſhip be not conferred upon them, ſo as to procure a Righteous Diſcharge from the Condemnation of the Law for them; which can derive in no other way but this; and how ſhould this drive us all to ſeek the Security of ſuch a Title, that we may not be condemned?

[DECEMBER 1. 1691.]

SERMON *XLIX.*

WE have taken a brief view of the *Nature* of Special Government, as it differs from that which is Common.

Secondly, THE *Subjects* of *this Government*, (we obſerved,) are *Reaſonable Creatures*: Now theſe are of Two ſorts, viz. *Angels* and *Men*. Both of theſe are equally concerned in this Government, as to the Subſtance of it; being treated with, as Cauſes by Counſel, and having a Law given them, according to the Tenour of which they were to be everlaſtingly Happy or Miſerable. Only we may obſerve theſe differences:

1. *THERE are many particular things in the Moral Law, which the* Angels *were not capable of, but were proper to* Men: The Angels being *Spirits*, whereas thoſe things have a reſpect to Man conſidered as having a *Body* as well as a *Soul*; and bearing ſome Relations which they do not, to which there are Relative Duties annexed; ſuch as between Husband and Wife, Parents and Children; Moderation in uſing the Good Things of this Life; inſtituted Worſhip, *&c.*

2. ANGELS *were each one of them to ſtand or fall for himſelf*; *whereas* Adam *was the common Head of Mankind.* All the Individual Angels were Created at once, in their natural Perfection, and therefore each one made his own Choice voluntarily; but Man was made *One* at the Firſt, and to be multiplied by Propagation, and in that One, all were comprehended, and tranſacted for, as will afterwards be conſidered.

3. OF the Angels, *ſome ſtood never to fall, others fell, never to be reſtored*; *whereas in the* Firſt Adam, *the whole race of Mankind fell under a Curſe of Death*; *and there are ſome who remain under that Apoſtacy, and others who are again reſtored unto Life by the* Second Adam. But, as it little concerns us at preſent, to know the particular Tranſaction between God and the Angels, ſo the Scripture hath ſpoken but little diſtinctly about it; but as it relates to Men, we are all deeply intereſted in it, and have need to be well-acquainted with it from the beginning to the end.

AND here, The firſt thing that offers it ſelf to our conſideration referring to Man, is the *Covenant* which paſs'd between God and him at the Firſt, which is the very Baſis on which all

that

that follows is built, and unto which it muſt be referred.

THIS *Anſwer* before us, affords a Deſcription of this Affair: And in the clearing of it up, we may conſider of theſe things. (1.) That there was ſuch a Covenant paſt between God and Man. (2.) When it was made. (3.) The Excellency of it. (4.) The Nature of it. (5.) The Sacraments annexed to it.

[1.] THAT *there was ſuch a Covenant paſt between God & Man.* I need not here tarry to Diſcourſe of the Nature of a Covenant in General. Where two Parties do ſtand mutually obliged one to another in a voluntary Agreement, there is a Covenant: that there was ſuch a Tranſaction between God and Man will appear if we conſider,

1. THAT Adam *was by Creation God's Servant.* He was made, as all other Creatures were, for the Service of his Creator, Prov. 16.4. *The Lord hath made all things for himſelf.* He was a Creature, and ſo bound for God as his laſt end: for this is the natural reſpect which a Creature owes to the Creator, and it is due to Him for giving it it's Being; Pſal. 100. 2, 3. *Serve the Lord with gladneſs; come before his preſence with ſinging. Know ye that the Lord he is God, it is he that made us, and not we our ſelves; we are his people, and the ſheep of his paſture.*

2. ADAM *was a Reaſonable Creature, and ſo he owed unto God a Reaſonable Service.* Rom. 12. 1. *I beſeech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reaſonable Service.* The Nature of the Creature diſcovers the Quality of the Service that it owes to God; for the Operation follows the Being of the thing: And as a Reaſonable Creature, Man was capable of Tranſacting with God in the way of a Covenant; he was able to underſtand, and ſubſcribe to the Articles, to give his free Conſent, and ſet his Seal to them.

3. *GOD's dealing with all his Creatures is according to their manner of working.* Man therefore was made in ſuch a Capacity, that ſo he might actually be indented with; and hereupon God traded with him in this way. Hence,

4 THE *Tranſaction between God & Man,* recorded, Gen. 2. *carries in it the Subſtance of a Covenant*; as will be evident if we conſider,

(1.) THAT *God gave him a Law or Rule to walk by.* He pointed him to what was his Duty; laid out the way of his Obedience before him; Mic.6.8. *He hath ſhewed thee O man, what is Good, and what doth the Lord require of thee.*

(2.) *HE joined to the Rule, Conditional Promiſes and Threatnings; by which both God and Man became obliged.* For both did God engage Himſelf to proceed according to theſe Sanctions, and laid Man under them: *Gen.*2.17. we have the Threatning.

(3.) *HE gave Man an Underſtanding both of his Duty, and of his Benefit and Danger.* The Woman could tell the Serpent upon what Terms they ſtood with God, *Gen.* 3. 2, 3. And this is enough to make it a Covenant between One abſolutely Supream, and a Subject who owed himſelf and his all to him: But,

5. ADAM *conſented to and approved of this Rule, as juſt & equal, and aſſented to the Righteouſneſs of the Sanction of it.* For neither did, nor could he Object againſt it, but conſented with *Eve* in the Declaration of it; and when he knew that he had tranſgreſſed it, and ſo brought himſelf under the Threatning, his Conſcience accuſed him, and he ſought to hide himſelf from God; and where we have God propounding, and *Adam* conſenting, on ſuch Articles, this amounts to a *Covenant.*

[2.] WHEN *it was made*: viz. *When God had Created Man.* He was firſt made capable of Covenanting; and then he was Covenanted withal, ſo that it was not the meer reſult of Creation, but conſequent upon it, and falls under Government: And Man was no ſooner made, and placed in his Station among the Creatures, but God enters into Bonds with him and takes him into Covenant: And the reaſon of this was, becauſe Man was made capable of Happineſs; now he could not be Happy without a Covenant. Thoſe Glorious Rewards of Obedience could not become his due in any other way. He owed Service to God as he was his His Creature, but God owed him nothing, but what he ſhould pleaſe freely to give him: Obedience was but His Duty, and there could have been no Merit in it, nor could he have challenged a Reward of Life for it, if it had not been Covenanted for on this Condition; for God is voluntarily and not naturally obliged to any of his Creatures. Man no ſooner was, but he was to ſerve God, and God immediately brought him under the ſtrongeſt Engagements ſo to do.

[3.] THE *Excellency of this Covenant*: It was a *Covenant of Life.* It is true, there was both Life & Death contained in it, (as will be obſerved) but it is called, a *Covenant of Life,* not only from the latter part of it, or the Promiſe, but alſo becauſe this Covenant was therefore propounded to Man, that it may ſhew to him the way of Life; and the Uſe which he was to make of the Threatning of Death affixed to it, was to make it an incentive to him to be more carefull in his Obedience, that ſo he might live. It is a Covenant of Life in it ſelf, of Death only by accident; Rom. 10. 5. *For Moſes deſcribed the righteouſneſs which is of the law, That the man which doeth thoſe things, ſhall live by them.* Man ſtood now a Probationer for Happineſs or Miſery; the Covenant told him how he might eſcape the one, and gain the other: by offering the Reward to encourage him, by threatning the Penalty to caution him,

[4.] THE *Nature of the Covenant* is expreſt in the reſidue of the Anſwer: Life was promiſed upon the Condition, *&c.* Here let us obſerve,

1. THAT *the Covenant between God and Man was a Covenant between Unequals.* Such as there is between a King and his Subjects, or a Maſter and his Servants; this indeed is but a ſhadow of it, becauſe God's Supremacy is abſolute; and he hath a Sovereign Right to lay

His Commands, and give Articles as He pleaſeth, and for that reaſon it properly belongs to Government; and it is properly called the Covenant of God, and not of Man, in as much as He is the Author and Executor of it; Deut. 8. 19. *And it ſhall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, and ſerve them, and worſhip them, I teſtifie againſt you this day, that ye ſhall ſurely periſh.*

2. THE *ſubſtance of the Covenant was the Moral Law, conſidered as the bond of the Obligation of the Creature unto God*; as it was impoſed by God, and accepted by Man. Impoſed upon a Subject, over whom God had the right of Dominion: Thus is the Law the matter of the firſt Covenant, and therefore it is indifferently in Scripture called, ſometimes a Covenant, and ſometimes a Law; it being that unto which all Man's references are in the Covenant between him and his God, and the ground of the Divine proceedure with him.

3. IN *this Covenant we are to obſerve the Parts of it*; and they are two, *viz. The conditions propounded*, and the *conſequents annexed*: For, as there are two Parties in a Covenant, ſo there is ſomething that each of the Parties is obliged to, and the Obligation is on both, or elſe it could not be a Covenant: Now the conditions here are the Obligations laid upon Man, the annexed conſequents are thoſe which God hath taken upon Himſelf, and bound Himſelf unto: and there was a ſtrong connexion between theſe; as therefore the conditions were two, viz. *Obedience* and *Diſobedience*; ſo were the conſequents, viz. *Life* and *Death*; the former referring to Obedience, and was contained in a *Promiſe*, the latter to Diſobedience, and conſiſts of a *Threatning*: Here then,

(1.) THE *Condition of Life was Obedience*, *Rom.* 10. 5. Now Moral Obedience, is Man's due, and Perfect, Perſonal attendance to the revealed will of God, or the command given to him, and thereby reſting ſatisfyed in God, as the chief good; Deut. 6. 5. *And thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy might.* More particularly, in the Rule of Obedience, Man was required,

1. *TO acknowledge God's Supremacy*, and Authority to Command him, and to have born the higheſt reſpect unto it: God therefore gives that for a Reaſon of his Commands, *I am the LORD*; that He is an abſolute Monarch, His Will is a Law: Man therefore was to acknowledge the Command worthy of Obedience for its own ſake.

2. NOT *to have given Ear to any Temptation of Satan*, but ſtood reſolutely and unmovably to the Command as his alone guide to eternal Bleſſedneſs; and his not ſo doing, was the firſt ſtep to his fall.

3. *TO have made an Abſolute choiſe of God for his Portion*; and to have reſted ſatisfyed in this choiſe. He was not to take up with any thing, either in Heaven or in Earth in the room of God. Pſal. 73. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I deſire beſides thee.* He was to chooſe God for himſelf, as his laſt End and beſt Good, and account Him enough.

4. *FROM this Principle he was practically to have Attended to the faithful performance of the whole Law or Command.* All the faculties and powers of his Soul and Body were to be employed conſtantly in this work; he was to do the Will of God, and nothing elſe; this was his buſineſs; and for that Reaſon it was a Covenant of Works, becauſe there was a work ſet him to do, on which his happineſs depended, *Iſai.* 56. 2.

(2.) THE *Reward promiſed to this Obedience, was Life:* In which Life there was contained the continuance of an Unchangable ſtate of Bleſſedneſs, in the full enjoyment of the Infinite goodneſs of God to his utmoſt capacity, *Rom.* 10. 5. There are Two things contained in it,

1. *A N Immutable State of Bleſſedneſs.* He ſhould have been confirmed in his Obedience, and never loſt it, and ſo have been everlaſtingly happy: for it is Eternal Life that is promiſed: for as this is the reward of Faith now, ſo it ſhould have been of Obedience then; for it is the ſame Life is promiſed in both Covenants: and the continuance of his bodily Life, was included in it.

2. *A full Fruition of God to be his Portion*: and that is Life, *Pſal.* 30. 5. He ſhould have been his God, *Exod.* 20. 2. and he ſhould have been his for ever, Pſal. 48. ult. *For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death.*

(3.) THE *condition of Death was Diſobedience.* And this is contrary to the former; as therefore it was enjoyned him, ſo this was forbidden him: and it was his Non-attendance to God's will, and taking up with ſomething inſtead of God for his portion; and it conſiſted in any coming ſhort of duty, or tranſgreſſion of the Command: This is called *Diſobedience*, *Rom.* 5. 19. And as the Obedience conſiſted in an entire conformity to the whole Law, ſo this Diſobedience, was in coming ſhort in any one Article, Gal. 3. 10. *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them.*

4. *THE Puniſhment threatned for this Diſobedience, was Death*, Gen. 2. 17. In which is contained an utter loſs of all that is good exhibited in the promiſe, and ſuffering all the miſeries of this Life, and Eternity.

NOW theſe terms were fixt, ratified, unalterable; and that on God's part as well as Man's: He engaged His Holineſs, Juſtice, Truth in it, and they were to ſtand inviolable, Mat. 5. 18. *For verily I ſay unto you, Till heaven and earth paſs, one jot or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled.* Hence,

[5.] WE *are to obſerve the Sacraments* which were annexed as Seals to this Covenant, and they were two, *viz.* the *Tree of Life*, and the Tree of Knowledge, *Gen.* 2. 9.

1. *THE Tree of Life* was a Sacrament, whereby God Sealed up a conſtant Life of Happineſs,

pineſs, in caſe of his Obedience, Gen. 3. 22. *And the Lord God ſaid, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil. And now leſt he put forth his hand, and take alſo of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever.* God had given to Man a concreated Power Moral, enabling of him to obey perfectly; but he was mutable: Hence to encourage him, He made to him a glorious Promiſe of an excellent Reward, if he would be Faithful; and to ratify this Promiſe and to make it the more obliging, He ſequeſtred this Tree, and put that figure upon it, that it ſhould be a Sign and a Seal of the Promiſe, and by looking upon it, he might ſtimulate himſelf, and fortify againſt all Temptations to draw him away.

2. THE *Tree of Knowledge* was a Sacrament to confirm the Threatning, and witneſs to Man the certainty of his Death, in caſe of Diſobedience; Gen. 2. 17. *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou ſhalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die.* It was to let him ſee and know that God was in earneſt; and would be as good as His Word; that the threatning was not meerly to frighten him, but to ratify to him the Truth of what he was warned of. This Tree alſo had a further deſign in it, *viz.* To be a ſpecial Trial of his Obedience: This Tree, as the former, had nothing in its own Nature, to make it unlawful for Man to uſe the Fruit as common Food; but God to ſhew his Sovereignty, did by a poſitive Law, lay a reſtraint upon Man's Liberty, and ſo exempted it, to ſee if he would acknowledge His Sovereign, and give Him his Prerogative. Not that all Obedience was reſtrained to this one Article; for the whole Moral Law was his Rule; but here was a ſpecial Probation of him; ſo that this Tree was both a Sacrament, and a Teſt unto Man at the Firſt.

USE 1. *HERE we ſee the ground of that Truth; that Man's Perdition is in himſelf*, Hoſ. 13.9 *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf.* Man is his own undoer, he had a perfect Law given him, and he might have obeyed it if he would, and ſo have been forever happy: If he would diſobey and throw himſelf away forever, he muſt ſtand to the hazard of it; if he dy and be damned, he can charge none with the guilt of it but himſelf: The Covenant was a Law of Life in it ſelf, if he finds it become a Law of Death, it is thro' his own Default. Man by Covenant was put upon making his own Choice, whether he would Live or Dy; if he then Chuſe to Dy, againſt all Warnings, he juſtly deſerves to be filled with his own Device.

USE 2. *SEE here a Reaſon of the Juſtice of God's proceedings againſt the Heathen; to puniſh them with Eternal Death.* Not as they have refuſed to accept of the Second, but as they have violated the Firſt Covenant. The terms of Reconciliation were never propoſed to them, and hence they are not on this account Guilty, neither have they received the written Word, in which the Law is revived, (and hence ſaid to be *Judged without the Law*, Rom. 2. 12.) but all Mankind owe Obedience to the Law Moral; and were intereſted in the Covenant made with Man in *Adam*; the breach of which Covenant they ſtand Guilty of; having ſinned, *and come ſhort of the glory of God*, Rom. 3. 23.

USE 3. SEE *how impoſſible it is for fallen Man, by Perſonal Legal Obedience to recover a State of Life & Happineſs.* The Nature of the Covenant of Works diſcovers the vain attempt of *Legaliſts*, who go about to eſtabliſh a Righteouſneſs of their own: The Nature of this Covenant ſhews it abſolutely impoſſible for fallen Man to recover God's Favour by his own works: The Covenant ſaid, if Man *Sin*, he ſhall certainly *Dy*, and it Sealed it: How unreaſonable then is it for any to think by a new Obedience, perſonal, to recover himſelf again to the Promiſe of Life, who is for Sin already actually under the threatning of Death; which muſt be Executed, or the Truth, Juſtice and Holineſs of God will ſuffer. Let Men walk never ſo exactly, yet there is Guilt upon them; and if not removed, they muſt Dy.

USE 4. SEE *and Bewail the Happineſs we have miſt of, and the Infelicity we have contracted to our ſelves by the Fall.* Had Man obeyed God, all the Creatures had obeyed him; he had poſſeſt an Eternal Unchangable State of Happineſs: Life had been his Portion; all things had conſpired his Good; he had Lived and not Dyed; God would have taken up His Eternal Reſidence with him, and filled him with all Glorious Felicities; but now how far otherwiſe is it? and what a loud Cry is here to all, to ſeek a redreſs by the New Covenant; yea to drive Children to Chriſt in the Days of their Youth: You are now miſerable, make haſt then to be Happy in Chriſt.

[DECEMBER 29. 1691.]

SERMON L.

QUESTION XIII.

DID our Firſt Parents continue in the Eſtate wherein they were Created?

ANSWER.

OUR Firſt Parents being left to the Freedom of their own will, fell from the Eſtate wherein they were Created, by ſinning againſt GOD.

HITHERTO we have ſeen Man bidding fair for Happineſs; being Created in the Image of God, furniſhed with a ſtock of Original Sanctification, fitting him for the whole Obedience of the Moral Law, and put under a Covenant firmly engaging Life to him upon that Obedience: And now what ſhould hinder him? What ſtronger tye could there ly upon him, than the aſſured Felicity which ſhould have been his Reward,

Reward, and the certain Misery he should incur in Case he should Transgress? But behold, The next News is, Man is fallen and undone: And this is the doleful Condition we are now to enquire into: We have considered the First Covenant as the Rule of God's special Government, and according to the Tenour of which, He leads Men to an Everlasting State of Happiness or Misery: We are now,

III. TO take a view of *the Things that were consequent upon this Covenant, with respect unto* Man; *or what becomes of him with reference unto it:* And all of this will be reduced unto Two Heads, *viz.* Man's *Apostacy*; and his *Recovery*: The *Apostacy* subjects Men to Everlasting Misery, and God leaves multitudes to Perish in it; but there is also a *Recovery* and *Restitution* in which many are restored to the Enjoyment of Felicity.

I. THE first of these to be spoken to is *Man's Apostacy*, his departure from, and violation of the Covenant, (which the present and several following *Questions* will instruct us in.)

IN the *Answer* before us, there are Four Things to be observed, *viz.* 1. The *Fall* of Man from his Primitive Estate is also asserted. 2. That the *Occasion* of it was his being left to his Free-will. 3. That the *Principle blameable Cause* was the Abuse of his Free-will. 4. That *that in which he abused it, and by which he fell*, was his sinning against God.

HERE then *Two Things* may be look'd into for the opening and confirming of this Truth. 1. Something in *General* concerning the Apostacy of Man. 2. Something in *Particular* about the way in which it was brought about.

I. IN *General* respecting *Man's Apostacy*; there are *three Things* worthy our Reflexion, *viz.*

1. THAT *Man is certainly fallen from his Primitive Estate.* That our First Parents did not continue in that Integrity, Perfection and Dignity in which they were placed at first, but cast themselves down from that height. We have the History of this at large, recorded in, *Gen.* 3. where we are informed, both *that* it was, and *how* it was. And indeed there needs no more to prove the *Fall of Mankind*, or that Man is by Nature in a *State of Apostacy*, than to consider what he *once was*, and what he *now is*; whether we look upon his Endowments, or his Privileges which he was at first invested withal, and see how all these are now gone, & exchanged for Misery, it speaks plainly that he is *Fallen*; if his Estate were such as it hath been already described to us, there is none of that now abiding: *Once* he was able to Serve God, *now* he cannot; *Once* he knew Him, and could chuse him for his Portion, *now* he is ignorant of Him, and bids Him depart from him: *Once* he was Immortal, in Health and Favour, all the Creatures served him, and there was nothing to molest him; but *now* he is a Dying Creature, and every thing gives him Trouble and Sorrow: And if this be not a *Fall*, what can be so? But,

2. WE *may look upon the* general Nature *of the Apostacy of Man.* It is in the *Answer* called, *His falling from the Estate wherein he was Created,* and that respects to *two Things*; 1. The *State of Nature* in which he was, and that was a *State of Perfection*, by vertue of the Image of God which was upon him. 2. The *Covenant State* which he bare, and that was in Relation to Happiness, as he was under a Covenant Promise of it, and stood fair for it: From both of these he is gone, and they are utterly lost, as will be particularly taken notice of under some of the following *Answers.*

MAN by the Fall lost himself; and there are *two Words* by which this Fall is expressed in the *New Testament*, which will give us light into the *general Nature* of it:

[1.] IT is called an *Apostacy*, Heb. 3.12 The Word properly signifys a standing off, and so properly expresseth the fallen State of Man: He was made to close with God, but now he stood off from him, departed and seperated himself; hence a sinful Man is said to be *seperated*, Isa. 59 2. It implies a Defection, and there are *two Things* contained in it:

(1.) THAT *Man left the Place which God had set him in.* There was a Station to which he was appointed, but he Deserted it: God commanded him to Serve him; and to make His Glory the ultimate Scope of his whole Life, and all his Actions; he was ranked foremost in the visible Creation, but he broke his Rank, deserted his Place, flew from his Colours.

(2.) THAT *he Rebelled against God, and took part with His Enemies, against his Maker*: He went over to those that had taken up Arms against his Lord, and listed himself among them, and became of their Party: He went away from God to the Creature; it is summarily exprest in, Jer. 2. 13. *For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.* And this is surely a great Fall.

[2.] IT is called an *Offence*, Rom. 5.17. The Word properly signifys a Fall which is taken by stumbling at something which lies in ones way: And here it is applied to *Adam*'s total Apostacy; and it serves most aptly to express the ruined Estate into which Man hath cast himself; for there are *Three* or *Four* Senses in which it is used, all of which give light in this Affair:

(1.) IT signifys a *falling besides ones Aim or Mark* which he should have gone to: And this was the very Nature of the Apostacy; for in it Man fell beside his Rule, which should have guided him to his End, and so he mist of that: he declined from the Law which God gave him to direct him to this Happiness, and so he fell quite beside it. *Adam* should have gone by Rule, and so have reached to his End; his coming short of so doing, was the procuring Cause of his Fall.

(2.) IT is a *falling down*, a declining; or a loss of a Man's excellent Estate, and that by stumbling at something thrown in his way; and so it farther expresseth the Apostacy. Man stumbled at his Rule, and so he fell. There was a Question of the verity of God's Promise & Threatning cast before him; and this gave him such a Trip,

Trip, that it threw him down: He was in an high Place of Eminency and Dignity, exalted above his fellow Creatures, ſtood next to his Maker; but now he is brought into a low, a mean, and an ignoble State: was made free; but is now become a Servant of Servants.

(3.) IT intimates a *falling from one Object to another.* A deſerting of one thing, for ſomething elſe. Such was the Apoſtacy: Man's proper Object is GOD, whoſe Face and Glory he was to view, and in the Enjoyment of whom he was to be Happy; but he changed his Object, and choſe ſomething beſides God to cloſe with-al: He choſe the Creature inſtead of God, to ſeek his Happineſs from: For that is the Sum of Man's Apoſtacy, Rom. 1. 25 *Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worſhipped and ſerved the creature more than the Creator.*

(4.) BY a Metonymy of the Cauſe, it ſignifies the *Ruin* of a thing. The Fall and the Ruin of a thing are one and the ſame thing in Scripture Language; compare, Hoſ. 13. 9. *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf*: with, 14. 1. *O Iſrael, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou haſt fallen by thine iniquity*: And this well ſuits to the Apoſtacy. Man in his Creation was like a fair Houſe, new built, fit to entertain the King of Glory, fit for a Temple for the Holy Ghoſt to dwell in; but now he is like an old Houſe gone to decay, where, by the ruinous Heaps, we may gueſs what a famous Structure it once was, but is now nothing but Rubbiſh.

3. WE are to obſerve the *Manner of his Fall*; and that is expreſt to be, *by Sinning againſt God.* I am not here to ſpeak of the Nature of Sin in general, nor of the particular Tranſgreſſion in which Man's Apoſtacy conſiſted; for theſe things come afterwards: But only in General to take notice, that Man's Fall comes under a Moral Conſideration; or that it was his Sin which threw him. And here take this General Concluſion;

THAT Man loſt his Primitive State by falling off from the Rule of ſpecial Government, under which he was placed, as it was a Rule of Life.

AND that we may take up the right notion of this, let theſe things be obſerved:

(1.) THAT *Man did not fall from the Rule of Creation or Conſervation, but of Gubernation.* Not of *Creation*, for he ſtill remains one of God's Creatures, tho' he be a Diſobedient one: He is not therefore cut off from that Duty and Homage, which as a Creature of God, he owes to his Maker: Nor doth God diſown him from being one of His Creatures: Nay Sinners ſhall know it one Day to their Coſt. Nor of *Conſervation*; as God gave his Being to him, ſo He will ſuſtain or uphold this Being of his according to the Rules of Providence, and the Condition of ſuch a Creature: As therefore he had an Immortal Being beſtowed upon him, ſo God will preſerve him in it to all Eternity, and not ſuffer him to be Annihilated, or loſe that Being and Nature of his: He partakes in that Conſervation here, during God's Pleaſure, which extends to Good and Bad, Juſt and Unjuſt, and he ſhall do ſo forever: But his Fall is properly from the Rule of *ſpecial Government.*

(2.) THAT *Man did not Fall abſolutely from God's Government.* Nay he is as much under it as ever he was, notwithſtanding his Apoſtacy; he is a Subject, tho' he be a Rebellious one: and God will have His Glory by him, whether he will or no, which is the deſign of His Government: God will in this reſpect hold him in Subjection, that if he will not pay Him the Homage which he owes Him, He will recover His Honour of him by force: If he will not Glorify Him, He will ſtrein for it: If he will not do what a good Subject ought to do, he ſhall ſuffer what is an Offenders due: If he will not Serve at Liberty, he ſhall be held in Chains: God will drive him home to his Journey's end, & bring him to an Everlaſting State, and that according to the Rule of ſpecial Government. Man can never wholly deſert this Rule: but muſt ſtand related to one of the Conditions of it: Hence we read in Prov. 16. 4. *The Lord hath made all things for himſelf: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.*

(3.) THAT *Man did not fall from the Obligation of Obedience, to the Rule of ſpecial Government.* For notwithſtanding the Fall, he is ſtill held under the Dominion of the Rule, and the Conditions of it ſtand inviolable: He is held in paſſive Subjection to the Law, tho' he doth not actually conform unto it. He is not properly an out-law, or put out of the reach of it, but a Rebel, one whom the Law hath an eye and aim at, and will take hold of; it will Cenſure and Judge him according to Rule. The Heathen themſelves, who are *without the written Law, are a Law to themſelves*, Rom. 2. 14. And they ſhall one Day be Tried by, and Sentenced to an Everlaſting State, according to the Relation they bear to this Law: Hence, every Sin expoſeth him.

(4.) *MAN's proper Fall was from this Rule of Government, as it was a Rule of Life.* He is fallen from his *Euproxy*, and ſo from his Happineſs; and he is fallen under *Ataxy*, and ſo into Miſery.

Here obſerve,

1. THAT *by the Rule of ſpecial Government*, Life *was to be the Reward of Obedience, and* Death *the Recompence of Diſobedience.* Theſe we have obſerved to be the Terms of the Firſt Covenant, and Man was to be Happy or Miſerable upon theſe Conditions: for the Law is not to be conſidered barely as a Directory, but as it ſtood with it's Sanctions, which were the Rule of Relative Juſtice in it's Proceedings with Mankind, and the diſtribution of Recompences to them; according to which he was to Live or Dy.

2. THAT *as Man by his power to Obey, ſtood fair for Life, ſo by his actual Obedience he ſhould have been confirmed in it.* All the Created Holineſs and Righteouſneſs in Man, did not put him into Poſſeſſion of Happineſs, but it diſpoſed him

him into a next capacity for it; he might be happy if it were not his own fault, he was told how it was to be attained, and he had power to comply with the condition, and if he had but ſo done it had been put paſt danger; for the promiſe poſitively ſaid, *Do and Live*: And if he had been faithful in his Duty, God would have been true to His Word.

3. HENCE *Man's Actual coming ſhort of his Obedience, was properly his Fall.* Herein his Apoſtaſy truly and eſſentially conſiſted, in his falling from his Rule, in diſobeying of it; and all the conſequent Miſery which he fell into, was but the fruit and effect of this. If he had not ſinned he had not died; nothing elſe but ſin could have tumbled him down from that excellent ſtate, and laid him in the pit of miſery, Hoſ. 14. 1. *O Iſrael, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou haſt fallen by thine iniquity.* For, by neglecting the condition of Life, he loſt the reward of it, and by fulfilling the condition of Death, he brought himſelf under the efficacy of it.

4. HENCE, *That he is fallen from all power and ability of obeying and being Happy by it, is a penalty of that Diſobedience.* His loſs of his power conſiſts in the loſs of the Sanctification which he at firſt had habitually in him, and this was part of the Death which he procured to himſelf by his Sin. How far there was a *Phyſical* influence into it by the act of Diſobedience, is matter of diſpute, but this *Moral* influence it certainly had; and whether Man did actually deſtroy all his Grace at once, by the Tranſgreſſion, it is certain that he did it Meritoriouſly, and it all went away upon it, by God's righteous Judgment; ſo that he left no good thing remaining in him, that was *Theologically* ſo; and this was the complement of his Fall, now his *Primitive* State was altogether gone, and the Law it ſelf according to the firſt conſtitution of it, can no longer give him Life, Gal. 3. 21. *Is the law then againſt the promiſes of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteouſneſs ſhould have been by the law.* And this may ſuffice to be ſpoken of the Fall of Man in general.

USE, 1. HERE *we ſee the true and proper Reaſon of Man's Miſery.* When we look all over the World, and ſee Sons and Daughters of Sorrow ſcattered up and down upon the face of the Earth, born to Affliction as the ſparks fly upwards; when we ſee Sickneſſes, Diſeaſes, Deaths, Perplexities, Diſappointments, Diſcontents, and all manner of Miſeries, let us ſtand ſtill and enquire, How a Creature ſo excellent in his Creation, is become ſo Sorrowful and Miſerable in his preſent condition; and to ſatisfy our Minds about it, let us look back to Man's Apoſtaſy, and there we ſhall read thtText on which all this Infelicity is the wofulCommentary. Had not he fallen from his God, and from his Rule, his God had never forſaken him; nor had we ever read or heard ſuch Tragical things, if Man had not thrown himſelf down into them by Sin; had not that opened the door, theſe Miſchiefs had never got out: Jer. 2. 17. *Haſt thou not procured this unto thy ſelf, in that thou haſt forſaken the Lord thy God.*

USE, 2. *SEE here how needful both the Active and Paſſive Obedience of the Second Adam, were for the Reſtitution of fallen Men.* For,

(1) IN *his Apoſtaſy Man fell from his Obedience.* He ſtood off from the Law of God, which was the Rule of Life, and here upon came ſhort of the condition of Life, without which it could not be enjoyed: the Second *Adam* therefore muſt of neceſſity obey, and perform the required Condition for him. No Obedience, no Happineſs; Life comes in upon that Condition: He then that will be Mans Saviour muſt fulfill all Righteouſneſs.

(2) IN *the Apoſtaſy Man came under the condition of Death.* By falling off from God, he fell under the Threatning, and ſo was bound over to ſuffer the Penalties included in it; and he who will Redeem him, muſt alſo comply with this Condition, by ſuffering in his ſtead, elſe could not an Holy and Juſt God ſtand to his own Agreement: No part therefore of Chriſt's work could have been ſpared, nor could we have been Happy, if any of it had been omitted.

USE, 3. THE *Conſideration of Mans Apoſtaſy may ſhew us what weak Things we are; and what little reaſon we have to confide in our own Strength.* When we look upon *Adam* in Innocency, adorned with all thoſe glorious Perfections of Original Righteouſneſs and Holineſs, having God's Law written on his heart, and God's Image imprinted upon him, and every way furniſhed for Obedience, and now ſee him fallen, and all his glory loſt, and him tumbling into a Pit of Ignominy and Miſery; let it teach us to be afraid of truſting to our own Abilities, or leaning to our imperfect Grace. None more likely than *Adam* in perfection, and yet he loſt all. Be not high minded but fear; let us make ſure to have our Security in a Stronger Hand, not reckoning our ſelves ſafe, but in having Immutable Omnipotency engaged to carry us through; and let our hopes Center there.

[JANUARY, 26. 1691.]

SERMON *LI.*

SERMON *LI.*

II. WE are *more particularly to conſider of the way in which the Apoſtacy was brought about:* in which the *Cauſes* of it come to be enquired into: and though there is but one of them mentioned in the Anſwer, yet we may here methodically look upon the other. Here then we may obſerve that Divines do diſtribute theſe Cauſes, into thoſe that are *blameleſs*, and ſuch as are *blameable:* and I ſhall offer ſomething in reſpect of them both.

I. THE *blameleſs Cauſes* are reckoned three; 1. The *Law* of the firſt Covenant. 2. The *Decree* of God concerning this Affair. 3. The *Permiſſive Providence* of God which was at work about it. What influence theſe had into the Fall, and how far they may be called Cauſes, I ſhall endeavour to diſcover diſtinctly.

1. *CONCERNING the Law of God:* we read, Rom. 4. 15. *The law worketh wrath.* and 7. 10, 13. *And the commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. Was then that which is good, made death unto me? God forbid. But ſin that it might appear ſin, worketh death in me by that which is good, that ſin by the commandment might become exceeding ſinful.* Hence they ſay that the Law was a cauſe by accident of the fall; becauſe if there had been none, man had not fallen. Others call it *Cauſa ſine qua non*, but I ſuppoſe it may be more properly called an *Occaſion* then a Cauſe: to be ſure whatſoever influence it had, it was altogether blameleſs, Rom. 7. 12, 14. *Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and juſt, and good. For we know that the law is ſpiritual: but I am carnal, ſold under ſin.* We may then gather up this matter in theſe Concluſions.

(1.) *THAT the Law was the Rule of Man's Obedience.* It was the meaſure of his duty, and that ſervice which he owed to his Maker: it put the diſtinction between what was good for men to do, and what was evil, Mic. 6. 8. *He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good.* It was the hedge which was ſet up to keep him right; and whiles he kept within the bounds of it, he did well.

(2.) *IT was neceſſary that man ſhould have a law given him to walk by.* For as he was made by a rule, ſo he muſt be guided by a rule. If it had not been given to him, he could never have been happy; without it he had been left in the dark without any light, yea in a wide wilderneſs without any way: he could not have acted well without a law; for, to act well is to act by a Rule. God therefore did man no wrong in giving him a law to point him to happineſs, for he wrought it on his heart, and made him compleatly fit to attend it. Eccl. 7. 29. *God made man upright.*

(3.) *THE proper ſcope and nature of the Law, was to be a guide to man to the enjoyment of Life and Happineſs.* Iſai. 56. 2. Jam. 1. 25. *But whoſo looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the word, this man ſhall be bleſſed in his deed.* It is the ſcope of every rule, as ſuch, to guide to ſome end: now man was made for a cloſure with God, as his only bleſſedneſs, and the Law was to direct him hereunto, and was fitted exactly for it; *David* therefore calls it a *light*, and a *lamp*; and declares them to have great *liberty* who keep it, *Pſal.* 119. and for this reaſon it is deſervedly called a *law of liberty*, Jam. 1. 25.

(4.) *YET if there had been no law, Adam had not ſinned.* It was therefore ſo an occaſion of his ſinning. Rom. 4. 15. *For where no law is there is no tranſgreſſion.* Adams act in eating, &c. had been no ſin, if there had not been a law prohibiting it; if man's actions were under no rule, he could not do amiſs; all would be alike, and the *moral* difference between good and evil would not have been; where there is no way, there can be no going out of the way. Hence we read in Rom. 7. 5. *For when we were in the fleſh, the motions of ſins which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.* i. e. both diſcovered, and excited occaſionally. Adam found fault with the Law, and ſo he ſtumbled at it, and that gave him a fall; the law forbids the thing, and therefore when it is done, the law makes it a ſin by this prohibition, which elſe it had not been.

(5.) *HENCE the Law was an occaſion of the fall, only as man oppoſeth himſelf to it*, otherwiſe it had never procured it: a mighty Rock daſheth in pieces a ſtately Ship that runs it ſelf upon it; an hard floor ſhivers a glaſs that falls upon it. The rock had done the ſhip no harm, if it had ſtood clear of it; the glaſs might have remained whole for all the floor, if it had not fallen upon it. The Law had let man alone, if he had not run himſelf againſt it by oppoſing it; hereby it makes him a ſinner which otherwiſe he had not been.

(6.) *HENCE man's Apoſtacy was no way neceſſitated by the nature of the Law which was given him.* The rock which the ſteersman fooliſhly runs againſt, may be a ſea-mark, to guide him to ſhape a right courſe to his haven; his own folly procures him a ſhipwrack, by it. To be ſure the glorious law of God, was a directory to man, to guide his courſe to the haven of everlaſting bleſſedneſs, he, by falling foul of it, was ſplit, and diſabled for ever reaching the harbour of felicity, and ſo the law which was of it ſelf a ſavour of life, became a ſavour of death.

(7.) *HENCE the Law was altogether blameleſs.* Though the command prove death conſequentially, yet it was ordained for life, and hence *it is holy*, Rom. 7. 10. *And the commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.* 'Tis the commendation of the rock to ſhiver in pieces the veſſel that daſheth againſt it, and falls foul of it; it is the glory of the law, to break the man that throws

himſelf upon it. If Adam be ſo bold as to juſtle with the command, it is fit he ſhould bear the marks and bruiſes upon him, as tokens of his preſumption; and he muſt thank himſelf for all the miſchief which ariſeth to him from it.

2. CONCERNING *the Decree of God* about this Affair; this alſo, though it was concerned in the fall of man, yet rather is to be called an *Antecedent*, then a *Cauſe* of it; tho' fooliſh man be ready to cry out, *Who hath reſiſted his will?* Here take theſe Aſſertions.

(1.) *THAT God did certainly from all Eternity fore-ordain the fall of man.* That He foreknew the futurity of it is undeniable, for he laid in for a remedy againſt the evil effects of it, reſpecting his elect, having *choſen them in Chriſt before the foundation of the world*, Eph. 1. 4. which fore-knowledge could have no ground but in his purpoſe; the thing being in it ſelf contingent: this was one of thoſe *Media* by which God would advance the glory of his juſtice and his grace in man. As therefore mans apoſtacy did not fall out beſides God's fore ſight, ſo neither beſides his holy purpoſe; had not he decreed it, it had never been.

(2.) *HENCE man's fall was unavoidable with reſpect to the Decree.* i. e. the event could be no other in regard of that. Either the purpoſe of God muſt be void, or elſe man muſt fall; but the counſel of the Lord ſhall ſtand; ſo that there was a neceſſity of the event, becauſe God had ſo determined; and there is no Liberty granted to man, to cavil at or quarrel with divine decrees. See how the Apoſtle anſwers ſuch daring objections, Rom. 9. 19, 20. *Thou wilt then ſay unto me, why doth he yet find fault? For who hath reſiſted his will? Nay but O man, who art thou that repliеſt againſt God? ſhall the thing formed ſay to him that formed it, why haſt thou made me thus?*

(3.) *THAT God's decree did no violence to man's free-will.* They labour of a great miſtake, who ſuppoſe that every neceſſity puts a force upon the ſubject of it. The Decree conſidered in it ſelf is an *immanent act* in God; and therefore hath no *efficiency* upon the creature. Man was made a cauſe by counſel of his own actions, according to the decree, and acts as ſuch notwithſtanding it; without any compulſion; yea it determined that he ſhould do ſo.

(4.) *HENCE the blame of man's fall cannot be imputed to the decree*; nor is the man blameleſs for it. And this will be evident. For,

1. *THAT God ſhould give man a law and bind him under obedience to it on peril of death, and yet purpoſe that he ſhould fall and dye, belongs to his ſupremacy*, and was according to his infinite wiſdom, to lay a foundation for the coming of the Second Adam, and the advancing of his glory. So that there was no unrighteouſneſs with God in this regard: as he made all for his own glory, ſo he may contrive, and deſign his own glory by them, as beſt pleaſeth him. Rev. 4. 11. *And for thy pleaſure they are, and were created.*

2. *THAT God did Adam no wrong in giving him ſuch a law, and binding him under the penalties of it, in caſe of diſobedience.* Adam was God's creature, God had abſolute dominion over him; he was made for an end, and muſt have a rule to govern him to it: and the law which God gave him was ſuitable to his nature, a law of life, adapted to his concreated abilities, good for him, and would have led him to the fruition of the chief good if he had complied with it. It was therefore Adam's lawful duty to obey this command, and God exacted of him no more than what he might do without wronging of him. Hence are thoſe three titles put upon the law, Rom. 7. 12. *Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and juſt, and good. Holy*, as it directed man how to glorify God as his laſt end; *juſt*, in the ſanctions of it; *good*, as it pointed man in the way to eternal bleſſedneſs.

3. *THAT man's action by which he fell was not an act of obedience to the decree, but of rebellion againſt the precept.* Man could not do it in compliance with the decree, becauſe he did not know it; and if he had known it, it was not his rule. God's decree is his own rule of efficiency, but the command was man's rule of obedience, Deut. 29. 29. *The ſecret things belong unto the Lord our God; but thoſe things which are revealed, belong unto us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.* It was God's will that it ſhould be man's duty to obey him in all his commands; and this man knew; for it was imprinted on his nature. Now this will of God was that which man reſiſted and ſat himſelf againſt; which was a revolt from his God, and a renouncing of his duty; yea that which was his duty according to the decree, for this was an everlaſting rule, that man ſhould obey God.

4. HENCE, *the decree of man's apoſtacy had no moral influence at all into his fall.* A blameable cauſe is a moral cauſe; and it works by incitation; but man had no motion from hence, for he underſtood nothing about it. Man in ſinning acted without any deliberate regard to the decree, only concerning himſelf with the command, againſt which he entertained a prejudice, and accordingly revolted from it: and this he did with a full liberty as if there had been no decree about it, as will hereafter be diſcovered; ſo that here is no blame at all to be charged.

3. WITH *reſpect to God's permiſſive Providence which was at work about man's fall.* Here lies the greateſt difficulty; and that becauſe this permiſſion belongs to the Providence of God; and for that reaſon is not a meer ſuſpenſion or ceſſation of divine acting, as *Arminians* and *Jeſuits* dream; but hath an energy or efficacy in all thoſe things that are done by the creature, by divine permiſſion. And therefore we muſt allow it a *cauſal influence into the very action by which man fell* from his pri-

primitive state, although we are not to charge any blame upon it. Let us then briefly reflect upon this in a few Conclusions.

1. *IT was God's pleasure to give man that command, which was to be the trial of his obedience:* viz. respecting the Tree of Knowledge. And he did it on purpose for a trial; of which we may take a more distinct account when we come to it. But God would have man's obedience put to the proof; and it was with a purpose to let man know his own mutability: hence is prohibition given him, *Gen.* 2. 17.

2. *IT was God who ordered the Temptation which was leading eventually to man's fall.* As he provided matter for the tempter to work upon, so he over-ruled the affair so as that man should be tempted. It is certain that there was the active concurse of God's efficacious influence in disposing of this matter; for there is no creature can stir without him, *Act.* 17. 28. The entity of every action, so much as a thought proceeds from him; and it is he that determines it to this or that; the Devil could not have thought of such a thing, nor come to Adam, nor spoken any thing without a concurse of God's efficiency; and that is voluntary in God.

3. *GOD determined the event of this Temptation*: and therefore he influenced accordingly. God's efficiency gives being to all his Decrees, and therefore, because he has decreed it, he brought it about by his permission, so that there was more than a meer leaving it to contingency; His hand was in it, and it will appear how, if we add,

4. *THAT God gave not to Adam these influences of confirming and assisting grace, that were needful to his standing.* Adam had all habitual grace that was requisite to a Creature so concerned; but a Creature hath a necessary dependance on the Creator, for its concurring influence to all its actions; without which it can do nothing. Now Adam had not these bestowed upon him in the time of the temptation, but was left to himself; for if he had he would not have fallen; God could have assisted him and kept him, but he did not. And,

5. *THE powerful efficiency of God, concurred with the act of disobedience in which man's fall was accomplished.* Not only did he suspend his assistance but he also influenced the act itself; else it had never been; all action is entirely from the superiour cause; Adam could never have looked on the fruit; nor deliberated about it, nor consented to eat it, nor stirred his hand to take it, nor opened his mouth to taste it, if there had not been an active concurse of the divine power enabling him in the very act, thus to exert all these powers of his.

6. *YET in all these things the Providence of God is without any blame*; which will be evident by these things,

(1.) *WE must distinguish between a* physical *and a* moral *Cause.* All blame relates to a *moral* cause; not to one meerly *physical.* Blame ariseth from a doing that which one ought not to do, or not doing what he ought, and so he that commands or perswades another by argument to a sin, is guilty and blameworthy, but no such thing can be charged on God's Providence, for he forbad man upon pain of death, *Gen.* 2. 17. hence, Jam. 1. 13. *Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.*

(2.) *WE must also distinguish between a cause of the* act, *and a cause of the* obliquity *of it.* Every act hath an *Entity* in it; and is so far good; the *Obliquity* of it is the evil. And that is as it bears a respect to a rule, which is broken by it; and this is of a meer moral consideration. Now the *act* belongs to *Efficiency*, and so cannot be without *divine concurse*; but the *sinfulness* of it, is a *deficiency* moral in it, and therefore belongs only to the *creature*; hence that, Act. 2. 23. *Him being delivered by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucify'd and slain.*

(3.) *ADAM did not want those influences, 'till he was willing to want them.* That man could not obey unless he had divine assistance, belonged to his nature, as he was a dependent Being, which is a property of every second Being, inseparable from it; and he could not but know it, by the light of nature which he had. That it was his duty, as such a creature to have testifyed his dependance by asking it of God, is not to be doubted. Prayer is a natural duty, belonging to natural worship, and is an acknowledgment of that dependence; had Adam asked help of God, and it had been deny'd him, he might have had something to plead; but he consented to be without them, in the very Temptation; he had influences which preserved the habit of grace in him 'till he put it away, he only wanted such as were for the acting of this habit; and he, by entertaining the Temptation into deliberation on the offer of it, willingly was without them.

(4.) *PREVENTING influences were not due to him, but belonged to God's Sovereignty.* God might either give them, as he did to the standing Angels, or he might with-hold them, as he did from the other Angels, and Man. And as he gave them not, that which he did not owe them, so it was not to be imputed to him, as any blame on him, or wrong done to them. And though man, by the want of them, was in hazard, by reason of his own mutability, yet because God did not owe them to him; and he was furnished with that which was sufficient to lay him under the obligation of Obedience; and might have had divine help, if he had sought it; he did not fall therefore, because he wanted any help whereby to have stood; but because he chose to be without that help, and deliberately consented to commit that sin which was his ruin, as will appear.

USE. LEARN we hence then, *How vain as well as dangerous, a thing it is for men to excuse their sin, by charging it either upon God's Law, Decree or Providence.* This is too commonly done; but whether it be with respect to the first sin, or any other, it proves pernicious to them that do it. We may thus fill our hearts with prejudice against God, and so harden our selves in sin, and strengthen our impenitency; but if we think thus to implead his Justice in taking vengeance upon us for sin, we put a cheat upon our own Souls; and when we come to stand before the righteous Judge, he will wipe off all the aspersions which we have cast upon him, and make us to know, that our perdition is of our selves. Our best and only safe course is, to adore the supream wisdom and liberty of the Great God, and confessing our own guilt, and his holiness; to enquire what remedy there is to be obtained, that we may be delivered from the miseries which are fallen upou us for sin; and set our selves to comply therewithal: so may we escape, and be delivered from our Judge. But, if we neglect this way, and set our selves to fret against those Judgments of God, which are a great deep, and past our finding out, we shall know to our cost in the day of Revelation, that then every mouth shall be stopt, and the whole World shall be found guilty before God.

[FEBRUARY 23. 1691.]

SERMON *LII.*

II. WE are now to proceed to consider the *blameable Causes of the Apostacy:* and these are reckon'd to be either the *instrumental* or the *principal.* The ground of this distribution is, because man fell by Temptation, and therefore the tempters are reckoned as instruments in this affair; and yet because they could but tempt, and he had a power of resistance, there is an higher cause than they: and because it was their duty not to tempt him, and his not to be tempted by them, both are therefore blameable.

First. WE may begin with the *Instrumental,* because they were leading: and these are reckoned to be three, viz. the *Devil,* the *Serpent,* and the *Woman.* That the Serpent was an instrument used in the temptation is not to be denied; but whether blameable or no will be considered in the place of it.

Here then,

I. THE first of these is *the Devil,* who was the leader in the Temptation; and though he be not named in the history of man's doleful fall, *Gen.* 3. yet he is plainly intimated, who else managed the Serpent to speak, and reason, and plead, which was altogether preternatural to that creature? and for this reason he is in Scripture charged, to be the *biginner, father,* or author of *Sin*; *Joh.* 8. 44. 1 *Joh.* 3. 8. And here,

I. WE may methodically treat something about *the nature of Devils.* For man is not a little concerned with good and bad Angels; as therefore we treated of them as Angels under the doctrine of the Creation; so we may look upon them as Devils under the head of Apostacy; both because they made themselves so by Apostatizing, and because their sin seems to have been compleated in their procuring man's fall. To be sure here is the first notice that is given us of their shewing themselves Devils; and in their own apostacy, they became the instrumental causes of man's fall. Of the Devils then take this description; *They are apostate Angels, who disdaining, through pride, that special Office which God put upon them at first; became blasphemers of God, and murderers of men.* In opening of this description we shall see how deeply they were concerned in the fall of man. Here then,

1. *THEY are Angels.* This is their nature; they have all the natural angelical properties belonging to them: they were created in the first moment of time; they are spiritual substances, incorporeal, invisible, of a quick understanding, exceeding active, &c. hence they have the name *Angel* put upon them, 1 *Pet.* 2. 4. and *Jude* 6.

2. *THEY are apostate Angels.* And herein they morally differ from those blessed ones that never fell: they were created by God with all moral perfections, they were good, for so was all that God made, as it came out of his hands, *Gen.* 1. ult. they were therefore capable of serving to their end, in actual glorifying of God; but by apostatizing they made themselves Devils, which word is a name of disgrace; the English word signifies *doing Evil*; the Latin and Greek *Diabolus,* signifies an *Overthrower,* or one who darts through another. The Hebrew, *Satan,* signifies a *spiteful Adversary:* they stood off from God, armed themselves against him, set up for themselves to be Gods in the world. Hence that, 2 Cor. 4. 4. *The god of this world.* The Scripture often speaks of them, in the *singular* as one, partly because they are *united* in their great and general design; their Kingdom is not divided, but there is an unanimous agreement whereby they consent as one person against God and man: partly because they are *subjected* to one Prince, to whom they yield a diabolical obedience. However, there are multitudes of them; a legion could once be spared to one man, and yet enough left to tempt all the world besides: we therefore read of the Devil and his Angels. If the time of this apostacy be enquired after, thus much may be said about it, viz. that they did not fall during Creation; for all stood right 'till after man was made, that is the observation which God made upon the whole, *Gen.* 1. ult. and it is certain that they were at least begun to fall before man, for they were the sinful tempters of him. But,

3. *THE*

3. *THE ground of their Apoſtacy*, or that wherein they fell. They through pride diſdained the ſpecial office which was put upon them at the firſt. There are various opinions about the ſin of the Angels which ruined them, and the Scripture ſeems to ſpeak ſomething darkly about it; but yet if we put things together, we may ſpell out ſomething about it. Here then take theſe Concluſions.

(1.) *THAT there was a ſpecial office for the good of man, which God put the Angels into at firſt, and made it the teſt or trial of their obedience.* Angels, as all other Beings, were made for the ſervice of God: they being in the top of the Creation, and the moſt noble Beings, were therefore in order next unto God, and thereupon nextly and immediately for him. Man was made a little lower than them, and therefore they were not put into his Charter, nor was he to have any dominion over them: but God, by a poſitive order aſſigned them for his miniſtration; ſo we read, Heb. 1. 14. *Are they not all miniſtring ſpirits, ſent forth to miniſter for them, who ſhall be heirs of ſalvation?* where we have their inferiority to Chriſt, proved by the office they bear, and the whole texture of the words import it to be an office. This precept then was poſitive; and this office was to be a teſt. They owed all homage to God, now God would prove them by ſuch an appointment as this, as he did man by another teſt, viz. the Tree of Knowledge.

(2.) *THAT this teſt was the unblameable occaſion of their fall.* To call it a cauſe is too much, but an occaſion it was. The Angels fall, was a revolt from God, a renouncing of the homage they owed to him; now they acted as cauſes by counſel; they therefore had ſomething that was to them a motive, which put them upon ſo doing; and what could that be but this office of theirs? for, if we conſider them as glorious Intelligences, filled with knowledge and perfect holineſs in their creation, they could not be diſcontented, either at their *Being*, for as Creatures they had the greateſt excellency of nature of any, they could ſee no other creatures of a better make for them to emulate; nor at the *Place of their Habitation*, for that was Heaven, the beſt and moſt glorious in the whole Creation, and every way fitted for their entertainment; nor at their *Serving and Glorifying of God directly*, for they knew him to be the moſt glorious Being, and themſelves to be his Creatures, and had a natural delight in him, and ſubjection to him, and knew it to be their happineſs; and therefore all the while that the reſt of the Creation was in making, they ſung to him in conſort, *Job* 38. 7. and what elſe doth their now remain to be a moving cauſe of their rejecting their ſervice to God, but not liking of their Special Work?

(3.) HEREUPON *their fall is aſſigned to their Pride.* This was the firſt ſin, and leading to all the reſt, which went into the compleating of their apoſtacy; 1 Tim. 3. 6. *Not a novice, leſt being liſted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil.* And what is pride, but an overweening opinion of ones ſelf, which makes him think himſelf too good for his duty, and ſo puts him upon ſcornfully neglecting it. And this is reſembled by the pride of an upſtart Miniſter, who thinks himſelf too good for his People, and ſo neglects his care of them: this therefore points directly to the miniſtry of the Angels.

(4.) *THIS pride led them to diſdain the ſpecial office which God had ſet them in.* The nature of their fall is deſcribed in, Jud. 6. *The Angels which kept not their firſt eſtate, but left their own habitation.* They *left* it, and we have obſerved that it was pride that made them to leave it; and therefore they did it in diſdain; and the word, *ſtate*, ſignifies a *Magiſtracy*, or an high office that is put upon perſons, this was it that they left. It could not be their *nature*, for they could not change it for a better; it could not be their *order* in the Creation, for there was no higher; it could not be their *habitation* in Heaven, for it was the moſt glorious, and therefore it muſt be their *office*; and here was the matter of their indignation. For,

1. *THEY were conſcious of their own excellency, and dignity.* As Angels, they excelled in Knowlege, ſo that they could not but know themſelves to be the maſter-pieces of the works of God; to ſurpaſs in all excellent endowments, every other piece of the Creation: they did ſo in reality, and they had a power of reflection upon themſelves by which they were able to diſcern it.

2. *THEY knew man to be in a lower order of being than themſelves.* This is conſequent on the former; though they could not but diſcern man to be the maſter-piece of the viſible Creation, and adorned with a great many excellent endowments, and to be in his ſpiritual faculties and perfections akin to themſelves, yet as to his bodily frame to be raiſed out of the Duſt; and in many reſpects to be of an inferiour order; Pſal. 8. 5. *Thou haſt made him a little lower then the Angels.*

3. *HENCE they reckoned themſelves to be degraded, in being employed to miniſter for man.* Their ſervice appeared to them to be diſhonourable, it was below their dignity, and unworthy of ſuch noble Creatures; pride now enters into them, when they reflect upon themſelves, and their office, and it tells them they are too high, and too good to wait upon ſo mean a perſonage as man, and they know not how to brook it.

4. *THIS raiſed in them a diſdain or contempt of their ſervice.* They ſcorned it, their minds roſe up againſt it, and would not ſuffer them to comply with it: and hereupon they reſolved not to perform it; their pride would not give them leave to ſtoop to ſuch a peaſant as man.

5. *HEREUPON they are filled with Malice againſt God and man.* And that is a natural and

and proper offspring of pride; they entertained prejudices againſt *God*, for the injury they conceived he had done them, in finding ſuch an employment for them, as if he had put an affront upon them, and caſt diſparagement upon their high and glorious nature; and againſt *Man*, becauſe he is thus become an object of their envy, in that there ſeemed to be a greater honour conferred on him, than upon themſelves; and that he was in higher favour with the Creator than they were.

6. *THIS malice and envy ſat them upon deviſing a way how they might at once be revenged both upon God and Man.* And that was by caſting of man out of God's favour, and ſo undoing him: they conſulted and contrived how to deprive God of that glory which was due to him from men, and make man to forfeit himſelf, and loſe his happineſs for ever without any hope of a retrieval. And this was of meer ſpite, and they reſolved to venture their own eternal ruin, for the bringing about this deſign; and here was the way and ground of their apoſtacy: Hence called Satan, and our Adverſary.

4. *THE conſummation of their tranſgreſſion was in their proſecution of this deſign, and actual accompliſhment of it, ſo far as in them lay*; and it conſiſts in two things, viz.

(1.) *THEY hereupon became blaſphemers of God.* And that appears in thoſe lying and reproachful reflections which they caſt upon Him, in the temptation. They were *lies*, and for that reaſon, is the Devil called both a *liar*, and the *father of lies*, Joh. 8. 44. They were the firſt who ſpake equivocations, untruths and falſhoods; and they were *blaſphemous* lies againſt God; for we find in the reply upon the woman's firſt anſwer; *Gen.* 3. 4, 5. a direct impeachment of God's glorious perfections; endeavouring to perſwade man, that God in treating with him, had dealt unkindly, yea injuriouſly, yea falſly with him; had envied him his happineſs, had impoſed upon him, had no love for him, had laid a foundation for his miſery; and what is this but blaſphemouſly to traduce Him?

(2.) *THEY alſo thus became murderers of Men.* And that not of their Bodies only, but of their Souls too; they ſeduced them, and ſo undid them, and thus in procuring of man's fall, they compleated their own; in making of him miſerable, they made themſelves Devils.

II. HERE therefore we are to obſerve *how they murdered Mankind.* That they did, ſee *Joh.* 8. 44. and the way was by ſeducing him into the Sin, whereby he fell; and ſo he was the leading inſtrument; He is therefore ſaid to *have beguiled our firſt Parents*, 2 *Cor.* 11. 3. the word is a metaphor taken from a thief, who collogues a traveller out of his way, upon pretence of ſhewing him a nearer and better, and ſo draws him into ſome blind corner where he robs him. Here then we may take this concluſion; *That the Devil was not a neceſſary compelling cauſe, but only a counſelling and tempting agent about the fall of man.* And for this reaſon he is called the *Tempter*, *Math.* 4. 3. becauſe that is the trade which he is always driving, and by which he draws men to deſtruction.

Here then obſerve,

1. *THAT he was no compelling cauſe of man's fall*; he did not neceſſitate it. For,

(1.) *HE had not the power of man's free will.* He was never made the lord and ſovereign of man in the order of Gubernation; that dominion which he hath, he hath gotten it by the fall; by God's juſt Judgment, and man's conſent: he not only would not force by violence, for that the humane will is not capable of, but he could not morally alter or change it, or put any new principles into it, for he was a creature.

(2.) *ADAM had in him created abilities to ſerve God, and conſequently to have rejected the temptation.* For God made him able to perform the whole law, and this was one eſſential part of it, to hearken to no offers made to him, to draw him away from his obedience, but with greateſt indignation to renounce them; this therefore he could have done, by the improvement of his moral powers.

2. *HENCE he could be no more than a tempting Agent.* It was only morally that he was an inſtrument.

NOW if we conſider what the Temptation was, we ſhall find in general; that it was a fallacy, whereby under the pretence of truth and goodneſs, he endeavoured to ſeduce man to believe a lye, and thereupon to entertain evil. Man is a cauſe by counſel of his actions, his underſtanding is for eyes to his will; and therefore, by deceiving of that, this is drawn into miſchief; accordingly the Devil applied himſelf to man. Here obſerve,

(1.) *MAN hath a natural reach after happineſs.* This is a principle engraven in humane nature, and inſeperable from it: hence the ſtrongeſt motives to perſwade him to any thing are from this topick, to make him believe that it will be a medium to happineſs: hence that, Pſal. 4. 6. *There be many that ſay, who will ſhew us any good?*

(2.) *GOD therefore made theſe the ſanctions of his law*, viz. *happineſs* in caſe of obedience, *miſery* upon diſobedience. Theſe being moſt of all accommodated to man's nature, and having the ſtrongeſt tye or obligation upon them, the one to encourage, the other to caution him.

(3.) *GOD to try man's obedience, gave him alſo a teſt*; a prohibition to eat of the Tree, &c. on pain of death. This, we have heard was a poſitive command, in a thing in itſelf indifferent, 'till God uſed his ſovereignty about it.

(4.) *THE Devil hereupon makes an advantage by his lies, to lay before men, matter of prejudice againſt God.* The ſubſtance whereof is in Gen. 3. 4, 5. *And the ſerpent ſaid unto the woman, Ye ſhall not ſurely die. For God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes*

eyes ſhall be opened : and ye ſhall be as Gods knowing good and evil. Where,

1. HE *propoſeth a ſhort and eaſy way to be happy at once, by eating the fruit of this Tree.* He therefore abuſeth the name of it, to inſinuate a ſecret vertue hidden in it, to fill man with divine wiſdom, and advance him to a God-like perfection : and he knew if he could but ſcrew into man an opinion of being happy by it, he could go a great way to prevail with him.

2. HE *calumniates God*, as having ſome ill deſign in prohibiting man the uſe of this tree. q. d. God knows how much a very taſte of this fruit will advance your perfection, and becauſe he envies you ſo much felicity, therefore he hath forbidden you to touch it, leſt you ſhould thereby be made more happy than He is willing to have you.

3. HE *perſwades them that the threatning was but a bugbear to fright children, and not to be regarded* ; and gives his word that there was no danger in it, ſo to remove them from all fear of any miſery likely to enſue upon their undertaking to eat of it. *ver.* 3.

4. *HEREUPON he offers the fruit to them in its lovelineſs.* Gen. 3. 6. *The woman ſaw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleaſant to the eyes, and a tree to be deſired to make one wiſe.* q. d. See what a beautiful thing it is, look over all that garden, obſerve if you can find ſuch another, and it muſt needs have ſome ſecret ſtrange vertue in it.

USE. I. LEARN hence, *What are the Sins which make us moſt like the devil ; and let it put us upon hating of them.*

THERE is *Pride*, this was his maſter Sin ; and when you ſhew moſt pride in your look, in your talk, in your garb, in your carriage to others, the more Devil-like you appear.

THERE is *diſcontent* at the ſtate and place God ſets us in, thinking it beneath us, and below thoſe endowments and abilities that we have ; we think our ſelves better then ſome whom God hath preferred to us, either in honour, eſteem, preferment, or wealth ; and now we murmur and fret.

THERE is *malice* and *envying* others the favours beſtowed on them by God, and thereupon ſtudying and endeavouring to undermine them, to blaſt them, looking upon them with an evil eye, waiting to do them a miſchief.

THERE is *lying* ; a being given to a ſpirit of it, and driving of a trade, of equivocations, falſhoods, and endeavours to deceive others with our impoſtures.

THERE is *blaſphemy*, in aſperſing the glorious Name of God with reproaches, and caſting vile reflections upon any of his precious Attributes.

THERE is *ſeduction*, improving of our wit to draw others into ſin, to ſtudy devices, and lay ſnares to entrap their Souls withal.

AND there is *murder*, whether of ſoul or body, by endeavouring to ruin them, all theſe are ſpecially Satanical ſins ; by them the fallen Angels made themſelves Devils ; and they that live in them, look as like him, as the child like the father.

USE II. LEARN hence, *What need we have to implore the conſtant help of God to preſerve us from the power of Satans Temptations.* Though he cannot force, yet how ſtrong is he in perſwading, how ſubtle in inſinuating ? Remember he beguiled Man in his integrity, was too hard for him in his greateſt perfection ; who are we then to withſtand him, who have always a party in us ready to betray us into his hands ? Let us not then be ſecure, but always ſuſpecting his ſtratagems, and ſenſible of our own infirmity, refuſe to entertain any parley with him ; let us commend our ſelves to the Grace of God, that by it we may be preſerved, and enabled to eſcape the wiles of the Devil.

[MARCH 22. 1691.]

SERMON *LIII.*

WE have conſidered of the firſt leading inſtrumental Cauſe of Man's Apoſtacy, viz. the Devil : the 2d follows, viz.

II. *THE Serpent.* Which is numbred among the blameable Cauſes ; how rightly we may conſider : I ſhall paſs this over with two or three Remarks.

1. THAT it was *a real Serpent* that the Devil made uſe of, as his inſtrument, in the Temptation. It is true, the Devil himſelf is called a Serpent in Scripture ; yea and this is aſcribed metonymically to the Serpent in this caſe, which was truly the Devils work. 2 Cor. 11. 3. *The Serpent beguiled Eve.* But that Satan did not meerly aſſume the ſhape or reſemblance of ſuch a creature, but improved that ſort of creature in this deſign, is evident, becauſe there is a particular curſe denounced upon it, Gen. 3. 14. *And the Lord ſaid unto the ſerpent, Becauſe thou haſt done this, thou art curſed above all cattel, and above every beaſt of the field : upon thy belly ſhalt thou go, and duſt ſhalt thou eat all the days of thy life.*. Which is not in propriety applicable to the Devil : and tho' the Devil's and Serpent's doom are put together, in *ver.* 14, 15. yet there is ſuch a real effect in reſpect of that kind of creature.

2. THAT *the Devil applied himſelf to our firſt Parents viſibly and audibly*, ſeems to be, *becauſe he could in no other way then offer them a Temptation.* That there is a nearer and more ſecret commerce that Angels can have with our ſpirits, then by the outward ſenſes, is not to be doubted ; and it is certain, that Satan can inſinuate his ſuggeſtions into the fancy or imagination of fallen man ; as he did unto *Peter* and *Annanias :* but the reaſon is, becauſe all our powers are now tainted with Sin, and ſo readily receive the impreſſion : but whether he ſo could do when man was

in his integrity, may be well queſtioned; ſince he muſt firſt corrupt the imagination, before he could faſten ſuch a Temptation on it, which was above his power. Hence that of Chriſt, Joh. 14. 30. *The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me.*

3. *WHY the Devil made choice of the Serpent rather than any other creature, is not recorded*; we may therefore only conjecture. We read, Gen. 3. 1. *Now the Serpent was more ſubtle than any beaſt of the field, which the Lord God had made.* Poſſibly he might improve that natural ſagacity for his purpoſe. It is alſo evident that this beaſt could eaſieſt wind itſelf into the garden and on to the Tree; and ſince all the creatures had payed their natural homage to man, as their conſtituted Sovereign, our firſt Parents had no ground or reaſon to expect any plot in ſuch a creature, whoſe nature they underſtood; and therefore the Devil might with greater facility addreſs them in it.

4. *THAT the Serpent therefore was meerly paſſive in this deſign.* The Devil, by divine permiſſion, entred into the Serpent, and managed it himſelf for his own deſign: orders its tongue, and frames it to ſpeak ſuch words as he articulated by it; for ſurely, the Serpent underſtood not what he ſaid: for, who ſhould infuſe that underſtanding into him? we have no reaſon to think that God did, as once miraculouſly to Balaams Aſs: but we are not to ſuppoſe that the Devil who is himſelf a creature, ſhould be able to put knowledge into a brute, and enable it to diſcourſe underſtandingly. He therefore only made uſe of the natural ſubtlety of the Serpent to be ſubſervient to an higher deſign than that could underſtand.

5. *THAT hence the Serpent was no blameable cauſe of the Apoſtacy.* The Devil in it was to blame, and the more for abuſing any one of God's creatures, to ſubſerve to the greateſt piece of miſchief that ever was done in the world; but the Serpent itſelf was not at all to be blamed. Blame is only merited by a fault that is committed; and every fault is a voluntary trangreſſion of a moral law, prohibiting it, and ſuch a law can be given to none but cauſes by counſel; and hence, no unreaſonable creature can be blame-worthy by any of its actions: inaſmuch as it always acts the nature that was put into it, unleſs it be acted by ſome other beſides its nature, and beyond its apprehenſion, where it is purely paſſive.

6. *HENCE the curſe which fell upon the Serpent was an act of Sovereignty.* That which belongs to the Serpent, in *Gen.* 3. 14,15. was not a puniſhment of its Sin, (for it had none,) but a righteous inſtance to the world of God's hatred of Sin, in putting a ſpecial remark on an inſtrument in it, though but paſſive. And truly what is the curſe, which is come upon the whole Creation, but a witneſs againſt man's Sin, who abuſed the creature?

USE. *LET this then be a ſolemn warning to us, to have a care how we be uſed as tools for any to commit Sin by.* God hath hung up the Serpent in Scripture for a warning to us; and remember, that knew not what it was abuſed for, and ſo it ſinned not, and yet was curſed; whereas we can never conſent to be inſtruments of Sin, without our own Sin; becauſe we are capable of knowing the rule, and it is our duty to acquaint our ſelves with it.

III. THE laſt inſtrumental Cauſe of the Tranſgreſſion, was *the Woman.* She is reckoned among the inſtrumental Cauſes, becauſe the Devil in the Serpent firſt tempted her, and by her the Man. Although ſhe may alſo be accounted to the *principal* cauſe; in as much as the firſt man and woman were the root of mankind, from whence all were to derive; and in that reſpect were looked upon as one. Hence they had one common name given them, Gen.5.2. *Called their name Adam.* And they are mentioned as one in their Creation, *Gen.* 1. 27. And though their prohibition be expreſt as given to Adam in the ſingular, Gen. 2. 16, 17. *The Lord God commanded the man*, &c. yet Eve underſtood it as comprehending them both, Gen. 3. 3. *God hath ſaid, ye ſhall not eat.* She alſo was a cauſe by counſel in what ſhe did. Yet, looking upon her as made for the man, and by the Creators law owing a ſubordination to him, ſo ſhe may alſo be looked upon as *inſtrumental.* And ſo, beſides the common calamity falling upon man for ſin, there was a ſpecial curſe which ſhe derived to her Sex, Gen.3.16. *Unto the woman he ſaid, I will greatly multiply thy ſorrow and thy conception: in ſorrow ſhalt thou bring forth children: and thy deſire ſhall be to thy husband, and he ſhall rule over thee.* And ſhe was in this *blameable*, becauſe ſhe acted upon deliberation, and was voluntary in what ſhe did: And there are three things here to be conſidered; which will ſhew how ſhe was culpably inſtrumental in this affair.

1. *SHE was created on purpoſe to be a meet help unto man.* Gen. 2. 18. *And the Lord God ſaid, it is not good that man ſhould be alone: I will make an help meet for him.* Being therefore of his own ſpecies, and fitted for humane converſe with him, ſhe ought to have encouraged and fortified him in that obedience which God had required of them both. They were to take that delight one in another, which they could not find in any other creature, and were therefore mutually to conſpire in the great work of glorifying and ſerving God, being jointly made for it.

2. *SHE firſt hearkened to the Temptation of Satan.* The Apoſtle takes particular diſtinct notice of this, in 2 *Cor.* 11. 3. 1 *Tim.* 2. 14. And we find in the hiſtory, that the Serpent directly addreſſed himſelf to the woman, *Gen.* 3. 1. And he no ſooner offered that enſnaring Queſtion, but ſhe began to warp in her anſwer, *ver.* 3. abating from the abſoluteneſs of the threatning, and making it a peradventure:

peradventure: and then ſhe ſubjected her underſtanding and will to the report of Satan, and the deluſion offered to her ſenſes, *ver.6.* by which ſhe entertained all thoſe ſenſual luſts mentioned, 1 *Joh.*2.16. the *luſts of the fleſh*, in giving way to her carnal appetite; *good for food*; the luſt of the *eye*, in entertaining the deſirable aſpect of the forbidden fruit, *pleaſant to the eyes*: the luſts of *pride*, in aſpiring after more wiſdom than God ſaw meet to endow a creature withal, *to make one wiſe.* And theſe luſts ſo prevailed upon her, as made her to adventure upon the fruit directly againſt the divine precept, *ſhe did eat.* By which act ſhe defiled the root and fountain of humanity.

3. *NOW ſhe joined with the ſeducer, and became a tempter of Adam to ſin with her.* Gen. 3. 6. *And gave alſo unto her husband with her, and he did eat.* And hereupon we have Adam impeaching her for this thing, *ver.* 12. *And the man ſaid, the woman which thou gaveſt to be with me, ſhe gave me of the tree, and I did eat.* She gave the fruit it's commendation, which ſhe had entertained, makes offers to him, inſinuates herſelf into him, backs all that the Serpent had ſaid, and attracts him to a joint conſent with her in the great Tranſgreſſion; and by thus doing inſtead of being an help, ſhe proves a miſchief, and becomes an occaſion, yea a blameable cauſe of his ruin.

USE. THE *Conſideration of this will tell us, what need we have to be very wary to our ſelves, leſt Satan ſhould uſe us as tools to draw one another into Sin*; and ſo become under-Devils each to other. And earneſtly to pray to God, that he will preſerve us: and it peculiarly concerns thoſe whoſe relation and affection is moſt near and intimate. We have great advantage either to do good or harm unto thoſe, in whoſe boſoms we lie, and whoſe affections we have the aſcendent upon. If God give us wiſdom and grace to uſe it, we have the greateſt probability to procure their ſalvation; 1 Cor. 7. 14. *For the unbelieving husband is ſanctified by the wife, & the unbelieving wife is ſanctified by the husband.* But if we yield to the Devil, there are none whom he can uſe more dangerouſly, in alluring each other to the commiſſion of Sin, and hereby to become guilty of ruining each other. And if the Devil got ſuch advantage by it upon our firſt Parents, in innocency, what need have we to fear and tremble, and pray to the father of mercies to be preſerved.

THUS we have conſidered the Inſtrumental Cauſes of the Apoſtacy. We now come,

II. TO the *Principal*, which is expreſt in the Anſwer: viz. *Adam's abuſing the freedom of his Will*, to which he was left by God, in yielding to the Temptation, which it was his duty, and he had ability to have withſtood. Here are two things to be conſidered, viz.

1. *THAT our firſt Parents were left to the freedom of their own will.* Something was intimated of this under the occaſions or blameleſs cauſes, referring to God's permiſſive Providence relating to Man's Apoſtacy. Here only let me add theſe remarks.

(1.) *THAT freedom of will properly conſiſts in a ſpontaneity, or liberty of chuſing or refuſing.* It is the priviledge of a cauſe by counſel, and it ſuppoſeth an underſtanding to direct, and a will to elect or reject accordingly. Such a freedom God did at firſt put into the Angels and Man; although it muſt always be conſidered in the ſubordination of a creature, in the concurſe or co-operation of God. And this freedom is the foundation of all moral tranſactions with ſuch creatures. Hence that, Deut. 30.19. *I have ſet before you life & death, bleſſing & curſing: therefore chooſe life.*

(2.) *GOD's leaving of man to the freedom of his will, was his ſuſpending of his determining influences, whereby he might have been confirmed in his chuſing good.* Man had all the habits of ſanctifying Grace put into him, conſiſting in ſpiritual knowledge, righteouſneſs and holineſs, fitting him to make a good choice; but theſe were not confirmed, ſo as to determine them to make ſuch an actual choice, as the event proved, for if they had, he had never embraced the Temptation. And this was an act of divine Sovereignty.

(3.) *HENCE man being left to himſelf, the Tempter was too hard for him, and overcame him.* Thus it was eventually; and God had purpoſed that it ſhould be ſo; and yet his thus being left was not a neceſſitating compulſive cauſe of his fall. For,

1. *THE Tempter could only Tempt.* He could not compel. All his ſtrength lay in his ſubtlety: Man's free will is incapable of compulſion: it was therefore in it's own nature a thing contingent, whether the Temptation ſhould prevail or no. The Devil had no phyſical power over man's free will, he had only the cunning of perſwaſion, by preſenting his covered fallacies.

2. *MAN's liberty of will had an innate power of refuſing the temptation, as well as of the embracing it.* It did not then want it's liberty to good, as it doth ſince the fall, for he had the habits of ſanctification on him, that grace in him which had he ſtirred up and made uſe of, would have led him to have rejected Satan with utmoſt deteſtation, and no corrupt inclination in him; ſo his liberty was not an indifferency to good or evil; but only a freedom to good, with a mutability, or capacity of being ſeduced to evil.

3. *OUR firſt Parents being thus left abuſed their free will, and ſo fell into Sin.* And here is the principal blame-worthy cauſe of the Apoſtacy. For the more full diſcovery of which, let theſe Concluſions be here obſerved,

(1.) *THAT man was at firſt created with perfect liberty or freedom of will.* This belonged to the integrity in which God made him. Eccl.7.29. *God made man upright.* Adam had all that conferred upon him, whereby he was compleatly fitted for the obedience which God required at his hands; there was nothing wanting that was due to his nature,

as a creature in ſuch an order, and made for ſuch an end. He had a law given him, ſuitable to his nature; he had an underſtanding able for to read it, and diſcern the rationality of it; a conſcience able to diſcover his obligation to it, and reſent both the rewards and penalties annexed to it; he had thoſe gracious qualities in him, which diſpoſed him to love and delight in, and accordingly to chuſe the ways of obedience, and had not any the leaſt natural inclination to ſin inherent in him.

(2.) *THAT Adam by this free will of his was able to cloſe in with the chief good.* His free will was made for good *objectively*, and not for evil. If evil had been it's object as well as good, or if it had been made with an indifferency to one as well as the other, this freedom then had been the proper cauſe of his chuſing evil; but ſo it was not, but only by accident. Man's free will was no more made for him to fall by, as it's direct end, than a knife is made for a man to cut his fingers withal; nay it is herein evident, that it was made for good directly, and not for evil; becauſe whenſoever man chuſeth the evil, rather than good, it is under the notion and appearance of good, and therefore there lay the fallacy of the Temptation, *Gen.* 3.6. and this is the leading cauſe of all Sin. Iſai. 5. 20. *Wo unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs; that put bitter for ſweet & ſweet for bitter.*

(3.) *THAT this freedom or liberty of will to good, was not taken away from man before he conſented to the temptation; but in the inſtant of his conſenting.* It was man's ſin was the procuring cauſe of this loſs, and is therefore before it in nature, and not after it in time. The loſs of the image of God is a puniſhment of Sin; Adam therefore conſents to the Temptation, and ſo he loſeth his liberty: he at once diſobeys and dies; he throws off the image, and ſo God takes it away from him. So that when the Tempter come he had it in full ſtrength: Man had elſe been puniſhed before he had merited it.

(4.) *THOUGH Adam had a free will to good, yet he was but changeably good.* Abſolute immutability is a prerogative of God, and belongs to him alone. Mal. 3. 6. *I am the Lord, I change not.* All created perfections, though never ſo eminent in themſelves, yet have this defect attending of them, that in themſelves they may be loſt. Adam was one thing, and his Rule another; as they might meet, ſo they might part. And this mutability in a moral agent is a ground of the poſſibility of it's failing, and ſo forfeiting all it's perfections.

(5.) *GOD*, not intending to advance his glory, in man's happineſs, by a Covenant of Works, but of Grace, *did not ſee meet to confirm Adam in his primitive ſtate.* There is a *ſecondary* immutability, if we may ſo call it, which the creature is capable of, viz. of being confirmed, ſo as never actually to relinquiſh it's ſtate; this the bleſſed Angels enjoy, and this all Believers in Chriſt partake in, and are therefore ſaid to have the *immortal ſeed in them:* but this God would not confer on Adam, but left him to the trial of his habitual grace; and this was *arbitrary*, altogether depending on God's good pleaſure.

(6.) *THIS ſuſpenſion did not put a compelling neceſſity on man to fall.* There was no force in it; it did indeed expoſe him to the hazard, but without any blame on God: for man ſtill had all the created powers in him, a full liberty with him, and all moral obligations engaging of him to obedience; over which the Tempter had no power at all.

(7.) *HENCE Adam ſinned voluntarily, or by conſent, and in that he abuſed his own free will.* He, upon his own accord, upon free choice embraced the Temptation, and ſo threw himſelf into the tranſgreſſion; it was by a deliberate and conſulted act that this firſt ſin was committed by our firſt Parents, and it had in it theſe ſteps,

1. *THEY conſented to a conference with the Serpent about the command of God, and the juſtice and goodneſs of it*, Gen. 3. *begin*, which they ought not to have done; but immediately with utmoſt deteſtation to have rejected it: and this was the beginning of their great ſin, and expoſed them.

2. *THEY entertained the pleading of Satan to the raiſing of jealouſies in their minds againſt God, with reſpect to that particular poſitive precept.* That therefore was the trap which caught them. *Gen.* 3. 4, 5, with 6. this then was their next advance.

3. *NOW their judgment was blinded*; and they apprehended that good to be in the tree which there was not. It was therefore a miſrepreſentation to their underſtandings, which impoſed on them, calling evil good, *ver.* 6. and this was a penalty of the former, and a further ſtep of their fall.

4. HEREUPON they crowded in, a *diſtruſting of God's truth and good-will*: a diſcontent at the ſtation they were ſet in, an aſpiring after a fancied happineſs, which they ſuppoſed was to be gained in the way offered by the Devil, *ver.* 6.

5. AND now *they are drawn to a full election*; and chuſe to caſt off the precept, and cloſe in with the temptation: and this is followed with the ſin itſelf, *ver.* 6. in which the whole tranſgreſſion is conſummated; and that action perpetrated by which man is undone: the law broken, and the curſe of it procured.

USE. *THIS may point us where to lay the ſtreſs of the blame of every Sin that we are at any time drawn into.* The firſt tranſgreſſion diſcovers to us a rule to judge of all actual ſin by. We are apt when conviction is offered to us, to ſhift off the fault, and ſometimes to lay it to eternal decrees, and ſay; *who hath reſiſted his will?* ſometimes to the Providence of God, which offers us the allurements which our corruptions are enflamed by: and very frequently upon inſtruments

which

which have tempted us, eſpecially moral agents; thus Adam turns the fault off to Eve, and ſhe to the Serpent; but let us know, that whatever blame any ſecond cauſes may deſerve, (for God's Decrees and Providences deſerve none;) it will be one day found a truth, that the great blame of all the Sin we commit, will fall upon our ſelves. And it will be made to appear, that we our ſelves were our own undoers; and had we not voluntarily given our conſent, we had not been trapan'd into ſin: and if ever we truly repent of ſin, and go aright to Chriſt for pardon, he will make us to charge it upon our ſelves, and acknowledge that our own wicked hearts were conſenters, and ſo left us inexcuſable. This is the right conviction; and 'till we come to a thorough and ſenſible apprehenſion of this, we ſhall never know the ſinfulneſs of Sin, ſo as to acknowledge our ſelves vile, and bitterly bewail it before God. Labour we then by every ſin we fall into, to be more acquainted with our own perverſeneſs; ſo ſhall we be able to juſtify God, and condemn our ſeves.

[APRIL 19. 1692.]

SERMON *LIV.*

QUESTION XIV.

WHAT is Sin?

ANSWER.

Sin is any want of Conformity to, or Tranſgreſſion of the Law of GOD.

OUR Catechiſm, having taken notice of the woful miſchiefs, which man had done to himſelf by Sinning; throwing himſelf from, and ſo loſing that good eſtate in which God made him at the firſt; commorates upon this ſad contemplation, and calls us to ſtand ſtill and make enquiry, what Sin this is that hath done all this harm, and undone mankind? And it muſt needs be ſome fearful thing, which hath produced ſo fearful an effect. We are here therefore invited to take notice of Sin.

I. IN the *general nature* of it; more particular conſiderations about it will follow afterwards. Here then are two Particulars in the Anſwer to be obſerved, 1. The *Rule* to which Sin bears a relation, or by which it is denominated; viz. the Law of God. 2. The *relation* itſelf which Sin bears to this Rule, ſet forth in two things; 1. By way of *defect*; a want of conformity. 2. By way of *exceſs*; a Tranſgreſſion. And theſe are the things now to be ſpoken to.

I. CONCERNING the Law unto which Sin bears a relation. The particular treating of it in it's nature, and parts, will follow to be purſued afterwards, (when we come to enquire into *the duty which God requires of man.*) Here only ſo much may be taken notice of concerning it, as may help us in the diſcovery of the nature of Sin, which may be gathered up in theſe following Concluſions,

1. *The Law of God is that Idea or Platform according to which God determined to govern mankind.* It is the rule of ſpecial Government. God made all creatures for ſome end, and they were to be led to that end by ſome rule: and every creature hath a rule ſuited to it's nature, according to the wiſdom and pleaſure of Him who is Lord of the creation. Man being a cauſe by counſel, and capable of acting deliberately, and voluntarily, was treated withal in the way of a Covenant, in which he had a work appointed him, and wages promiſed him; now this Law referred to his work, and was the condition of the firſt Covenant. It was that which God revealed to be his will concerning man's duty. He had therefore laid it out in his decree, in which reſpect the Law is an everlaſting rule: for though God did not from Eternity purpoſe, that man ſhould actually obey it; yet it was an everlaſting decree, that it ſhould be man's duty ſo to do, and that he ſhould ſtand or fall accordingly. And hence the judgment ſo paſſeth upon men, *Iſai.* 19. 20.

2. *THIS Law was given unto man at firſt for the rule of his obedience.* God was pleaſed to reveal it unto man as ſoon as he had made him, to be his ſquare and compaſs; it paſt into a command, it was to tell him what was good, *Mich.* 6. 8. and he was to meaſure himſelf and all his actions by it; he was to do nothing without an eye to it, it was to tell him what was right, what wrong: and he was by precept obliged to keep within the bounds of it, in all his thoughts, words, and deeds; and neither to come ſhort of, nor to go beyond it. Iſai. 8. 20. *To the law and to the teſtimony: if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them.*

3. *THE ſubject-matter of this Law, is all that which God hath revealed to man as his duty.* There is a law of creation, which was the idea according to which God decreed in himſelf to make the World, and each ſeveral ſorts of Being in it. And there is a law of Providence, according to which he hath determined to manage all the affairs of the World, and every individual creature in it, to the end he hath appointed them; but theſe laws are not the Rule we now ſpeak of. God propoſed them to Himſelf, and they

are his own rule of wiſdom: But this is that which contained in it the whole of man's duty. Eccl. 12. 13. *Let us hear the concluſion of the whole matter, fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.*

4. *THE ſubject of this obedience is the reaſonable creature, and particularly man.* Touching the Law given to the Angels, it belongs not to our diſcourſe, nor need we much to concern our ſelves about it. But unreaſonable creatures are under another law or rule, from which they cannot ſwerve voluntarily, and for that reaſon are not capable of ſinning: for indeed there are none but reaſonable creatures that can actively entertain their rule, and come under it properly as a command: others are meerly paſſive; theſe alone can underſtand and chuſe. Hence it is ſpoken to man, *Job* 28. 28. *And unto man he ſaid, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom, and to depart from evil is underſtanding.* No inferiour ſort of creature can receive this.

5. *THE equity of this Law is founded in the good-will and pleaſure of God.* There are ſome who uſe that diſtinction, viz. that ſome things are *good becauſe God commands them*, and other things are *commanded by God becauſe they are good*: but we are to remember that God is Goodneſs itſelf, and all Goodneſs is fountained in Him, and derives from Him. The infinite wiſdom of God is inſeparable from his ſovereign will, He therefore by that accommodates his Laws, to the ſtate and deſign of the creatures; all of which reſult from his holy will. *Eph.* 1. 9, 11. It is He who hath made all thoſe connections of things, which we obſerve in the world, or they had never been. His will therefore is given as the higheſt reaſon of every law: *I am the Lord*, is that which ſubſcribes the warrant, and there is no liberty left to us to diſpute it. And the equity of this is founded in the *Divine Sovereignty*; God is a great King, creatures are all from him, and owe themſelves to him. *Lord* and *Lawgiver* are joined together, *Iſai.* 33. 22.

6. *THE way of God's revealing this Law to man*, is either,

1. *By the light of nature*: thoſe inſcriptions or engravings of it, which are on the hearts or conſciences of men. Men are therefore ſaid to *do by nature the things contained in the law*, Rom. 2. 14. i. e. though they have not the written law, yet it is on their natures; and *ver* 15. their conſciences are brought in giving evidence. This inſcription was at the firſt full and legible on man's heart, in his ſtate of integrity; it was equally extenſive to his rule; for he was created in knowlege. But in fallen man it is much obliterated; and there are but ſome ſcattered fragments, and moth-eaten relicts of it to be obſerved; and theſe ſo blurred as ſcarcely legible.

2. *BY the tranſcript of it in his word.* When man had almoſt utterly loſt his rule, God revived it again, and hath made a record of it in the Scripture; where beſides the law *Ceremonial*, which was given to one People, and for a time, and the *Judicial* law, which was accommodated in civils, to a People under ſuch a pædagogy; there is alſo the law *moral*, which was more univerſal, perpetual, and abiding; of which our Saviour ſays, Mat. 5. 17, 18. *Think not that I am come to deſtroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to deſtroy, but to fulfil. For verily I ſay unto you, till heaven & earth paſs, one jot or one title ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled.* And with reſpect to this publication of it, is that in Mich. 6. 8. *He hath ſhewed thee O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.*

7. *THE goodneſs of this Law appears, in that it was a law of life.* There was not only an *equity* in it, obliging man to the obedience of it, and making him juſtly guilty in caſe of diſobedience; but there was a *goodneſs* in it too, with reſpect to man, for whom it was appointed. And therefore that is one of the epethets which the Apoſtle put upon it, Rom. 7. 12. *The commandment is good.* And the goodneſs of it for man, was herein to be ſeen, that he was directed by it in the way to live for ever, i.e. to be happy. (*Iſai.* 56. 2. *Rom.* 10. 5. *Jam.* 1. 26.) It was neceſſary that man ſhould have a law to frame his life by, without it he could not be happy; he had been in the dark, without light; in a wilderneſs without a way, and ſo muſt have been loſt. Now the ſcope of the rule was to point man to bleſſedneſs; to pleaſe God, and enjoy his favour, which is his life.

8. *MAN's Obedience properly conſiſted in his conformity to this law.* When in all things he anſwered it, then was he to be eſteemed obedient unto God; then, and only then, when he was juſt as broad in his being and actions as the law; when being laid by it, he neither went beyond it, nor fell ſhort of it. *Iſai.* 56. 2. according to this therefore is man to be meaſured in a *moral* conſideration. And this leads us to the ſecond thing offered us in the anſwer under conſideration, viz.

II. *THE relation that Sin bears to this Law.* We read in, 1 Joh. 3. 4. *Whoſoever committeth ſin, tranſgreſſeth alſo the law: for ſin is the tranſgreſſion of the law.* The word, *Tranſgreſſion*, according to the ſtrict meaning, and vulgar acceptation of it, is ſhort of expreſſing the full ſenſe of the Greek word that is here uſed. The word *Anomia*, ſignifies a miſſing the law or rule, yea every miſſing of it: and, if ſo we underſtand the word, *Tranſgreſſion*, it comprehends the ſubſtance of what is intended. The Engliſh of the word is, a *being without law.* Sin then is a being or doing beſides the rule: it is called a *departing*, Dan. 9. 11. Now this is expreſſed in the Anſwer, both in the *defect*, and the *exceſs*: the former whereof relates to the ſins of *omiſſion*, the latter to thoſe of *commiſſion*. For our better

and

and more diſtinct underſtanding of the nature of Sin under theſe expreſſions obſerve theſe things.

1. *THAT in every command of the Law, there is both a negative and affirmative part.* Obedience properly conſiſts in act; man cannot be ſaid truly to obey, but when he doth ſomething. *Iſai.* 56. 2. *Gal.* 3. 10. Now it is not every act that a man doth, which is obedience, but only that which is regular. Hence the command doth two things; 1. It *points out what is to be done*; it tells us what is duty, or what are thoſe actions in which we are to obey the pleaſure of God revealed in his word. 2. It *ſets limits to this*, by excluding of the oppoſite; it therefore tells us what is not to be done, and how it is not to be done, this is the negative part, and the other is the affirmative: and there is no affirmative but hath it's negative; yea, under whatſoever form the precept is delivered, the other is always included. When the law ſaith, Thou ſhalt not kill; it intends, thou ſhalt preſerve the life thou art concerned in. When it ſaith, Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy, it ſignifies, thou ſhalt not prophane any part of holy time, &c.

2. *HENCE men are liable to Sin two ways*, viz. either by *not doing*, or by *doing amiſs*; either by neglect of, or by going beſide the rule: the former of theſe is called a Sin of omiſſion, the latter of commiſſion.

Here then,

(1.) *A ſin of omiſſion is a want of actual conformity to the law of God:* When men neglect, or do not, that which God requires of them by his precept. Whatſoever God bids us to do, we are under a moral obligation to do it, and we bring a curſe upon our ſelves by neglecting. Gal. 3. 10. *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.* And there is as real ſin in not doing what God commands us, as there is in doing of that which he hath forbidden us; and this is actual ſin; becauſe though as to the performance it ſelf, there is rather a not acting, yet there is always an act of the will, conſenting to ſuch a neglect; whether it be through ſinful ignorance, or more high handed rebellion. Now this omiſſion reſpects either,

1. *THE Heart:* When there is not an inward approbation of, and love to the law of God, he cannot receive it. 1 Cor. 2. 14. *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the ſpirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs unto him: neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.* The command doth not pleaſe men, they do not ſee that beauty, excellency, deſireableneſs in it, which it deſerves to be acknowledged for, and therefore cannot take delight in it. *Rom.* 7. 22. they look not upon it as a rule of life.

2. *THE Life:* When men do not their duty which lies upon them, either unto God or unto men; they do not perform the will of God. Though men do nothing, yet they ſin, becauſe they are bound to do by precept; and therefore God oftentimes, in his word, threatens men for not doing. Many are apt to think, if they ſit ſtill and ſuſpend from acting, they are on the ſurer ſide; but this is a great miſtake. Why is *God's fury* threatned to be *poured out upon thoſe that call not upon his name?* Jer. 10. 25.

(2.) *A ſin of commiſſion is, when men do thoſe things which are againſt or beſide the Law.* And indeed all that is beſide it is againſt it; becauſe that is a compleat rule for all the actions of men. When men act, but they do not act by rule, then they do tranſgreſs, i. e. they go beſide the law, it is *Anomy*. There is nothing that we can concern our ſelves about, but there is a law to direct us. Though there are things indifferent in themſelves, yet there are no actions of men ultimately indifferent, but are either right or wrong; and there is a direction about them in the word of God. When the law ſaith thus, and men do otherwiſe, they ſin. All actions are as ſo many arrows that are ſhot by men, the law directs to the mark they ſhould be ſhot at, and tells men how they ſhould ſhoot them. All that miſs here do ſin in ſo doing. Now there are Three things in which this miſſing eſpecially diſcovers it ſelf.

1. *WITH reſpect to the matter of the action.* It is then beſides the law, when it thwarts the letter of it. The rule preſcribes the things themſelves which are to be done, the action it ſelf is required of us; not to do this, or to do ſomething elſe beſides it, is the moſt groſs and apparent ſinning of all; and this is that only which men can directly and immediately charge upon others, ordinarily.

2. *IN regard of the principle from whence the action proceeds.* A man may fail in his duty, and be guilty before God of ſinning againſt Him, in the very action wherein he keeps moſt cloſe to the letter of the law, and others cannot charge tranſgreſſion upon him. We are therefore here to obſerve; that there is an habitual and ſpiritual conformity to the law, which is required of all men; which conſiſts in the Image of God, or that righteouſneſs and true holineſs, from whence our obedience is to flow; and this was beſtowed upon man in creation; and he hath loſt it by his own default; but ſtill it is his ſin that he wants it; yea the very want of it is part of his original ſin, which is in all men by vertue of the apoſtacy, as will hereafter be made to appear. When therefore men have not a principle of Sanctification in them, or do not exert it in their actions, they ſin; becauſe they fall ſhort of the rule, which requires that entire love in every duty that is done by us, which can only commend us to God; and where it is wanting, all that is done flows from the corruption which is in man, which is *enmity to the law of God*, and *is not, cannot be ſubject.* Rom. 8. 7.

3. *IN the end that it is done for.* The law of God is to direct man to his laſt end; it therefore

therefore requires man to level all his actions right, and let him do never ſo plauſibly, yet if he have a finiſter aim in what he doth, he falls foul with the command, and comes under the guilt of tranſgreſſing it. That is a precept of univerſal influence. 1 Cor. 10. 31. *Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatſoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.* *Jehu* therefore ſinned in doing God's command, though he did it with a great deal of zeal, becauſe he aimed at his own politick ends; and not at the glorifying of God. And that is the fault God chargeth upon them about their faſting, Zech. 7. 5. *When ye faſted and mourned in the fifth & ſeventh month, even thoſe ſeventy years, did ye at all faſt unto me, even to me?* Any action of ours, which centers ſhort of God as the laſt end, is a Sin. And this may ſuffice for the nature of Sin in general.

USE I. LEARN hence *what need there is of Preaching the Law*, if we deſire that Sinners ſhould be brought to a ſight of their ſin. Some there be who are all for Goſpel preaching, as they pleaſe to call it; i.e. nothing but comforts, and conſolations by JeſusChriſt, and they like not any other Preachers but ſuch. But we muſt remember that conſolation is offered too ſoon to Men, if it come before ſin is diſcovered to them. JeſusChriſt came to ſave his People from their ſins; and in order to their coming to Him, ſo as to partake in his Salvation, it is requiſite that they be convinced of their ſin, and their miſery by it, that ſo they may ſeek unto Him for this deliverance: for whiles men are whole they ſee not their need of the phyſitian. Now it is by the Law that we come to the knowledge of Sin. Rom. 7. 7. *What ſhall we ſay then? Is the law ſin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known ſin, but by the law: for I had not known luſt, except the law had ſaid, Thou ſhalt not covet.* It is true, the law ought always to be diſpenſed with reſpect to the Mediator, elſe it is only to drive men to deſperation; but if it be neglected, and not taught at all, that will be to let men alone in their carnal ſecurity, and ſuffer them to live altogether without apprehending their need of a Saviour.

USE II. *THIS will tell us that there is no ſin, that can be of it's own nature little.* The Papiſts tell us of trivial ſins, that are next of kin to no ſins; that are ſo ſmall & trivial things, that it is an eaſy matter to obtain pardon for them. Yea practically; who is there that doth not ſhew that he hardly regards ſome ſins; can eaſily commit them, and is not much troubled for them? Well; we are here aſſured that there is no ſin but is a croſſing or thwarting of the holy law of God; it is therefore an act of diſobedience to his command, a riſing up againſt his authority. And remember what God judgeth of all ſin, His law threatens death for every one. Ezek. 18. 4. *The ſoul that ſinneth, it ſhall die.* And ſurely that ſin that a man muſt die for is not a little one; for there is no injuſtice with God: the ſentence then is righteous; and let every Sinner think of it ſolemnly, and then call any ſin little again, if he dares. It is true, ſins differ circumſtantially, and in themſelves; but there is in every ſin a want of that love to God which we owe to him, and a daſhing of our ſelves againſt a holy law, and eternal rule, which is given us to guide us to our great end, and thereby an expoſing of our ſelves to the juſt wrath of the Great God.

USE III. LEARN hence *how juſt it is with God to puniſh Sin with Eternal Death.* Carnal minds are apt to entertain themſelves with prejudices here, and are ready to charge God with undue rigour; but it is becauſe they do not conſider what Sin is. Did men think what a great King God is, and what little things they are; what homage they owe unto Him: and then remember that every ſin is a putting themſelves in direct oppoſition, to an holy law, and a righteous God, it would put them to ſilence. This will ſtop all mouths one day. If we worms cannot bear affronts from our fellow worms, how ſhould the high and lofty One, who is infinitely above us, take ſuch from us, who are in every Sin ſtriking at his Glory?

USE IV. *HOW careful then ſhould we all of us be of Sinning.* Here is ſufficient matter of warning to us, to take heed how we engage our ſelves in any Sin. Conſider then, that by Sinning you loſe the great end of your lives, which was to glorify God. Rom. 3. 23. *For all have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God.* The law againſt which you ſin is God's law, and He ſtands engaged to plead againſt you all the affronts which you at any time offer to it; and how fearful is your hazard then? By Sinning you directly oppoſe God in his very command, and ſet your ſelves to undermine his honour; and whoever was there reſiſted God and proſpered? Every ſin is of a ſeparating nature, it makes a fearful diſtance between God and you. Iſai. 59. 2. *But your iniquities have ſeperated between you and your God, and your ſins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.* And there is no readier way to periſh, then to be far off from God. By every Sin you are laying up more wrath for your ſelves. Rom. 2. 5. *But after thy hardneſs and impenitent heart, treaſureſt up to thy ſelf wrath againſt the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.* And how fearful a trade is that? Let then all Sinners fly to Chriſt to deſtroy the dominion of Sin in them: and let us all learn to be more watchful over our hearts, and careful in our lives, that we be not drawn away by our own hearts, Satan's Temptations, and the ſnares of the World, to do that curſed thing which God's Soul hateth.

[AUGUST 8. 1692.]

SERMON

SERMON LV.

QUESTION XV.

WHAT was the Sin whereby our firſt Parents fell from the eſtate wherein they were created?

ANSWER.

The Sin whereby our firſt Parents fell from the eſtate wherein they were created, was their eating the forbidden fruit.

AFTER the general conſideration of Sin, we are invited,

II. TO make a more *particular reflection upon that Sin, which was the leading and procuring cauſe of all the infelicity that is befallen mankind.* And this is that which is uſually called *Adam's firſt Sin*, and ſtiled by Paul, *the offence*, Rom. 5. 18. becauſe it was perſonally committed by him, though influencially, or, by way of imputation, it reacheth to all.

I. WE are to conſider the *nature of this Sin.* This Sin is here deſcribed unto us, by the action in relation to the ſubject about which it was performed, *eating*, &c.

Two things may here be conſidered in the explication of this truth, viz. 1. In *what properly the Tranſgreſſion did conſiſt?* 2. *Wherein the greatneſs of this Sin diſcovers it ſelf?*

Q. 1. *IN what properly the Tranſgreſſion did conſiſt?*

A. *AS this action of our firſt Parents referred to the precept*, or prohibition laid upon them, *not to eat this fruit:* or, becauſe when God had forbidden it them, they adventured upon it. For our diſtinct conception of this, let theſe things be obſerved,

1. *THAT by the law of Creation there could have been no hurt in Adam's eating this fruit.* In the order of Creation, God made theſe things for the uſe of man, and he gave him the dominion over them. Man's bodily life was to be ſuſtained by things fitted for that end; and this fruit was ſo ſuited, it had no noxious quality in it, but had that nouriſhment, and pleaſancy in it, that was adapted to man's appetite, and wholſome for him. Gen. 3. 6. *The tree was good for food.* The act of eating is natural, and ſo lawful, yea neceſſary, and the fruit was convenient to the end of eating.

2. *THAT by the common law of ſpecial government, it had been lawful to eat this fruit as well as any other.* By this common law, I mean the law of nature, which was engraven on the heart of man, conſiſting of all thoſe rules, which directed him to righteouſneſs and holineſs; and were ſuited to his nature, and imprinted on his conſcience. This told him that he was to make the glory of God his laſt end in all things; and to improve all the creatures that were put under him according to their nature and uſefulneſs, for the advancement of this Glory by them. Now according to that light, man had reaſon to think, that he might glorify God, by a thankful eating of that fruit as well as any other; nor could he have conſcienciouſly abſtained from it without ſuperſtition.

3. *HENCE it was by a poſitive law in ſpecial government, that man was reſtrained from that fruit, which made his eating of it become a Sin.*

Here conſider,

(1.) *THAT God is the abſolute Lord and ſovereign Owner of all his Creatures.* He hath a juſt challenge to diſpoſe of them according to his pleaſure; becauſe he both made them, and made them for this end. *Rev.* 4. ult. He never intended to make a World, and then put the government of it out of his own hands, nor yet to loſe the liberty of governing of it as he ſees meet: He will maintain his authority.

(2.) *HENCE God may, if he will, by a poſitive precept lay a reſtraint upon the natural liberty of men.* He did not ſo give the dominion of theſe things to man, as to leave Himſelf no liberty. That therefore which is lawful, according to the light of nature, may be unlawful, by a poſitive prohibition given about it. And there is a rule in the law of nature for this, in the *Second Commandment*, which tells us we owe God obedience in whatſoever he ſhall diſcover to us to be his will.

(3.) *GOD ſaw meet to give man a trial of his obedience to Him.* He would ſee whether he would be faithful to him or no. There muſt therefore be a proof made of it. Man was holy, but mutable, God therefore would that this mutability of his ſhould have an experiment, to ſee if he would maintain his fidelity notwithſtanding. Angels and men being cauſes by counſel, God ſaw meet to offer them a probation; what that of Angels was, we have before conſidered, we are now in queſt of that which was offered to man.

(4.) *THE law of nature could be no ſuch Teſt or Trial, but it muſt be ſome poſitive precept.* It is a true rule, that man's will always follows the laſt dictate of the practical underſtanding: the greateſt objection againſt it, is fetch'd from the fall of Angels and Men, but 'tis through a miſtake. Man had entire ſanctification on all his faculties; he not only knew his rule, but the excellency of it, and had an entire love to it, could not be miſtaken in it, nor prejudiced at it: ſo that there was no hold for a Temptation to faſten, which would draw him from his reſpect to it, or alienate his heart from it. It had been vain therefore for Satan to have attempted it. It muſt then be in a poſitive command, wherein God

God aſſerts his abſolute ſovereignty : Nor could it be in any other way.

(5.) *GOD ſaw meet to make choice of this Tree for the Teſt : and accordingly forbad him to eat the fruit of it.* The ſeparating of this tree rather than another, was not from any thing properly in the tree, but from God's arbitrary pleaſure. Poſſibly, yea likely it was one of the beſt and moſt inviting fruits, whence advantage might be taken in the Temptation : but it was God's will to forbid man the eating of it, and the reaſon was becauſe he was pleaſed ſo to do, to try man. It was to aſſert his Lordſhip over man ; and ſee how he would carry himſelf.

(6.) *THE Tempter by this gained advantage to inſinuate into man a ſuſpicion of God's good will to him* ; in that he would reſtrain him from the uſe of this fruit : as is evident in the Temptation, *Gen. 3. begin.* He knew there was no hurt in the thing it ſelf, God had no neceſſity of hindring him, but it was his meer pleaſure. The fruit was good ; and he would by a lye perſwade him, it had more vertue in it than it had ; and ſo his heart was leavened with jealouſy.

(7.) *THE malignity of this Sin lay in the rebellion of Adam's heart againſt the ſovereignty of God in the prohibition.* He entertained the arguments of the enemy, believed them, and was thereupon diſſatisfied at the command, and ſo more eager in his deſire to be tampering with it : and at length fully reſolved in himſelf to reject this government of God over him : his Sin was becauſe it was forbidden him, and yet he regarded it not, but would eat for all.

(8.) *THE Tranſgreſſion it ſelf was compleated in his actual eating this fruit.* He was begun to fall before, the firſt jealous thought entertained ſhook him ; and his ſuperiour faculties were depraved before his eating, but the Sin was finiſhed in his eating. For,

1. *NOW his whole man had acted in it.* All the faculties of his Soul, and powers of his Body were intereſted in it actually. His underſtanding had aſſented to it, his will had given it's conſent, and made the choice and reſolved upon it ; his affections carried him forth, or ſpurred him on to it : his ear had received the falſe reports ; his eye had been deluded by the fair ſhew ; his feet had carried him to it ; his hand had taken it, and his mouth had taſted it.

2. *NOW he had wholly ſhaken off the yoke of God's government, as far as in him lay.* It is true, no creature can put it ſelf altogether from under the government of God ; (He will be above them, do they what they will :) but he now rejected his active obedience to it, and thereby became a rebel againſt his Sovereign, and engaged with his enemy againſt his Lord and Lawgiver. And this leads us to enquire,

Q. 2. *WHEREIN the greatneſs of this Sin diſcovers it ſelf ?*

A. *THERE is a great deal of reaſon to be inquiſitive into this* ; becauſe the foundation of the miſery of all the children of men was laid in it. Rom. 5. 12. *Wherefore as by one man ſin entred into the world, and death by ſin : and ſo death paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned.* And vain men are apt to think it a poor baſis of ſo fearful a Tragedy : Men are ready to ſay, what muſt the eating of an Apple be ſo heinous a thing, as to be made the undoing of Adam and all his Poſterity, and the leading cauſe to bring ſo many millions into the bottomleſs pit, and everlaſting burnings? But it is for want of a right underſtanding of the matter. There are then ſeveral things, that may here be offered to our conſideration, to ſhew us the heinouſneſs of this crime.

1. THAT *this Sin was againſt the very Sacrament, or Teſt that was given them.* This tree was a Sacrament of death ; it was that which God gave to Adam to try his love to him by ; it was a Seal of the Covenant, and that was herein violated. Now the Seal is that which ratifies, either the promiſe, or the threatning. He did, therefore, by this act, as it were, tear off the Seal from the Covenant, that was paſt between God and him. The *trial* indeed was but *ſmall*, yet the *Dependencies* on it were very *great* ; his everlaſting happineſs or miſery were to turn upon it. Now the *ſmaller* ſuch a Trial is, the more *heinous* is the ſin and folly in violating it. If man might have ſaved his life, and obtained his happineſs, by abſtaining from an Apple, and he would not do that for it, how juſtly doth he dye? and yet ſo it was. If in this one little thing, he had been true to God, he had never been loſt. The ſmaller the matter was, the greater was the *contempt* ; and thereupon the Sin the more inexcuſable. See how they plead, 1 Kin. 5. 13. *And his ſervants came near, and ſpake unto him, and ſaid, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do ſome great thing, wouldſt thou not have done it ? how much rather then, when he ſaith to thee, waſh and be clean ?*

2. *ADAM was under no compelling neceſſity to comply with this Temptation.* We before took notice, that in it he abuſed the liberty of his will : he could have abſtained ; God herein required no more of him, then He enabled him to do : his tenure of life and happineſs were upon moſt eaſy terms : the Tempter had no power over him, he could only offer his deceits. Adam knew on what terms he ſtood ; he might have read his obligation to this duty in the law of nature, or the Second Command ; he might have employed his underſtanding in reflecting upon the indubitable Supremacy of God, His great Goodneſs, His truth, the certainty of his own ruin in caſe of diſobedience ; as well as on ſuch things as he was deceived by ; and that he did not was his own fault. That therefore he did this deliberately, and upon choice, without compulſion, greatly aggravated his crime.

3. THE

3. *THE luſts that gat into his heart, and prevailed over him to eat this fruit, rendred the Sin very great.* We muſt not only conſider, that he did tranſgreſs the command, and do the thing forbidden, but what made him to do ſo. Now Divines obſerve three luſts more peculiarly gotten into him, and hurrying of him to the perpetration of this Sin,

(1.) *INTOLLERABLE Pride.* And that wrought in diſcontent at his own ſtation, and aſpiring after an higher: and what higher could that be, but the Throne of God? Mark, what was the great motive that clenched the Temptation; *Ye ſhall be as Gods*, Gen. 3. 5. God had ſet him as high as a creature could well be; he ſtood next to God, ſubordinated to no other order; all viſible creatures were put under him, and the Angels themſelves, though in divers reſpects more noble Beings, yet were made to miniſter for him; there was none above him but God; nor any Being equal to him, but the Holy Angels; and yet he aſpired to be climbing higher, accounting his own place too low for Him. And what fearful ambition was this?

(2.) *HORRIBLE Ingratitude.* God, to oblige him to Obedience, had given all things to him, a World, and the Creatures in it, for his uſe and benefit; planted him a garden with his own hand, for his delight; and made the ſeveral creatures come and pay their homage to him, as their Lord. And what could he rationally have deſired more? And what did he require of him for all this, but to love Him, and in teſtimony of that love, to abſtain from this one thing? When he had enough and more beſides? And yet like an unthankful wretch, he abuſed his makers love, and takes this too.

(3.) *MOST grievous Infidelity:* And that both reſpecting the promiſe and the threatning. God had paſt his word, that if he would herein obey Him, he ſhould be happy for ever; but he believed Him not, diſcredited His word, and thought that God envyed him happineſs. God had alſo denounced Death, poſitively, and unavoidably, if he ſhould dare to meddle with this fruit, and eat of it. But the Devil tells him there is no ſuch danger, and he adventures on his credit, to make God a liar, as far as was in him. And was that a little Sin which was thus introduced?

4. DIVINES well obſerve, *That Adam in this one act, trod under foot, and deſpiſed all God's attributes, and commands.* And if ſo, then it engroſſed all Sin in it. Let us make a glance upon it.

(1.) *HE deſpiſed all God's glorious and precious Attributes.* God had engaged Himſelf to him, in all his manifeſted perfections, to be his portion, if he would obey Him; but if he ſat him at nought, and choſe rather to have his portion in himſelf, and the world; nay to expect his felicity rather from an apple than God, God had engaged all theſe perfections againſt him, if he ſhould tranſgreſs. They all ſtood armed againſt him in the threatning; but he regarded them not, but run upon the very boſſes of his buckler; though he had all the reaſon to conclude, that by this one act of his, he ſhould incenſe the Omnipotency, Infiniteneſs, Unchangeableneſs, Eternity, Holineſs, Juſtice and Truth of God againſt him, yet in the very face of all theſe, he adventures to put all to the hazard; entred the liſt, and threw out the gantlet to the moſt High, and practically ſaid, that he cared not to have theſe Attributes his friends, and was not afraid to make them his enemies.

(2.) *HE trod underfoot and violated the whole law, and commands of God.* It is true, there is a *collateral* breaking of all, in the tranſgreſſing of one. Jam. 2. 10. *For whoſoever ſhall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.* It is alſo evident, that he, who rips off the ſeal of a Covenant, makes every article of it void at once; and ſo was this. But beſides, there was a more *direct* and immediate violence offered to the particular precepts in the Decalogue; as ſome have remarked: And may be glanced at.

THE *Firſt* Command was broken, by his ambition to be in God's place; his ſlighting the Divine Sovereignty; his ſeeking his happineſs ſomewhere elſe, and not in God. The *Second*, in his violating of the divine Inſtitution, this Tree being a Sacrament, and by his abſtinence he was to ratify the Covenant, which he thus brake. The *Third*, by lightly eſteeming of God's Name and Word, His Promiſe and Threatning, he renounced his reverence; he alſo brake his vow, and covenant-promiſe to God, for an oath of God was on him in the Covenant. The *Fourth*, in that when he ought to have been preparing for the Sabbath, (it being ſuppoſed that he did this on the ſixth day in the afternoon,) he utterly diſabled himſelf for ever keeping a Sabbath aright. Again, the *Fifth*, in that he had no more honourable eſteem for man, and the whole race of mankind, (whom he knew were to ſtand and fall with him,) than to deſtroy them all for the ſatisfaction of his inordinate deſire: and herein alſo he ſinned againſt them, as they were his children, loſing of his parental bowels of affection to them. The *Sixth*, in that he hereby murthered himſelf, and all his poſterity, bringing death, ſpiritual, temporal and eternal on all mankind. *Rom.* 5. 12. And it was the moſt cruel murder that ever was committed: he had all necks on the block, and cut them off at a blow. He ruined all Bodies and Souls together. 1 Cor. 15. 22. *In Adam all die.* The *Seventh*, by luxury, indulging his appetite, and feeding his luſt, and by a vile uxorioufneſs, in rather hearkening to his deceived wife, and to her cruel flatterings, than to God himſelf, and his awful comminations. The *Eighth*, in eating the forbidden fruit; God had kept this from him by a lawful interdiction, He had by his

poſitive declared will, fenced that Tree out of Adams property, and he feloniouſly meddled with it. The *Ninth*, by his unbelief of God's threatnings, and taking a falſe teſtimony from the Devil: for he that believes a falſe report, and practiſeth upon it, as well breaks this command as he that raiſeth it. The *Tenth*, in giving ſcope to his concupiſcence, to luſt for that which it was not lawful for him to have, and therefore he ought not to have coveted it; longing to be fingering of that which God had charged him not to touch. Thus was every part of God's Law deſpiſed by him.

USE I. SEE here, *That the circumſtances attending it may make a Sin greater or leſs.* The thing itſelf barely conſidered, may ſeem ſmall; but when we have looked upon it with all its antecedents, and concommitants, it will be made formidably great. And the want of this is the great reaſon, why the ſinfulneſs of Sin, is ſo little underſtood by the moſt of the children of men: it therefore tells us how we ought to think of it.

USE II. *SEE how juſt it was with God to puniſh this Sin with ſo great a puniſhment as Death.* God hath not out-done in his ſeverity againſt it. Call over what hath been diſcovered in the bowels of this Sin, and judge according to reaſon, whether any Death be too much for ſuch a Creature to undergo.

USE III. *LET us here, as in a glaſs view our own natural infirmity.* See how weak we are in our ſelves to encounter a Temptation; how ſmall a matter will draw us from our obedience, if left to our ſelves. Adam in innocency is won, by the lovelineſs of an apple, to run into the ſnares and pits of miſery. If God keeps us not, the Devil will with the ſmalleſt matter delude us; which ſhould caution us againſt truſting to our ſelves, and drive us to Jeſus Chriſt, and ſeek of him for His keeping, that ſo we may be delivered from the wiles of the Devil.

[OCTOBER 4. 1692.]

SERMON *LVI.*

QUESTION XVI.

DID all Mankind fall in Adam's first Tranſgreſſion?

ANSWER.

The Covenant being made with Adam, not only for himſelf, but for his Poſterity, all mankind deſcending from him, by ordinary generation, ſinned in him, and fell with him in his firſt Tranſgreſſion.

UNDER the former head we took notice of man's Apoſtacy as it referred to the firſt Tranſgreſſion, which was perſonally committed by our firſt Parents: but tho' the *Act* terminated on them, yet not ſo the *Guilt*, nor the *Pollution* conſequent upon it. We are therefore here led,

II. TO the conſideration of the *Propagation of the Tranſgreſſion*, which is aſſerted and deſcribed in this. In which there are Three things obſervable. 1. The *ground* or Reaſon of the Propagation, *the Covenant being made*, &c. i. e. he was treated with, not on a perſonal, but a publick account, or as a publick Perſon. 2. The *extent* of this propagation, with the limitation of it, *all mankind*, &c. herein excepting the Son of God, in our nature, who deſcended from him after an extraordinary manner. 3. The *effect* it ſelf, or nature of the propagation, *ſinned in him*, &c. i. e. became Sinners together with him, and fell under the threatning of Death, as well as he. In the opening of this Doctrine, I ſhall endeavour, with as much brevity as may conſiſt with perſpicuity, to reſolve theſe two Queſtions. 1. *How the Tranſgreſſion is propagated?* 2. *To Whom?*

Q. 1. *HOW the Tranſgreſſion is propagated?*

A. THERE are two things will here come under conſideration, and ſerve to make it clear. 1. *Our union to the firſt Adam.* 2. *Our communion with him* in his Tranſgreſſion. Let us take the account of each of theſe.

I. OUR union to the firſt Adam. This is neceſſarily the foundation on which this affair depends. Adam's Sin is extended to none but his poſterity. If all the world had not been ſome way, in him, they could not have been made Sinners by him; and if they had not ſo been, they could never have been ſubjected to Sin and Death, on his account. Touching this Union, we may enquire into the nature of it. *This union is the being of all mankind in Adam, deſcending from him lineally, as from the firſt, by mediation of their next Parents.* We may diſcover the nature of this union in the following Propoſitions.

1. *THE Soul is not traduced or derived from the Parents, but is immediately created by God Himſelf.* This diſpute is much bandied among the Learned, which I will not here engage in, but only give two of many reaſons, to prove the truth of the aſſertion.

Here then,

(1.) IF the Soul be propagated, *it is either by multiplication, diviſion, or ſeminal generation.* I know not a fourth way that can be concerned; and therefore the disjunction is full.

Now,

1. *IT is not by Multiplication.* Some ſay one Soul multiplies another, as one light lights up another. But the compariſon will not hold. For, 1. There is a communication of an elementary ſubſtance from the lighting,

lighting, to that which is lighted by it, whereas the reaſonable Soul is not elementary and ſo cannot adminiſter any elementary ſubſtance, which is the alone ſubject of ſuch mutations. Nay, 2. Why ſhould the rational Soul be more capable of multiplicating it ſelf then Angels? they are both of a ſpiritual nature, and we hear of no ſuch way of Spirits multiplying themſelves, nor indeed is it intelligible. Yea, 3. This multiplication muſt be either natural, or voluntary. Meerly natural it is not, becauſe a Soul knowing and willing, cannot perform any ſuch action, without knowledge and will. Nor yet voluntary, for then it ſhould depend on the will: And if ſo, how comes it to paſs that ſuch as are illegitimate are reaſonable Beings, endowed with humane Souls? It is certain that for the moſt part, their conception is againſt the will of their Parents, who would rather have prevented it, if it had been in their power.

2. *NOT by Diviſion.* A part of the Soul of the Parents is not cut off to make a Soul for the Child; for then it would be impaired hereby, and ſo by degrees it would waſte and wear out it ſelf, ſince it is not nouriſhed, and ſo repaired by elementary nutriment as the Body is. Moreover, it may be well here enquired, whether this Soul proceeds from one or both of the Parents; if from one only, from which? For the Soul of each is equally diviſible? If from both equally, how comes a Soul which is without parts, to be made up of ſeveral parts?

3. *NOT by ſeminal Generation.* For the Soul is an immortal and conſtant Being, and is not therefore a ſubject of Generation. Whatſoever is produced by Generation, is in it's own nature liable to corruption. But this is contrary to the nature of the reaſonable Soul which was made incorruptible. We ſhall therefore find the different manner of the creation of the Body, & of the Soul, Gen. 2. 7. *And the Lord God formed man of the duſt of the ground, and breathed into his noſtrils the breath of life, and man became a living ſoul.*

(2.) *THE Scripture is very full in aſſerting the manner of the Souls production to be, by Creation.* See for this, Eccl. 12. 7. *Then ſhall the duſt return to the earth as it was: and the ſpirit ſhall return to God who gave it:* Where there is a manifeſt oppoſition, of the manner of the original of the Spirit, and of the Body; and by Spirit we are to underſtand the rational Soul. See alſo, Heb. 12. 9. *Furthermore, we have had fathers of our fleſh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: ſhall we not much rather be in ſubjection to the father of ſpirits, and live?* What more manifeſt oppoſition can there be, than is here between the *fathers of our fleſh*, and *the Father of ſpirits*? So, Zech. 12. 1. *And formeth the ſpirit of man within him.* Iſai. 57. 16. *The ſouls which I have made.* There is a peculiar emphaſis in it. So, *Job* 10. When having ſpoken of the origination of his Body, *ver.* 9, 10. he proceeds to ſhew the original of his Soul, *ver.* 12.

2. *YET mankind is propagated by Generation*, as other ſenſitive, and vegetative Beings are. This doth not at all hinder the truth of man's derivation from man. For,

(1.) *THERE are the formative Spirits generated*, which do organize the Body of the reaſonable creature, and make it fit to receive the Soul in it, as its inſtrument for it's operations.

(2.) *THE Body being thus prepared, the Soul doth certainly come into it.* There is that unfailing concurſe in the Providence of God, that he always provides a Soul for every humane Body, that is generated. Job 10. 11, 12. *Thou haſt cloathed me with ſkin and fleſh, and haſt fenced me with bones and ſinews. Thou haſt granted me life.*

(3.) *THE ſame Spirits become the inſtruments of the union between the Soul and Body.* They are the bond of this union, and are accordingly ſuited for ſuch a ſervice as that is; and it is upon the failing of theſe that a ſeperation is at any time made.

(4.) *THE Soul and Body are thus united together by Generation.* By which union they become one Perſon. This union is that in which Generation properly reſults. The whole Body, animal and vital ſpirits, which are the bond of this union, are produced by this Generation: and by vertue of this operation, the Body is faſhioned and organized, the Soul is received into union, and ſo one compleat ſubſiſtence is made. And this is enough to denominate a true propagation of the kind.

3. *HENCE natural Generation is the way of the propagation of the Tranſgreſſion.* For becauſe it derives from Adam to his children which come out of his loins; Hereupon, this is the only way by which it deſcends to all men as long as the world ſtands, becauſe by this means man is multiplied, and the world comes to be filled with men. Gen. 1. 28. *And God ſaid, be fruitful and multiply.*

4. *IT muſt therefore be by mediation of our next Parents that we are united unto Adam.* For there is a line of Succeſſion, and a connection of one to another, by which, as in ſo many links, we have a real adheſion to the firſt. Generations therefore have their ſucceſſion, Eccl. 1. 3. *One generation paſſeth away, and another generation cometh.*

5. *HENCE natural Generation is the bond of our union with Adam.* For,

(1.) *IT is by natural Generation that we have our inbeing in Adam.* Before we had our actual exiſtence, we were vertually in his loins; as the effect is vertually in the cauſe. The roſe is vertually in the buſh, before it ſo much as buds. Thus is *Levi ſaid to pay tithes in Abraham*, Heb. 7. 9, 10. And when we actually be, we are actually in him. All therefore are ſaid to be *of one blood*, Act. 17. 26. All are in him, as every branch that ſprings out is in the tree.

(2.) *HENCE it is by natural Generation that we are lineally deſcended from him.* We are all of us ſprung from our firſt Parents, by ſucceſſive Generations, which link us to them. Every new Generation, is a new link added to it.

6. *HEREBY we are united unto Adam as the firſt.* The meaning of it is, we are in him, as in the root, and common principle of all his poſterity. We are ſo united to him, as to be conſidered as having our inbeing in him in all reſpects. For

(1.) *HE had a paternal right to this.* Gen. 1. 28. *God ſaid unto them be fruitful and multiply.* Hence we are all ſaid, to have one father. He was the firſt father of men; and hence we were under him, as children are under their Parents, and involved with him as they are: And we know that a paternal right is of very great influence. Run up all the Generations that have been, and they will end here.

(2.) *HE hath a regal or princely right.* For, being the Father, he was alſo the Prince of the World: and here Kingly authority firſt took it's original. Now all ſubjects are involved in their Prince as ſo, and he tranſacts their publick affairs for them. Adam therefore bare the image of all his children upon him. 1 *Cor.* 15. 48. *As is the earthy, ſuch are they that are earthy.*

(3.) *HE was the root of all mankind, and they are the branches.* Now it is natural and rational that the ſame ſap which is in the root, ſhould ſpread it ſelf. So that this union of ours unto Adam, hath reſpect to all the relations and changes of ſtate, that he, as our root, was liable to. We were to be, as he ſhould be in all thoſe reſpects.

(4.) *ADAM ſtood not as a private, but a publick perſon.* Not for himſelf, but for us all; he was the repreſentative of, and received the common ſtock which belonged unto mankind. All the eſtates of all that were to be born of him, were put into his hand, and he was to trade for them. There was at firſt no other man beſides him, and all were to deſcend from him, he therefore had their whole concern betruſted with him, as their common head. And this may ſuffice to explain our union with the firſt Adam.

II. *OUR Communion with him.* This follows upon union, as being the end of it. The ſiene being united to the ſtock, partakes of it's nature, and is like to thrive or wither with it. This communion with him, implies that they ſhare with him in his Tranſgreſſion, that they have a participation in that Sin. And how can it be otherwiſe? For if they were in him, and ſinned in him, how then can they be other than ſinners in him? Now this communion appears in two particulars. 1. The *imputation* of Adam's Tranſgreſſion to them. 2. A *real communication* of the Tranſgreſſion and the conſequents of it to them. We may take a ſhort account of both of theſe.

1. *CONCERNING the imputation of Adam's Tranſgreſſion to them.* It is that which makes that one ſingular act of Adam's diſobedience, in eating of the forbidden fruit, according to the full merit of it, to become ours. Adam ſinned, and all ſinned in him, and ſo his ſin is charged to their account, and put upon their ſcore. We are all made debtors in Adam. We bear the guilt of his ſin, and are bound to ſuſtain the penalty of it. Imputation ſignifies as much as the ſetting of a thing to ſuch an ones ſcore, and making of him a debtor for it. *Phinehas* his good act *was imputed*, i. e. accounted *to him as a righteous act*, *Pſal.* 106. 31. So ſin imputed, or the imputation of ſin, is a ſentence of the Law, charging upon the perſon breach of Covenant, from which he is declared a delinquent. Here then for our right ſtating of this imputation of Sin to us, let us obſerve theſe things.

(1.) *THAT Adam's act in eating of the forbidden fruit was declared by the Law to be an unrighteous act.* God had ſeverely forbidden it to him. The Law had poſitively ſaid that he ſhould not eat of it; and that if he did, he ſhould die for it. The act therefore was no ſooner paſt, but the Law declared againſt it, and the ſentence of the Law fell upon it.

(2.) *THIS Sin was in the firſt place imputed to Adam himſelf.* *Gen.* 3. 17. Adam was the prime and perſonal offender; the action in which the Tranſgreſſion was, was his own, he was the ſubject of it. God then laid it to his particular charge, as the Perſon that was immediately intereſted and concerned in it. Every action as ſuch, terminates in the ſubject, and ſo did this.

(3.) *BUT it did not reſt here, but was alſo charged to the account of his Poſterity.* Adam's ſin is alſo become theirs, and that in the full merit of it, ſo far as it is a tranſgreſſion of the Law, and breach of the Covenant, and brings the creature under the deſert of the wrath of God; and they are legally accounted ſinners. Though they have not committed ſin in their own perſons, yet becauſe their perſons were legally in him, as the perſon of the debtor is in the ſurety, as the perſon of the Prince is in the Embaſſador. Hence it is all put down upon their acconnt, as legally as it is upon Adam's. They ſtand forth as delinquents, and are bound to anſwer for that ſin. His act of treaſon hath tainted all of his blood and poſterity deriving from him.

(4.) *IT was only that one ſingular act of eating the forbidden fruit that was imputed.* Hence in *Rom.* 5. 16. we read *that judgment was by one*, i. e. by one act of diſobedience, and the reaſon of it is this, becauſe that act, and only that, which Adam did as he repreſented the whole ſtock of men, is or can be imputed to his children. But this act Adam did, and none but this under ſuch a conſideration, as repreſenting of all Mankind. That none but this was accounted to him as a publick perſon, appears, becauſe no other but this peculiar act, was or is charged to the account of his poſterity. Adam's after actions were never mentioned in Scripture, with any ſuch imputation

tation annexed to them; only this tranſgreſſion is that which they are reckoned to have an hand in. Now that Adam in this one act, acted as a publick perſon, repreſenting the whole cluſter of Mankind, and for that reaſon the imputation of it fell upon them, will appear herein.

1. *BECAUSE this act is ſo often mentioned in the word of God, as having an influence upon his Poſterity*, and making of them to be offenders. And for this we may, among others, conſult, 1 *Cor.* 15. 22. *Rom.* 5. 15, 17, 18, 19. This is the very thing which hath brought them under the threatning of the Law Covenant.

2. *BECAUSE all men dye by vertue of this Sin.* That death hath ſeized mankind is evident. Now that which brought it in, and gave it it's extent, is aſcribed hither, Rom. 5. 12. *Wherefore as by one man ſin entred into the world, and death by ſin: and ſo death hath paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned.* He only that eat the forbidden fruit was by law to dye, Gen. 2. 17. *For in the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely dye.* But it is certain that all die, therefore all have eaten of it, vertually.

3. *BECAUSE they are reckoned to have ſinned, who never perſonally acted any ſin.* The term, *all*, *Rom.* 5. 12. comprizeth under it, Children in their infancy, as well as others. And it is ſure, that they cannot ſin actually: this muſt therefore be accounted to them by imputation, and as they relate to the firſt Adam.

4. *BECAUSE there are multitudes*, (yea indeed all,) *that are puniſhed for this, before they committed any actual ſin.* We find therefore that they are conceived and born in ſin. Pſal. 51. 5. *Behold, I was ſhapen in iniquity, and in ſin did my mother conceive me.* Now Sin, as it hath power and dominion over any, is a very great puniſhment: (as will hereafter be farther obſerved.) As alſo becauſe they dye, who never committed any one actual ſin. The Apoſtle makes a remark upon it, Rom. 5. 14. *Death reigned from Adam to Moſes, even over them that had not ſinned after the ſimilitude of Adam's tranſgreſſion.* He points to poor babes, that dye before they come to uſe their reaſon. Thus the Head plots treaſon, and the whole Body ſuffers for it.

[NOVEMBER 1: 1692.]

SERMON *LVII.*

2. CONCERNING *the real communication of the Tranſgreſſion; the conſequents of it, to them.* As we all ſinned in him, ſo we fell with him. And this alſo ariſeth from our union to him. Hence all that befell the firſt Adam, upon his violating the Covenant made with him, is fallen upon all his Poſterity. Becauſe he covenanted for them, as well as for himſelf. Now the unhappy things which Adam hath communicated to his children, and which they all labour under, are his *Guilt* and his *Puniſhment*; they have communion with him in both theſe, and feel the direful effects of them. I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak of both of theſe more largely under ſome following Queſtions. Here only as they derive from our firſt Parents unto us,

1. *HE hath communicated to us the Guilt of his Tranſgreſſion.* Guilt is properly an obligation lying upon a perſon to undergo a penalty for a breach of ſome law, by vertue of a ſentence paſt upon him, adjudging him thereunto. This may be enlarged upon hereafter, at preſent only let us obſerve,

1. *THAT our firſt Parents had no ſooner eaten the forbidden fruit, but they immediately became guilty.* The ſentence of the law threatning fell upon them, and they came under the condemnation of it. This guilt forthwith took hold of their conſciences, and it was the ſenſe of it, which affrighted them ſo, as that they ſought to hide themſelves away from God, by reaſon of the terrors that it imprinted upon them. Gen. 3. 10. *I was afraid, and I hid my ſelf.*

2. *THAT this guilt is derived from them to their Poſterity.* That it is ſo, the Scripture fully aſſures us, Rom. 3. 19. *Now we know that what things the law ſaith, it ſaith to them that are under the law: that every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.* They are no ſooner born than condemned; they come into the world under the ſentence: the law hath found them ſinners, and doomed them for it. They are faſt bound in fetters of wrath to deſtruction: the wrath of God is out againſt them as ſoon as ever they are children of Adam. Eph. 2. 3. *By nature children of wrath.*

3. *THAT this guilt ariſeth from the imputation of the firſt Tranſgreſſion to them.* Guilt alway ſuppoſeth an offence, which renders the man guilty. Now there is no perſonal tranſgreſſion of their own to lay them under it, for it falls upon them before they have done good or evil, but it was that of our firſt Parents. This is called, the offence, emphatically, becauſe it is charged on the whole race of men, Rom. 5. 18. *By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation.* And this muſt be by imputation.

4. *THAT the equity of this follows from our union to the firſt Adam.* Becauſe we had all our inbeing in him, and God tranſacted with the whole kind in one Head. He covenanted for us, and we were obliged in him. If therefore it was juſt that ſuch a Covenant might paſs between God and the firſt man, it cannot be unjuſt, that all deſcending thus from him, ſhould run the ſame riſque with him.

2. *HE alſo communicated to us the puniſhment of his Tranſgreſſion.* This muſt needs follow from the former; for if guilt be an obligation to ſuffer penalty; this penalty muſt needs

needs be the effect of the antecedent guilt: it being nothing elſe but the execution of the ſentence, which in that had paſt upon him. And the ſame juſtice which finds the man guilty, and accordingly dooms him for it, ſtands bound to proſecute it till it be conſummate. Under this head there are two things to be looked upon as communicated by Adam to his Poſterity, viz. *Sin* and *Death*. We may here take a brief account of each of theſe,

1. *THE firſt Adam hath really communicated Sin to all his Poſterity.* And that not meerly by imputation, but by derivation too. Sin (as we may hereafter conſider,) is either *original* or *actual*. *Actual* ſin is nothing elſe but the working, and breaking out of original ſin, and no man derives this from Adam immediately, but from his own depraved nature. *Original* ſin is the moral defilement that hath corrupted man's nature, whereby he is not only enclined but neceſſitated to ſin. Now this is that which Adam hath derived from himſelf to all men. The way and manner of it's communication is one of the deepeſt and moſt difficult points in Divinity, and calls for great ſobriety in the conſideration of it. There are two things here that would offer themſelves to our contemplation; viz. the *Phyſical* way or manner of it's derivation, and the *Moral* grounds of it.

(1.) *AS to the former of theſe*, I muſt needs confeſs mine own ignorance about it, nor am I able to give a natural reaſon for the derivation of this pollution, or how it is propagated, or what is the influence by which the formative Spirits are polluted, or how they can communicate this ſinfulneſs to the reaſonable Soul. And all the arguings that I have met with on this ſubject, ſeem obſcure and unintelligable. And I believe it is one of the Judgments of God which are unſearchable. It is then a point of Faith, and the word of God aſſures us of theſe things about it,

1. *THAT every one brings this Sin with him into the world.* This defilement cleaves to all men, and there are none born without it. Hence that character of man by nature, Pſal. 58.3 *The wicked are eſtranged from the womb, they go aſtray aſſoon as they be born, ſpeaking lies.* This is the *carnal mind which is enmity againſt the law of God*, Rom. 8. 7. And though Children cannot ſhow it before, yet as ſoon as ever they have any uſe of their rational powers, they make plain diſcoveries of it.

2. *THAT this was not the condition of man's nature at the firſt.* Man was not made in ſuch a conſtitution, he was not ſo as he came out of God's hands in Creation; his primitive ſtate was a ſinleſs ſtate, *Eccl.* 7. 29. It had been inconſiſtent with God's wiſdom to have made him thus, ſince he was made to glorify God, in obedience to His command, for which he had been incapable if he had been made with this defilement cleaving to him; for it is by reaſon of this that now he cannot ſerve God. Joſh. 24. 19. *And Joſhua ſaid unto the people, Ye cannot ſerve the Lord; for he is an holy God: he is a jealous God, he will not forgive your tranſgreſſions nor your ſins.*

3. *THAT this corruption is derived to us by our next Parents in the channel of natural generation.* We have it immediately, and unavoidably, from them that begat us and bare us. *Immediately* they impart it to us. Hence that of David, Pſal. 51. 5. *Behold I was ſhapen in iniquity, and in ſin did my mother conceive me.* He acknowledgeth that he drew it from his mother in his very conception: and *unavoidably*, it cannot be prevented. Hence we find ſuch remarks made, Job 14. 4. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean, not one.* Joh. 3. 6. *That which is born of the fleſh, is fleſh.* So that there is ſuch a contagion which doth ever accompany the generation of mankind.

4. *THAT the ſanctifying grace of God in our next Parents doth not prevent this.* And this ſhows that the contagion cleaves cloſe to humane nature. A circumciſed Jew begat an uncircumciſed Son. The beſt of Men have ſometimes the vileſt Children. And there are none but are ſinful. The natural birth cannot be ſuch as will prevent the neceſſity of the new birth, Joh. 3. 3. *Except a man be born again, he cannot ſee the kingdom of God.*

5. *THAT this began at Adam's Apoſtacy, and derived from him originally to his Poſterity.* It muſt have it's riſe ſomewhere: Our next Parents brought it with them into the world, and as they derived it to us, ſo they had it derived to them, by their Progenitors: But it muſt at length determine in an original, and that was the firſt Adam: He was that *one man by whom ſin came into the world*, Rom. 5. 12.

6. *THAT it was not the ſame individual corcoruption of nature which Adam derived to us, but one like it.* Adam's depravation was perſonal: The original Sin in one man is not the original Sin in another, though it be in all reſpects of the ſame nature or kind. Adam is therefore ſaid to convey his image & likeneſs to his Children, Gen. 5. 3. *He begat a ſon in his own image.* And on this account we are ſaid to have *born his image*, 1 Cor. 15. 49. And this is the ſubſtance of what we may gather from the word of God on this account.

(2.) *AS to the latter, or the Moral grounds of it*; it is more eaſy to conceive of, if we look upon this ſinful ſtate of men by nature, to be a puniſhment of Adam's Tranſgreſſion. And therefore, though we cannot ſee how this is done, yet we may be aſſured that God is righteous in doing of it.

Here then obſerve,

1. *THAT Adam's Sin made all mankind guilty.* This we have already taken notice of, but it is again to be here remembred, becauſe this whole Scheme muſt be reduced hither.

2. *THAT*

2. *THAT it is a righteous thing with God to puniſh the Guilty.* For what elſe is puniſhment, but the execution of the Sentence; if that then be right, ſo muſt this; yea it is in this way that God proves himſelf to be a righteous God, in reſpect of his relative Juſtice.

3. *THAT the corruption of man's nature is a very great puniſhment.* There are two things which go into the denomination of a puniſhment, viz. that the thing ſuffered be an evil, and that it is inflicted for a fault or offence. And both of theſe are here applicable to this ſinful ſtate of man.

(1.) *IT is a very great evil.* That is accounted evil to any one that doth him harm; much more that maketh him miſerable: and if ſo, nothing deſerves the title of evil more than this doth; for it is the moſt pernicious and miſchievous thing to mankind that can be; as will appear when we come to look into the nature of it, and ſhall conſider what it is in it ſelf, and what in it's woful effects. Sin is therefore called *an evil and bitter thing*, Jer. 2. 19. And

(2.) *IT is fallen upon men for the offence given by our firſt Parents, being imputed to them.* All their Poſterity bear it as the fruit of the Tranſgreſſion. Hence that, Rom. 5. 19. *By one man's diſobedience many were made ſinners.* They were made ſo, not only by imputation, but derivation too. Adam polluted the fountain of Generation, and God hath ordered it to derive into the ſtreams.

4. *THAT God's puniſhing Sin with Sin is very frequent, and conſiſtent with his Holineſs and Juſtice.* It is *frequent*, the manner of it is myſterious, but the thing is obſervable. Thus Pharoah hardens his heart, and then God hardens it. And ſee, Pſal. 81. 11. *But my people would not hearken to my voice: and Iſrael would none of me.* Rom. 1. 26. *For this cauſe God gave them up unto vile affections.* And He is *holy* even in this. He is no whit defiled by it, He can deliver men up to ſin, without any ſpot cleaving to Him; and it is a *righteous* thing with Him; for ſin deſerves the greateſt puniſhment the creature can ſuffer; and by the ſame reaſon that God may give men up to actual Sins, He may puniſh them with a ſinful nature, upon the ſuppoſition of a guilt preceeding, which all have contracted in Adam.

2. *ADAM hath alſo communicated Death to his Poſterity.* And indeed, this came in with the other, Rom. 5. 12. *Sin entred into the world, and Death by ſin.* And here I ſhall obſerve theſe things,

1. *THAT Death was the very threatning of the firſt Covenant.* Gen. 2. 17. *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou ſhalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely dye.* And this contains in it all temporal, ſpiritual, and eternal miſeries. This was an Article on which man was treated by God, and therefore it was the wages which he was to expect in caſe of ſinning.

2. *THAT as ſoon as Adam had tranſgreſſed he fell under this Death.* Not only was he liable to it, but it ſeized him in the inchoations of it. The curſe immediately took hold of him; He fell under the impreſſions of it; he fell under that mortality which was before ſuſpended; the elements were curſed for his ſake, terrors fell upon him, and he ſtood under the danger of hell's deſtruction, and their was no apparent hope of his eſcape.

3. *THAT he hath conveyed this Death down to his Poſterity.* Miſery and mortality are now grown natural to mankind, and they are as ſure of it as they are born, Job 14. 1. *Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble.* And for this reaſon all are ſaid to die in him, 1 Cor. 15. 22. *In Adam all dye.* And they cannot eſcape it, though they never committed any actual Sin, *Rom.* 5. 14. Whence elſe is it that ſuch a multitude of Infants dye? and not only ſo, but they are born into the world children of wrath, and fire-brands of hell. *Eph.* 2. 3. So that, without an intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt, they muſt ſuffer the everlaſting miſeries of the bottomleſs pit: And this they have not from themſelves, but from Adam; becauſe both that guilt, and that contagion, which expoſe them to it was derived to them from him.

Q. II. WE are now to conſider *to whom all this is propagated?* And our Anſwer tells us, it is *to all that deſcend from him by ordinary Generation.* And we read that all are in it, Rom. 5. 12. *Death paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned.* Here obſerve,

1. *THAT all thoſe whom Adam covenanted for, were included in this.* For the ground and reaſon of it derives from the Covenant-relation; and hence it muſt be ſuch as Adam ſtood the Repreſentative of; and whoſoever were ſo concerned muſt needs be entituled hereto. All thoſe who ſhould have lived if he had ſtood, died by his fall; for the promiſe and threatning were of an equal extent.

2. *THAT theſe are only ſuch as deſcend from him by Generation.* They are his children, ſuch as he had a parental right over, and might therefore tranſact for them with Authority. It was not meerly becauſe of humanity, but on the account of the deſcent of that humanity. If there had been an other generation of men in the world, that had derived from an other original, they would not have been involved in this affair, nor come under this fall. Adam would have had nothing to do to tranſact for them.

3. *AND it is only in the way of ordinary Generation that any are ſo concerned.* The Lord Jeſus Chriſt was of the lineage of Adam, (we have his Genealogy run up ſo high, *Luk.* 3.) but though he was born of a woman, yet He was not propagated, but conceived after an extraordinay manner, Luk. 1. 34, 35. *Then ſaid Mary unto the Angel, How ſhall this be; ſeeing I know not a man? And the Angel anſwered and ſaid unto her, The holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the power of the Higheſt ſhall over-*

overſhadow thee; therefore alſo that holy thing which ſhall be born of thee, ſhall be called the Son of God. So that though he were put under the law, yet He did not derive from Adam this guilt and puniſhment; for if He had, He could not have been a ſufficient Surety and Redeemer for man. Beſides, though He was a man, or had an humane nature, yet He was no humane perſon, and therefore could not come naturally under Adam's covenant, but only by contract or agreement; and which it was inconſiſtent with His deſign to have any perſonal guilt or defilement cleaving to Him. But beſides Him, there is no man was ever exempted.

USE. I. *I might here offer ſomething to vindicate God from injuſtice, in involving all mankind under Adam's Tranſgreſſion.* For if the *union* to Adam in the Covenant was *juſt*, the *communion* cannot be *unjuſt*. And what blame can the holy God ſuſtain, for uniting the whole ſtock in one head or root? If man had ſtood there would then have been no injuſtice thought of in God's rewarding, not Adam only, but all his too, with a conſtant life of happineſs: and muſt there not be a parity of reaſon, in puniſhing of them, as well as him, in caſe he diſobeys? There was as great an advantage as hazzard. It can be no puniſhment in it ſelf to be a child of Adam; and that in being ſo, men ſhould ſtand or fall with him, in his Covenant, is an equity, which is to be vindicated in things which men by their reaſon defend as juſt. By a natural right, innate qualities and maladies are derived by natural generation. By an hereditary right, inheritances are conveyed or loſt to their Children by their Parents. By a political right, the Prince involves the whole Nation. Let us then beware of charging God fooliſhly.

USE II. *LEARN hence the neceſſity of our being cut off from the ſtock of the old Adam, if we hope to be ſaved.* We are here given to underſtand, what we are to expect if we continue under this Covenant. Adam indeed once was able to have conveyed life and happineſs to his children; but now there is no more any hope of that. He is fallen, and all that we can derive from him is, nothing but guilt, ſin, and miſery; and as long as we are in him, we muſt expect it. What neceſſity then was there of another Adam, to derive life and ſalvation to us. Hence that, 1 Cor. 15. 22. *For as in Adam all dye, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.* How infinitely then doth it concern us to be found in Him? To be cut off from a death-giving, and put into a life-giving Adam? To be tranſplanted out of this curſed ſtock, and engrafted into that bleſſed one? How reſtleſs ſhould we be, till this horrible entail is cut off, and we are reſtored again to a title, not to damnation, which is our claim by our firſt Parents, but to Salvation, which Chriſt only can confer.

USE III. *THIS may ſerve to tell us all, what our true ſtate is, as we are born.* And it is good for us to know it; and Children are concerned in it. And it is in three things.

1. *WE are bound under the curſe of the law from our conception and nativity.* There is a Sin that we are bound to dye for; there is a Debt charged on us, that we never perſonally contracted; and by this we are priſoners from the womb, and in danger of wrath falling upon us every moment.

2. *WE are under the power of a ſinful nature from the Cradle.* We have an Amorite to our father, and a Hittite for our mother, and we are juſt like them; we are born in our blood, we have no good thing dwelling in us, but all manner of perverſeneſs, and enmity; we are good for nothing but to ſin againſt God, and provoke him continually.

3. *WE are born dead.* Eph. 2. 1. *Dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.* Miſery is fallen upon us, and we have many fearful ſymptoms of it; and there is all the reaſon that we ſhould live in a trembling expectation every moment, of being hurried away to the pit of endleſs torments. And did we believe this to be our ſtate, would it not make us to enquire ſeriouſly after a delivery?

USE IV. *HERE is matter of humbling and abaſement to us all, Young and Old.* This is a killing conſideration to pride: and it ſhould often be reflected on to keep us low in our own eyes; and eſpecially when we are ready to be lifted up with any fond conceits. Suppoſe of our *birth*, and parentage, we are the children of a Traytor, and our ſelves tainted in our blood. Suppoſe of our *morality*, and civil converſation attended with a good-nature, we are ſtill guilty, filthy, curſed creatures in our ſelves. Suppoſe we have *no other Sin* to charge our ſelves with, yet here is enough to make us vile, and abhor our ſelves, and juſtify God in all the Judgments which paſs upon us. And let us all remember, that if there ſhould be no more to be ſaid of us, yet this is enough to render us hateful to God, and cut us off from eternal life, that we are the natural progeny of thoſe that have undone themſelves and all their poſterity.

[JANUARY 24. 1692.]

SERMON

SERMON *LVIII.*

QUESTION XVII.

INTO what Eſtate did the Fall bring Mankind?

ANSWER.

The Fall brought Mankind into a ſtate of Sin and Miſery.

WE have been conſidering of the firſt Tranſgreſſion, from whence all our unhappineſs derives, in the *nature* of it, and in its *propagation*, it now follows,

III. THAT we take notice of *the puniſhment under which man is fallen by it.* And this is a thing neceſſarily conſequent upon the tranſgreſſion, and therefore next in order to be ſpoken to. And our Anſwer gives us a full diſtribution of it. That the puniſhment of man's *firſt ſin* is here intended, is certain; for it not only points us to the ſtate, into which men are fallen, ſince the Apoſtacy; but it tells us that the fall it ſelf hath brought them into it, or is the procuring cauſe of it: and that muſt needs be in way of penalty. I ſhall commorate a little upon this Anſwer: there being two things needful to be enquired after for the clearing of it. viz. 1. *The general conſideration of the puniſhment* inflicted on man for the tranſgreſſion. 2. *The legitimacy of the diſtribution* it ſelf that is here given.

I. WE may enquire in general after *the puniſhment of ſin*, becauſe the diſtribution here given leads us to it. And in this enquiry, we may firſt look into the *nature* of the puniſhment, and then the *neceſſity* of it.

I. AS to the nature of it, we may firſt take notice of the common notion of puniſhment among men, and then apply it to the preſent caſe.

1. *PUNISHMENT is properly that evil which is inflicted upon a tranſgreſſor righteouſly, for, and according to the merit of his tranſgreſſion.* There are ſeveral things belonging to this deſcription, which muſt be well obſerved.

1. THE *general nature* of it; *it is an evil.* And ſo the wiſe man expreſſeth it, Prov. 13. 21. *Evil purſueth ſinners*; *but to the righteous good ſhall be repayed.* Good and evil are oppoſed privatively. Whatſoever deprives the creature of the good it is made capable of, is evil. Puniſhment is therefore called, a *doing men hurt*, Joſh. 24. 20. It is true, puniſhment is *good* with reſpect to the *inflicter*, (as will appear in what follows,) but it is always *evil* in reſpect to the *ſufferer*; he is always damnify'd by it. Only let us remember, that tho' all puniſhment be evil, yet every evil is not a puniſhment. We muſt then look a little farther.

2. THE *ſpecial nature*, it is an *evil righteouſly inflicted.* There is an evil contracted in guilt, (as will hereafter be obſerved,) but in puniſhment it is laid upon the man; for it belongs to the execution of juſtice, and it muſt be done *righteouſly*, elſe it is no puniſhment but an injury. Hence that, 2 Theſ. 1. 6. *Seeing it is a righteous thing with God, to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you.* And to this righteouſneſs there are two things in general requiſite.

(1.) *THAT there be a juſt cauſe for the inflicting of it.* To do a perſon evil without a cauſe, is not to puniſh him, but to abuſe him. Hence that complaint, Pſal. 119. 161 *Princes have perſecuted me without a cauſe.* When wicked men afflict the people of God for their holineſs, and bring trouble upon them for well doing, that is not puniſhing but wronging them. Puniſhment hath always a reference to the reaſon of it: for if it be what it pretends to be, it muſt needs be juſt: unjuſt puniſhment is a mere contradiction, at leaſt a very harſh catechreſis.

(2.) *THAT he who inflicts it, have a right of authority ſo to do.* Puniſhment is an act of juriſdiction; it is not then every bodies work, but it belongs to thoſe who are inveſted with ſuch a power. For civil Judges to put a murderer to death, is to puniſh him; but for other private perſons to do it, is not ſo, but murder. Hence God makes that challenge to himſelf, on this account, Ezek. 18. 4. *Behold all ſouls are mine, as the ſoul of the father, ſo alſo the ſoul of the ſon is mine: the ſoul that ſinneth it ſhall die.*

3. *THE ſubject of it is, a tranſgreſſor.* Though puniſhment terminate upon the perſon, who is the ſufferer in it, yet it always refers to the fact for which it is inflicted; it therefore ever preſumes two things,

(1.) *THAT there is a law with ſuch a ſanction put to it, unto which he owes ſubjection.* All puniſhment muſt be regular; none can be liable to it, but one that is under ſome law, or rule; and that which makes him ſo is, becauſe there is a penalty added to the precept of the law, by which it is ratified. It belongs to remunerative juſtice to puniſh; and that muſt be referred to a threatning in which it is contained.

(2.) *THAT he hath ſome way broken that law, and ſo brought himſelf under that ſanction.* For the threatning of a law cannot juſtly hurt him, who doth his duty, and doth not tranſgreſs it. 1 Tim. 1. 9. *Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawleſs and diſobedient, for the ungodly and for ſinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manſlayers.* Now by thus doing, he comes to bear the denomination of a tranſgreſſor; and becauſe he is ſo, he may be puniſhed.

4. *THE reaſon of puniſhment; it is for tranſgreſſion.* And without a reſpect to this rea-

ſon, it cannot come under that denomination. Whatever evil is ſuffered, if it be not on this account, it cannot be called a puniſhment. Though the man deſerves it, yet if it be not done for that, it muſt have ſome other name. There are many evil things that God's people ſuffer in this life, meerly as trials of their Grace, in reſpect of God, and acts of malice in reſpect of men, and devils; theſe are not puniſhments, but acts of ſovereignty as from God, and injuſtice as from inſtruments: ſuch were *Job*'s in particular.

5. *THE meaſure or proportion of this evil*; it is *according to the merit of the tranſgreſſion.* If it comes ſhort of, or within that merit, there is a mixture of mercy in it; and ſuch are all that men undergo in this World, Ezra 9. 13. *Thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs than our iniquities deſerve.* But if it ſhould exceed that, it would ceaſe to be puniſhment, and become cruelty. Now, though among Men, the Law is ſuppoſed to determine this, and men are judged to be puniſhed according to merit, when the penalty provided in law is inflicted; yet, there may be too ſevere laws among men, and it is not real juſtice but barbarous cruelty to do it; and alſo, if the law be right, and men do more; they do not puniſh, but perſecute. Puniſhment is the wages of a tranſgreſſion. Hence that, *Rom.* 6. 23. *The wages of ſin is death.* And therefore it is to be ſo much as is earned by it in equity.

2. *TO apply theſe things to the preſent caſe.* God then puniſheth, when He executes His juſt wrath upon ſinners, for their ſins: this agrees in every part to the foregoing notions. Here then obſerve,

1. *THAT the execution of puniſhment for ſin, is God's proper work.* Not that He doth not uſe ſecond cauſes as His inſtruments in it; as civil rulers alſo have their executioners by whom they puniſh offenders; but it is not a puniſhment becauſe they do it, but becauſe authority appoints it. He therefore challengeth it as His prerogative. Heb. 10. 30. *For we know him that hath ſaid, vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompence, ſaith the Lord: and again, the Lord ſhall judge his people.* And when ſinners are puniſhed, they are ſaid to *fall into his hands*, ver. 31. For this reaſon He is called *a conſuming fire*, Heb. 12. *ult.* the Pſalmiſt therefore appropriates it to Him, Pſal. 94. 1. *O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth, ſhew thy ſelf.* And none may challenge to do it but He, or by His order. Though becauſe He uſeth all creatures to do His will by them, the ſame evil which is done to any by inſtruments, may be both an injury done them, in reſpect of theſe, becauſe they had no precept for it; and yet a puniſhment relating to God, in whoſe hands they are but the rod of his wrath. *Iſai.* 10. 5.

2. *THAT God then properly puniſheth ſinners, when He brings his wrath upon them for ſin.* That God is diſpleaſed at ſin, and ſinners for it, belongs to his holineſs; when he reveals his wrath, in the works of his Providence, againſt men, then He puniſheth them. This therefore is in Scripture called his anger, and wrath and fury: ſo that if God afflict any, yet if it be not in anger, it is not a puniſhment; but if there be of that in it, whether it be of a father or a judge it is ſo. Hence that expreſſion in, Deut. 29. 20. *Then the anger of the Lord, and his jealouſie ſhall ſmoke againſt that man, and all the curſes that are written in this book, ſhall lie upon him.* And Pſal 90. 7. *For we are conſumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath we are troubled.* And, 79. 5. *How long Lord, wilt thou be angry for ever? ſhall thy jealouſy burn like fire?*

3. *THAT this wrath of God againſt ſinners is juſt.* All mankind owe ſubjection to God, as they are his creatures, *Pſal.* 100. 3. The law He gave them was an holy, juſt, and good law. *Rom.* 7. 12. The penalty annexed to this law, was no more than ſin deſerved. *Rom.* 6. 23. God hath a right to execute it, for He is the judge of the whole earth. *Gen.* 10. 25.

II. IT follows to take ſome account of the *neceſſity* of this puniſhment; not only that it is a righteous thing that it ſhould be ſo, but alſo neceſſary and unavoidable: and the rather, becauſe the neceſſity of a Redeemer is built on this hypotheſis. Here then obſerve,

1. *THAT the law given to man at firſt was a rule of relative juſtice between God and him.* As God is infinitely juſt in Himſelf, ſo he would declare it in his works; and to that end he gave man a rule, according to which he was to walk, and by which he was to be judged: and hence there were rewards and puniſhments annexed to it. By this then God intended to manifeſt Himſelf to be righteous, in His proceeding with man upon it: it was therefore juſt in its ſelf, and God would appear ſo in doing according to it.

2. *THAT God, to make this rule ſure & inviolable, put it into a Covenant.* That the Covenant of Grace is called, a new covenant, argues that there was an old one, antecedent to it; and that was a covenant of works. This indeed was promulgated on mount *Sinai*, Exod. 20. but that was not the firſt edition of it; it was made with our firſt Parents, as hath been before proved. Now in a covenant both parties ſtand firmly bound upon articles; as therefore man was obliged to his obedience, ſo God obliged Himſelf to reward him with life if he did obey, and puniſh him with death if he diſobeyed: and that is plain in, *Gen.* 2. 17. for if the word be gone out of His mouth, He will ſtand to it; and it is of a threatning that there is ſuch a paſſage, 1 Sam. 15. 29. *And alſo the ſtrength of Iſrael will not lie, nor repent: for he is not a man that he ſhould repent.*

3. *THAT mankind are by the apoſtacy brought under the threatning.* This alſo hath been made to appear. And now he muſt needs die, either in himſelf, or ſurety. Though God, by His lordſhip, could have pardoned him, yet by the covenant He cannot unleſs his ſin be puniſhed in one that is accepted in his room. So that not only the holineſs of God ſtands engaged againſt

againſt ſin, and his juſtice is armed againſt the ſinner for it, but His truth alſo, and His faithfulneſs to His word and covenant, ratify and confirm the thing: ſo that it is not only a may be, but muſt be; the ſinner is not only in danger, but bound, to ſuffer the wrath of God.

II. LET me now add a few words to *vindicate the diſtribution* here given of the puniſhment of ſin. The parts of it are here ſignified to be *ſin* and *miſery*. Two things are objected againſt it, 1. That ſin is the *meritorious or procuring cauſe of all miſery*, and that is an effect morally flowing from ſin; how then can it be one part of the puniſhment? 2. That *God is the author of the puniſhment* which is inflicted on ſinners, as is confeſſed on all hands; and how then can ſin be reckoned to be a puniſhment, without making Him the author of it, which is a reproach to Him, and reflection on His holineſs? For the removal of theſe doubts, and eſtabliſhment of the truth, let theſe things be obſerved.

1. *THAT as God is holy in His Being, ſo he diſplays His holineſs in all His works of efficiency.* That is a truth for ever to be acknowledged, Pſal. 145. 17. *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.* He ſeeks his own glory in all, and will not endure any thing that oppoſeth, or ſtands in the way of it, Iſai. 42. 8. *I am the Lord, that is my Name, and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praiſe to graven images.* So that nothing is to be admitted that caſts any reflection upon that precious attribute of His.

2. *THAT hence, it is blaſphemy to charge God as the author of ſin.* In no one thing doth God more diſcover this holineſs of His, than in the diſplacency which He hath at ſin. He hates it, and cannot endure it, Hab. 1. 13. *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canſt not look on iniquity.* And therefore ſtands at a diſtance from ſinners on this account. Pſal. 54. 5. *He ſhall reward evil to mine enemies; cut them off in thy truth.* It would therefore be a contradiction to aſſert Him to be the author of that which is ſo contrary to Him. As well may light be the author of darkneſs, as the holy God of this filthineſs.

3. *THAT yet God doth, for ſin, give men up to ſin, is a celebrated Scripture truth.* Needs then muſt it be conſiſtent with his ſpotleſs purity, elſe He would not ſo do. We have that famous inſtance for this in, Pſal. 81. 11, 12. *But my people would not hearken to my voice, and Iſrael would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own hearts luſts: and they walked in their own counſels.* Thus God is ſaid to *harden Pharoah's heart*, that he ſhould refuſe to let Iſrael go out of his land. Thus God is ſaid to *move David to number the people*, 2 Sam. 24. 1. And we have that expoſtulation of the Church in, Iſai. 63. 17. *O Lord, why haſt thou made us to err from thy ways? and hardened our hearts from thy fear?* It is true, the way in which God doth this, is very abſtruſe and hard for us to comprehend; but when we are aſſured both, that he doth it, and yet is not the author of ſin in ſo doing, we are to entertain it with humble admiration, and not bold and ſaucy argumentation; and remember, that although it is His pleaſure that ſin ſhould be in the world, or it had never been, yet He cannot approve of ſin itſelf, though He approves that it ſhould be, for His own glory, which belongs to His holineſs; and alſo, that although the *entity* of the actions, unto which the ſin doth adhere, is of His all-efficiency, yet the *obliquity* of them, in which their ſinfulneſs doth conſiſt, is of themſelves, or their own deficiency who do commit it.

4. *TO be left, for ſin, to ſin, is out of doubt a very great puniſhment.* This will be evident if we conſider,

(1.) *THAT ſin itſelf is a great evil.* There is nothing that more, or indeed ſo much deſerves the title of evil to be put upon it. Not only are its conſequents evil, but it is of itſelf, that which is contrary to God, who is the chief good, and muſt for that reaſon be, the greateſt evil. By every ſin the man hurts his own ſoul, in it he falls ſhort of the glory of God, and ſo loſeth his laſt end. *Rom.* 3. 23. Yea, he obſtructs his own happineſs, which finally conſiſts in well working, he ſpots and defiles himſelf, he brings himſelf under vanity.

(2.) *THAT ſin is alſo a very great evil in its effects.* It is the moral and meritorious cauſe of all the other evils that men are ſubjected unto: every new ſin that a man commits, contracts a new guilt unto him; it increaſeth his condemnation; it is therefore called *a treaſuring up of wrath*, Rom. 2. 4. Men by ſinning make their woes the more intollerable; ſo that the longer a ſinner lives, and the more ſins he commits, the more fearful is his hell at laſt: hence the more ſins are committed, the more ſtripes are to be expected.

(3.) *HENCE by giving men up to ſin, God certainly inflicts evil upon them.* It is true, this is rightly by Divines aſcribed to the permiſſive providence of God; becauſe though He ſuffers it, yet He is diſpleaſed, and doth not approve of the ſin ſo committed. But we are not to think, that God's permiſſive providence is meerly paſſive; no, the whole tenor of Scripture expreſſions about this, evidence the contrary; God hath certainly an hand in it; and hence by giving men up, He doth do them hurt, he lays a ſore evil upon them: and hence it is expreſſed as a threatning againſt men, which always ſuppoſeth evil, Exod. 7. 3. *I will harden Pharoah's heart.*

(4.) *TO do this for ſin muſt needs be in way of penalty.* For we obſerved, that the inflicting of evil on a tranſgreſſor for his tranſgreſſion is the nature of puniſhment; ſo that whatſoever evil it be that a man ſuffers, upon the merit of his ſin, in a judicial way, muſt needs bear the reſpect of a puniſhment upon it: for though it be ſin in it ſelf, yet in the reaſon and order of it, it is a penalty.

(5.) *AND it is a righteous thing for God thus to do:* and this makes it to be truly and

properly a puniſhment. God doth not wrong men, when he gives them over to their ſins, becauſe they will ſin. Hence we have the method of it aſſerted and vindicated, Prov.1. 29,30,31. *For that they hated knowledge, and did not chuſe the fear of the Lord. They would none of my counſel: they deſpiſed all my reproof. Therefore ſhall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.* If man hath made choice of ſin, God doth him no wrong, if He ratifies the choice, and abandon him to it: and if this conſideration be added, that it is juſt, there needs no more to evidence, that it is a real puniſhment, according to the true nature of it.

5. *THE firſt ſin laid the foundation, for all the after ſins committed in the world, to come in as a puniſhment.* The firſt tranſgreſſion was not in itſelf a penalty; but it was the procuring cauſe of all the penalties which follow; for though every ſubſequent ſin be alſo cauſal, and meritorious, yet that is commutative; but this was the leading meriting cauſe of all. Rom. 5. 12. *Wherefore as by one man ſin entred into the world, and death by ſin: and ſo death hath paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned.* That therefore Adam himſelf fell under the power and dominion of ſin, immediately upon his eating the forbidden fruit, and that all his children, that derive from him ſucceſſively, are in their natural ſtate held under ſin, is not only conſequent upon, but a penalty of the firſt tranſgreſſion; and God hath for that righteouſly left the whole progeny to be carnal, and ſold under ſin.

6. *HENCE the puniſhment of ſin properly conſiſts of theſe two parts*, viz. *ſin* and *miſery*. That all the miſeries which befall men in this life, and after it in an other world, are the recompences of ſin, will not be denied; that to be left under the power of ſin, and led in the ſtreams of it, as a fruit of ſome antecedent ſin that hath procured it, is alſo a puniſhment, we have now ſeen evidenced; *this* therefore equally belongs to this head, under ſuch a conſideration, with the other. And to one of theſe two may be referred, all the evil which is befallen the unhappy race of fallen Adam. So that the diſtribution is both genuine and full; though indeed ſin thus conſidered is a miſery, in a large ſenſe; yet if we take miſery more reſtrainedly, for thoſe calamities which are not in themſelves ſin, but the unhappy attendants and conſequents of it, it is diſtributive; and what theſe are will afterwards come to be conſidered of.

USE I. *SEE here then what every ſinner in his natural ſtate is to expect at the hand of God.* If ſin go before, puniſhment is like to follow after. This is the ſtate which the apoſtacy hath brought you into. I am to warn you all, that if you are under ſin, you are dead creatures, dead in law. There is a puniſhment ordained for Sinners, and it is no leſs then deſtruction; and God Himſelf is concerned in the execution of it. Job 21. 30. *The wicked is reſerved to the day of deſtruction; they ſhall be brought forth to the day of wrath.* It may be, you little think of this in the midſt of your career; but know it, as long as you are under the law, you are under wrath; and miſery is your portion from the moſt High. And were this believed more, it would be a check to the madneſs, which is diſcovered to be in the hearts of the children of men. Well conſider the tenor of the firſt covenant, and there you will be aſſured of this.

USE II. *WE here ſee what muſt have become of us all, if Jeſus Chriſt had not come to be a Redeemer.* The eſtate into which mankind was fallen by the tranſgreſſion ſaith, that we muſt have all hopeleſly periſhed, had not the Son of God undertaken to interpoſe, between us and the wrath of an angry God, and take upon Him the puniſhment which we had merited, and accordingly in fulneſs of time ſuſtained it. Here was the foundation of our hope laid. 2Cor.5.21. *For he hath made him to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* How much then are we engaged to thankfulneſs unto God for this great love of His, in ſending His Son on this errand? And how greatly doth it concern us all, to uſe utmoſt care to get a title to Chriſt as a Saviour, that ſo we may be found in Him at laſt; there being no other hope for the poſſibility of our eſcaping the puniſhment, which will undo all thoſe for ever, whoſe lot is to fall under it.

USE III. *SEE here what a fearful judgment of God it is for any to be left to a courſe of ſinning.* The woful neceſſity of ſinning, under which mankind is fallen, is a dreadful evil, and declares their great unhappineſs; and for any to have the chains of reſtraint taken off from them, and be delivered up, to run themſelves into all abominations, is a token of the terrible wrath of God. Prov.22.14. *He that is abhorred of the Lord, ſhall fall therein.* Sinners may take it for a priviledge, & young perſons may think it an affliction to be under any curb or check to hinder it, to walk in the way of their hearts, and the ſight of their eyes; but be aſſured, that the time is coming when you ſhall know, that there was no greater puniſhment on this ſide hell, than to be thus deſerted of God, and ſo left to fill up an amazing meaſure of wrath. Bleſs God then for reſtraining grace, but yet reſt not ſatisfied without that which is converting and ſaving.

[MARCH 21. 1692.]

SERMON

SERMON *LIX.*

QUESTION XVIII.

WHerein conſiſts the ſinfulneſs of that Eſtate whereinto man fell?

ANSWER.

The ſinfulneſs of that eſtate whereinto man fell, conſiſts in the guilt of Adam's firſt ſin, the want of original righteouſneſs, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original ſin; together with all actual tranſgreſſions which proceed from it.

WE are conſidering of the puniſhment of the firſt Tranſgreſſion; which conſiſts in a *ſinful* and *miſerable* ſtate unto which it hath reduced mankind.

I. THE *former* of theſe is now to be ſpoken of. That Sin is conſiderable as a puniſhment, we have already obſerved; and are now to take particular notice of the influence, which Adam's fall hath upon mankind, to make them ſinners.

THE Anſwer before us is rather a diſtribution, than a definition; pointing us to the ſeveral ways wherein man's ſtate is now become ſinful. And theſe are reduced to three heads. 1. *Adam's firſt Sin* is ours by *imputation.* 2. *Original Sin* is ours by *derivation.* 3. *Actual Sin* is ours by *converſation*: that is, 1. *The guilt of the firſt Sin adhering to us.* 2. *Original Sin dwelling in us.* 3. *Actual Sin proceeding from us.* Touching the propagation of Sin to his Poſterity by Adam, we have conſidered it under a former Queſtion, and it needs not to be here repeated; only we are here led to a more diſtinct enquiry into the things thus derived; and to acquaint our ſelves with the nature of them: and thereby we ſhall have a more full proſpect of our own unhappineſs through the apoſtacy.

I. THEN the firſt thing here is, *That man's ſtate is become ſinful, by vertue of the guilt of Adam's firſt Sin.* That we have communion with our firſt father in his ſin, by a righteous imputation of it to us, and conſequently are fallen under the guilt of it, hath been ſufficiently proved. That there is this woful infelicity fallen upon men, to be born into the world under guilt, is now to be diſcovered; it being a puniſhment following of him: and this will laſt be ſeen by taking a brief view of the nature of this guilt. Some there be who reckon this guilt to be one part of original Sin. Others bring it under a diſtinct head; and it may be reckoned to original ſin, as it derives originally from Adam to us; though the different manner of its influence, is ſuch as makes it more proper to look upon it diſtinctly by it ſelf.

GUILT is properly *an obligation lying upon a perſon which binds him over to ſuffer the deſerved puniſhment of his Sin.* This is applicable to man both with reſpect to Adam's ſin, and alſo to original and actual ſin: the nature of it being the ſame in one and the other. And I ſhall here treat of it once for all in the general notion. Guilt is a Court phraſe, and well underſtood by thoſe who are skilled in Law affairs; and therefore we may borrow light for the illuſtration of it from the common ſentiments of mankind about it in humane tranſactions. And for a more full and clear opening of this matter, let me offer theſe concluſions,

1. *THAT Guilt always ſuppoſeth theſe Three Things,*

(1.) *THAT there is a law under which the perſon is, and to which he owes obedience.* Where there is no law, there can be no tranſgreſſion, and conſequently no forfeiture. None can be a guilty perſon but a ſubject, or one that is ſome way obliged by a law: for he who is under no bond of reſtraint, but may do what he liſt, cannot do amiſs. Hence that, Rom. 3. 19. *Now we know that what things ſo ever the law ſaith, it ſaith to them that are under the law: that every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.* Now it is certain that mankind were placed under the rule of ſpecial government by the will & command of God, and the covenant under which they were at firſt put; and they owed obedience to it, as God who gave it, was their ſupream creator and governour.

(2.) *THAT there is a ſanction put unto the law in a way of threatning.* And indeed, the very nature of a law ſuppoſeth ſuch a thing; and this is the difference between a bare command and a law: the former reſpects only a precept, the latter contains the precept with its ſanction. A law is properly an inſtrument of government, and therefore cannot attain its end, without it be ratified with rewards and puniſhments hypothetically annexed unto it. Now the latter of theſe is that which gives occaſion for guilt in caſe: ſo that if there were no threatning in the law, there could be no guilt derived to the ſubject: for, becauſe that ſaith, the Sinner ſhall die, therefore he becomes guilty of death, which otherwiſe he would not.

(3.) *THAT he is ſome way or other fallen under that ſanction.* For herein indeed, as will appear anon, is the very nature of guilt contained. It is not becauſe there is ſuch a clauſe put into the law, that men muſt thereupon be neceſſarily found guilty. The threatning, of it's own nature, is a guard againſt guilt, if rightly improved; it only accidentally becomes the occaſion of it: there are therefore none guilty but ſuch as are brought under the

ſentence

ſentence of the law ſome way or other. Hence that, 1 Tim. 1. 9. *The law is not made for a righteous man, but for the diſobedient, &c.*

2. HENCE it follows, *That Guilt is rooted in Sin, and inſeperable from it, ſo long as the man is under the law.* Sin and guilt do bear the moral reſpect one to another of cauſe and effect; and though theſe do always go together in time, ſo that in ſinning the man becomes guilty, and falls under it, yet in order of nature ſin is the firſt, becauſe it is the root from which the other ſprings, and out of which it grows. Hence that, Gen.4.7. *If thou doſt not well ſin lieth at the door. Sin*, i.e. Guilt. And hence it follows, that as long as the law hath hold of the man, and he is included in the ſanction of it, it is impoſſible that he ſhould ſin without being guilty. Believers indeed, though they do ſin, yet are not ſtrictly guilty, for they are juſtified, but it is becauſe they are freed from the law as a covenant. Rom.6. 14. *Sin hath reigned unto death.* And one way in which ſin hath dominion is by guilt. So we read, Rom. 5.21. *That as ſin hath reigned unto death: even ſo might grace reign through righteouſneſs unto eternal life, by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.*

3. *GUILT may be conſidered negatively*, or what it is not: and ſo,

(1.) *IT is not the Sin it ſelf which is committed.* Though they go together inſeperably, yet they are to be conſidered diſtinctly: and ſo they are two quite different things. Sin is an antecedent, Guilt is a conſequent: Sin is a moral cauſe, Guilt is an effect ariſing from it. And though both of them have a reſpect to the law, yet it is divers; Sin hath its reſpect to the preceptive part of the law, as it is a tranſgreſſion of it; whereas Guilt refers to the minatory part of it, or the ſanction, as it brings the man under it. There may therefore be an abſtract conſideration of ſin entertained in the mind, without any reference to the guilt which attends upon it. And ſo we ſhall conſider of it afterwards.

(2.) *IT is not the ſuſpicion or accuſation or indictment of the perſon for Sin.* Lawyers indeed do call the perſons ſuſpected, accuſed, indicted, or arraigned at the bar for a ſuppoſed crime, the guilty perſon; but it is by a catacreſis or over-ſtrained metonymie. For all this may be at man's bar, and yet the perſon purely innocent of the crime charged; and he may be proſecuted either upon miſtake, or malice, and by the information of falſe witneſſes. Now he cannot properly be both innocent and guilty at the ſame time. And though there be no ſuch miſtake at God's bar, ſince He knows all; and will indict none but the guilty: yet ſuch a proceſs preſumes an antecedent guilt upon which it is legally engaged in. So that the man is not guilty becauſe he is ſo proceeded againſt, but he is ſo proſecuted becauſe he is ſuppoſed to have been before guilty.

(3.) *IT is not the verdict brought in againſt him upon trial.* This indeed declares the man to be guilty, which before was under queſtion, and ſo it legally puts him into a readineſs for a ſentence of condemnation to paſs upon him; but it doth not make him ſo. For there are ſome that juſtify the wicked, and condemn the righteous. And if the verdict given be right, it ſuppoſeth the man to have been really guilty, before it paſt; for they do but find the caſe as it is, and determine it. So that if he had not firſt been guilty in himſelf, he is injured and abuſed by ſuch a declaration. There was ſuch a verdict brought in againſt Jeſus Chriſt Himſelf, Mat.26.66. *They anſwered and ſaid, He is guilty of death.*

(4.) *MUCH leſs is it the ſentence which is paſt by the Judge after the trial.* For, in a righteous and fair proceſs, the man is firſt found and pronounced guilty, before ſuch a ſentence paſſeth upon him; and it is the ground or foundation upon which it proceeds. Condemnation preſumes guilt as the reaſon of it, and therefore cannot be the thing it ſelf.

4. *GUILT may be conſidered poſitively.* And ſo it may be cleared up in theſe Aſſertions.

(1.) *GUILT is a relation which the perſon bears to the law.* It belongs to the head of relation; we therefore obſerved, that it always ſuppoſeth a law, and a duty of obedience lying upon the man unto the law. Now all mankind are related to the law, either as keepers or breakers of it: and this latter reſpect is that from whence guilt doth proceed. So that as ſoon as ever the man hath done ought that is againſt the law, he is immediately guilty, whether any proceſs be made againſt him or no; becauſe he hath thus armed the law againſt himſelf. Hence that, Mat. 5. 22. *But I ſay unto you, that whoſoever is angry with his brother without a cauſe ſhall be in danger of the judgment.* The ſame word with that, *Mat. 26. 66.* rendred *Guilty.*

(2.) *GUILT is always perſonal.* We muſt here diſtinguiſh of it as to it's derivation, and it's determination. It may derive from one common ſource and original, and from the firſt ſin of Adam have all mankind contracted guilt, (as hath before been evidenced:) but it determines in individuals. Ezek. 18. 20. *The ſoul that ſinneth, it ſhall die: the ſon ſhall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither ſhall the father bear the iniquity of the ſon.* Prov. 9. 12. *If thou be wiſe, thou ſhalt be wiſe for thy ſelf: but if thou ſcorneſt, thou alone ſhalt bear it.* Every one muſt give an account of himſelf to God: every one muſt paſs a perſonal trial before God's tribunal, and ſtand or fall according as he is found.

(3.) *GUILT hath a proper reſpect unto puniſhment.* As it looks back to ſin in which it was contracted, ſo it looks forward to the penalty which is by it deſerved: it is ſomething that intervenes between the fault and the recompence; and becauſe there is a cloſe connexion between that and puniſhment, it is reckoned to it. And there are two things wherein this reſpect is to be obſerved,

1. *BY*

1. *BY it the perſon is made obnoxious to puniſhment.* And hence the word is tranſlated, *in danger*, Mat. 5. 22. it puts him in the way of it, and lays him open unto it. For,

(1.) *THERE is an imputation of ſin which may be made unto him.* He may be charged as a ſinner; he is legally ſuch an one; and this imputability is eſſential to guilt, whether the perſon have himſelf really committed it, or in way of exchange taken upon him the perſon of the ſinner, with reſpect to the law; as Chriſt hath done for his redeemed, and is accordingly ſaid *to be made ſin*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. and ſo they have their ſins *laid upon him*, Iſai. 53. 6. *All we like ſheep have gone aſtray: we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all.* Or derives it from another by vertue of a legal in-being, as we all do from our firſt Parents.

(2.) *HE is hereby fallen under the threatning, and may expect the execution of it.* He is come within the reach of it; the threatning indeed is hypothetical, but the ſuppoſition is now in regard of him become a poſition, ſo that he is certainly comprehended under it; he hath therefore reaſon to be afraid of the wrath of God; he may read his name among thoſe whom the law of God hath doomed to death, and that he is worthy to dye: he is in the way of it. Rom. 3. 16. *Deſtruction and miſery are in their ways.*

2. *THERE is alſo an obligation lying upon him to ſuffer puniſhment, and he cannot eſcape it.* The danger before mentioned ariſeth from hence; but among men a criminal though expoſed, may hope to avoid it, but it is not ſo here. For,

(1.) *THE law hath already paſt the ſentence upon him.* Guilt is by ſome defined, to be a ſentence put upon a ſinner to dye. But then we muſt remember, that there is a ſentence paſt in the law generally, antecedent to that which is paſt by the Judge upon trial; and it muſt refer to this. And indeed it is nothing elſe but the particular application of this ſentence unto him, by his falling under it. The law ſaith, the ſinner ſhall dye, he is now become a ſinner, and therefore the law reacheth to him, and ſaith that he ſhall dye: and this is truly and really a ſtate of guilt which he is in.

(2.) *THE law is poſitive.* The threatning is without any reſerve. *Eve* miſſed it when ſhe minced it, and made it no more than an hazard. *Gen.* 3. 3. God, who is the lawgiver, had declared it with greateſt aſſeveration, *Gen.* 2. 17. Yea, it was ſtrengthned or ratified in that it came in the way of a covenant; ſo that there is no room left for the man to feed himſelf up with an hope, that he may avoid, and the ſentence not be executed. And,

(3.) *GOD Himſelf ſtands engaged to his own law.* It is His, and He will ſee that it have its efficacy, and this is manifeſt from the fore-hinted conſideration, that He put it into a covenant, wherein He no leſs bound Himſelf, than He did the creature: ſo that together with His holineſs, and juſtice, which are deeply concerned in the ſanctions of the law, there is His truth and unchangeableneſs alſo intereſted in it, and He cannot go back with honour: and therefore we have that aſſurance given us, Mat. 5. 18. *For verily I ſay unto you, till heaven & earth paſs, one jot or one title ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled.*

(4.) *HENCE, Guilt is the ſinners priſon which holds him faſt.* The word *Mat.* 5. 22. *in danger*, ſignifies *one that is held in.* Guilt is a ſtrong chain that the ſinner is bound withal to hold him faſt unto judgment; it is that which ſhuts him up to judgment. Gal. 3. 22, 23. *But the Scripture hath concluded all under ſin, that the promiſe by faith of Jeſus Chriſt might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, ſhut up unto the faith, which ſhould afterwards be revealed.* And as long as he is under it, there is no poſſibility for him to eſcape. Mat. 23. 33. *Ye ſerpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye eſcape the damnation of hell?*

3. *GUILT always preſumes that the puniſhment is deſerved.* A perſon may be under an obligation to puniſhment, and yet not truly guilty, but innocent; becauſe he is not juſtly ſo, but injuriouſly. And here three things are to be ſuppoſed for this,

(1.) *THAT the law according to which he becomes guilty, is a righteous law.* Humane laws are not always ſo. It was alledged by the Jews againſt Chriſt Himſelf, Joh. 19. 7. *We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, becauſe he made himſelf the Son of God.* But that did not render Him guilty, though by ſuch a law he was ſo reputed. There have been laws in all ages made againſt the faithful ſervants of Chriſt, and they have been proceeded againſt under the pretext of them laws, and accordingly been brought in guilty and condemned: but this is a perſecution, and they for all this were innocent perſons. Paul therefore juſtifies the law, in order to the yielding himſelf guilty, *Rom.* 7. 12.

(2.) *THAT the man hath really tranſgreſſed this law.* It is true, this alone is not ſufficient to make a man ſtand guilty before man's Tribunal, becauſe they are to proceed *ſecundum allegata et probata*, and if there is no ſufficient evidence to faſten the crime upon the perſon, he muſt be acquitted; but yet if he hath indeed done it, he is really guilty; yea though his own conſcience ſhould not for the preſent accuſe him, becauſe he hath done the things for which he is ſentenced by the law.

(3.) *THAT the ſentence of the law be no more than the merit of the cauſe.* Indeed this might be referred to the firſt, for the ſanction is a part of the law, and if that be unjuſt, the law is not righteous: but however, the preceptive part of the law may be right, where the penalty may exceed, and ſo the puniſhment in the degree of it not merited: all humane laws ought not to be written in blood: but as to the divine law, its puniſhments are right, and no more than the demerit of ſin.

Rom.

Rom. 6. 23. the ſinner therefore deſerves to dye. *Rom.* 1. 32.

4. *HENCE, Guilt hath always theſe three concomitants attending upon it*; viz.

(1.) *BLAME.* As praiſe attends upon innocency, ſo blame is inſeperable from guilt. The guilty ſinner deſerves to be found fault withal, for it is by doing the things which ought not to be done that he brings himſelf under guilt; and therefore ought to be reproved for it. So the Prophet to him, 2 Chron. 16. 9. *Herein thou haſt done fooliſhly.* And God expects that ſinners ſhould charge themſelves upon this account, as Job 33. 23. *He looketh upon men, and if any ſay, I have ſinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not.*

(2.) *SHAME.* This naturally follows upon the conviction of guilt which is faſtned upon men. Shame is an everlaſting companion of ſin: diſgrace is caſt upon him by it; and his guilt expoſeth him to thoſe things that are ſhameful; it makes them naked. *Gen.* 3. 7. Sin endeavours to caſt a blemiſh upon the name of God, but he returns it upon the ſinner himſelf. For a man to ſtand expoſed to all penalties for his faults, is his diſgrace. Prov. 13. 5. *A wicked man is loathſome, and cometh to ſhame.*

(3.) *HORROR.* Senſe of guilt makes men terribly afraid. *Gen.* 3. 8, 9, 10. and this is the very reaſon of all the remorſes of conſcience which wicked men are corroded withal, which makes them afraid where no fear appears, and makes them to be within like a raging ſea, though they outwardly proſper, and there is no man can tell what ails them: but it is guilt apprehended that torments them, and makes them to feel an hell in their own breaſts; they ſtart and fly at the ſhaking of a leaf, and would run away from themſelves, if poſſibly they could. They are ſelf-judged, ſelf-condemned, they know that they have committed ſuch things as are worthy of death, and they live in a fearful expectation of it every moment.

Use. I. *HERE we may in part ſee what a fearful thing it is to Sin.* Vain creatures are ready to make a light matter of it, they take little notice of it, but paſs it over with diſregard. Well, but remember, that you cannot commit the leaſt ſin, but you thereby bring your ſelves inevitably under guilt; and do you know what you do on that account? Let me tell you they are ſtrong cords that bind the ſinner, it is a faſt priſon that you are laid up in by it. Sin may be ſweet in the act, the commiſſion may pleaſe you, but know it, as ſoon as ever it is done, it will ſting like a ſerpent. The law ſtands againſt you, its ſentence takes hold of you; and commits you to the Judgment of the great day. Let young ones think of this when they are in their career. Eccl. 11. 9. *Rejoyce, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes: but know thou that for all theſe things God will bring thee into judgment.*

Use II. *LET this ſerve to convince every unregenerate ſinner of his preſent miſerable eſtate.* And Oh that you would be ſerious, whether younger or older: what you ſhall be hereafter God knows, but I aſſure you, you are guilty, and in ſo being, you are in a moſt dreadful condition. There is an hand-writing of terror againſt you, and it may make your joynts to tremble, mar your mirth, & make you put on ſackcloth and walk ſoftly. The ſentence of death is upon you, and you are obnoxious to it every moment; in guilt all the curſes of the book of God are fallen upon you, and have you in chaſe. Deut. 28. 15. *But it ſhall come to paſs, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to obſerve to do all his commandments and his ſtatutes which I command thee this day; that all theſe curſes ſhall come upon thee, and overtake thee.* You are *condemned already*, Joh. 3. 18. The law hath done it, it hath been long ſince recorded in the book of God concerning all ſuch as you, that you are children of wrath, & all the torments of hell are your portion from the hands of the Almighty. God the great & righteous Judge, is under an oath to ſee you damned, if you repent not. Deut. 32. 40, 41, 42. *For I lift up my hand to heaven, and ſay, I live for ever. If I whet my glittering ſword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood (and my ſword ſhall devour fleſh) and that with the blood of the ſlain, and of the captives from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy.* He hath ſwore and he will not repent. And you Children, remember, that you brought this guilt with you into the world, and it lies upon you, and if you had never committed one actual ſin, yet this ſaith, you muſt dye and be damned for ever, if you get not this guilt removed. Hear what God himſelf ſaith, Exod. 34. 7. *He will by means clear the guilty.* And can you live one moment longer in quiet under this ſentence? Can you eat and drink, and ſleep, and play under the load of guilt? and bear the infinite weight of it, without being burdened, and crying out with the horror of it; who do not know but that before the next hour is over, it will ſink you down into the pit, from whence there is no recovery? Oh let this make Chriſt precious.

[April 18. 1693.]

SERMON *LX.*

II. MAN's *Eſtate is become ſinful by vertue of Original Sin dwelling in us.* The guilt of the firſt ſin *was ours by imputation*, original ſin is *ours by derivation.* I am not now about to enquire how or after what manner our firſt Parents derived this contamination to

to their Poſterity, we took notice of that under a former Queſtion, ſo far as we might with ſobriety. Our preſent work is, to look into the nature of Original Sin, according as we are directed to it in the preſent Anſwer. This we have reduced under two heads. 1. The *want of original righteouſneſs.* 2. The *corruption of the whole nature.* And both of theſe belong to original ſin, though the latter is more commonly underſtood of it; yet not excluding the former. But I ſhall endeavour to give a more particular account of this matter in the following Concluſions.

I. THAT all ſin is a ſwerving of the reaſonable creature from the law of God. This hath been already cleared up, when we took the account of the nature of ſin; and needs not to be further illuſtrated; only it is to be remembred, that any moral defect in ſuch a creature, whereby it falls ſhort of that law, which is its rule, is to be reputed ſin.

II. THAT in the reaſonable creature we conſider both its nature and its actions. The nature of a creature is thoſe powers and principles which are put into it, whereby it is rendred capable of acting in its own orb. The nature then of a reaſonable creature, as ſuch, is that power which it had given it to act as a moral agent under a rule: and that is an ability of knowing, and electing, or chuſing & refuſing. Its *Actions* are ſuch things as it doth by the exertion of that nature, or principle which is in it; or whatſoever it doth under the influence of its reaſon and will.

III. THAT the ſwerving of the rational nature from its rule, is properly original ſin. Give me leave to illuſtrate this more particularly. Here then obſerve,

1. *THAT God at firſt put into man a nature ſuited to his end.* That all things were made by God for an end, is evident, becauſe He is a moſt wiſe agent, and therefore would not make any thing in vain. Now though the general end of all things be one, *viz.* the Glory of God; yet as there were diverſe natures put into creatures, ſo there was a different manner in which they were to ſerve to their end; and accordingly we take up various notions reſpecting the end itſelf. Now man was appointed to ſerve to the glory of God, by an active conformity to the law of obedience given him. Hence that, Job 28.28. *And unto man he ſaid, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom, and to depart from evil is underſtanding.* And the wiſdom of God did accordingly put into him, a nature adapted hereunto. See, *Eccl.* 7. 29.

2. *THE rectitude of man's nature, was an habitual conformity to the law of God.* I mean the rule of ſpecial government, according to which he was to be judged and rewarded. When God made man, He knew what He made him for, and made him accordingly. He was to be a moral agent, and therefore had not only moral powers put into him, but alſo a diſpoſition cleaving to them, whereby they were fitted to act regularly: a natural bent and inclination in them to cloſe with the rule, and a compleat ability ſo to do: the bias of man's nature was ſet right; and this was truly his *righteouſneſs and holineſs*, which is therefore ſaid to be *renewed* in converſion, *Eph.* 4. 24.

3. *HENCE by the omiſſion of this rectitude, and contracting of the contrary habit, man's nature is ſwerved from the law.* This is a neceſſary inference, for, if man's nature were by that conformity adapted to the rule, whatſoever is in it defective therein, or repugnant thereto, muſt needs put him off from this rule: the loſs of the habit, and the introduction of an oppoſite habit, makes a change in the nature, when the habit it ſelf belongs to the nature of the thing. The man was made by rule, if then he became other than he was made, he ceaſeth to be according to rule.

4. *THIS is ſin properly ſo called.* There are many who deny this, but they err, not knowing the truth: that it is ſin is evident, For,

(1.) *THE Scripture calls it ſo:* And that gives things their right names. This title is in the word of God conferred upon that which can be applied to no other but this. What elſe could *David* aim at in, Pſal. 51. 5. *Behold I was ſhapen in iniquity, and in ſin did my mother conceive me.* This is called the frame of the heart, and we ſee what is aſcribed to it, Gen. 6. 5. *And God ſaw that the wickedneſs of man was great on the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* and ver. 12. *And God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt: for all fleſh had corrupted his way upon the earth.* And that can intend no other but ſinful evil; it is called *indwelling ſin*, Rom. 7. 18. and that cannot be *actual* ſin. It is called the *fleſh*, *a body of death*, a *law in the members warring againſt the law of God*, &c.

(2.) *THE nature of it ſhews it to be ſin.* The definition of ſin agrees to it; it is *Anomy*; or frame contrary to the law of God, and that muſt needs be a ſinful frame. The Apoſtle expreſſeth this oppoſition in his own example, Rom. 7. 14. *For we know that the law is ſpiritual: but I am carnal, ſold under ſin.* Becauſe the law is right, therefore the man muſt needs be wrong; and that with reference to the law, according to which ſin and holineſs are to be judged of: it is habitual unrighteouſneſs, and that is ſin. 1 Joh. 5. 17. *All unrighteouſneſs is ſin.*

(3.) *ITS fruits prove it to be ſin.* It is our Saviour's rule, that we are to judge of the tree by the fruits, if they be corrupt, that is ſo too. Now all actual ſin is the reſult of this; and there can nothing elſe but ſin ariſe and derive from it. If ever this nature ſtirs in the man, and puts forth, either in thoughts, words or deeds, it is nothing but ſin; nay if it be in things lawful in themſelves, or duties owing to God, yet it turns them into ſin: the *plowing of the wicked is ſin*, and *his prayer is an abomination:* yea indeed all the ſin in the world comes from hence. *Mat.* 15. 19. we have an account of the generation of actual

ſins. Jam. 1. 15. *When luſt hath conceived, it bringeth forth ſin.* See Pſal. 58. 3, 4.

(4.) *THE effects which it morally produceth ſhew it to be ſin.* I mean the *penalties* that ariſe from it. It is that which makes God to loath men. *He deſpiſeth their image*, Pſal. 73. 20. It makes men to be *children of wrath*, Eph. 2. 3. There is nothing elſe but ſin that brings death, either temporal, or eternal upon men. Now it is certain, that there are multitudes that dye, who never ſinned actually. Rom. 5. 14. *Nevertheleſs, death reigned from Adam to Moſes, even over them that had not ſinned after the ſimilitude of Adams tranſgreſſion.* It is true, the guilt of the firſt ſin imputed is enough to juſtify this, but this corruption of nature goes alſo into it; and therefore they are ſaid to be unclean, by origination, Job 14. 4. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.* Why elſe are Infants baptized?

IV. IN Original ſin there are two things,

1. *THE loſs of original righteouſneſs*, or of the image of God: and this is the *privative* part of it. Here obſerve,

1. THAT by the image of God, we are to underſtand *thoſe habits of ſanctification which were infuſed into man at the firſt.* I know there are divers ſentiments of Divines, about the image of God, which was on man at firſt; ſome there be who diſtinguiſh between the *natural* image, and the *moral*; making the *former* to *conſiſt* in the rational powers, of underſtanding and will; and they divide the *latter* into the *external*, conſiſting in his dominion over the creatures, and *internal* conſiſting in the habits of grace or holineſs put into him: but I reckon this laſt, or the internal moral image, to be the only thing that is deſigned in Scripture; and therefore it is only of this that a renovation is ſpoken of in the Goſpel. *Eph.* 4. 24. *Col.* 3. 10. and when we are told of their being renewed, it ſuppoſeth that once they were in him.

2. *THIS image belonged to man's nature at firſt, conſidered as a moral agent, under a rule.* There is great diſpute, whether this image were *natural* or *ſupernatural*, and I ſuppoſe it is beſt reconciled by ſaying that it was *connatural.* It could not belong to the nature of man, meerly conſidered as humanity, for then he would ceaſe to be man upon the loſs of it: but conſider him as a creature made for ſuch an end, it belonged to his nature, becauſe elſe he could not be fit for his end: his rule had been in vain, without ſuch a conformity in his nature to it: and for that reaſon his being without it, hath made him *unprofitable*, Rom. 3. 12. He could never have ſerved God, in conformity to his revealed will, without it; and ſo the command would not have been holy, and juſt, and good, and he himſelf would have been made in vain.

3. *BY loſing of this image he hath contracted to his nature theſe two things,*

(1.) *AN utter impotency to do that which is truly good.* Not only doth he not do it, which belongs to actual ſin, but he cannot do. Once he could, but now all his ſtrength is gone. Hence natural men are ſaid to be *without ſtrength*, Rom. 5. 6. He is in no wiſe able to put forth any action that is pleaſing to God. Rom. 8. 8. *So then they that are in the fleſh cannot pleaſe God.* This *Joſhua* put them in mind of, *Joſh.* 24. 19. And on this account men are ſaid to be *dead*, Eph. 2. 1. They can indeed do the material part of duties, but they cannot do them after a right manner, from a right principle, or for a right end. Hence that, Iſai. 66. 3. *He that killeth an ox, is as if he ſlew a man: he that ſacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dogs neck: he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered ſwines blood: he that burneth incenſe, as if he bleſſed an idol.*

(2.) *AN univerſal indiſpoſition to that which is good.* As they have no power, ſo they have no inclination to it, they have no deſire after the ſervice of God. Job 21. 14. *Therefore they ſay unto God, depart from us: for we deſire not the knowledge of thy ways.* They may indeed have a deſire to perform formal ſervice, as, Iſa. 48. 2. *They call themſelves of the holy city, and ſtay themſelves upon the God of Iſrael.* A corrupt carnal principle in them may prompt them to that, but to honour and glorify God they have no appetency of: they are fallen ſhort of that, (*Rom.* 3. 13.) and the reaſon is, becauſe they have nothing left in them which is ſuitable to ſuch a ſervice; the ſervice is holy, but their holineſs is gone.

2. *THE corruption of the whole nature by the introduction of a contrary image.* We read of fallen Adam, *Gen.* 2. 7. We are told of two oppoſite images, 1 *Cor.* 15. 49. There is now the image of ſin upon man's nature, and from thence alſo there do ariſe two things,

(1.) *AN utter averſeneſs to that which is ſpiritually good.* This belongs to the *poſitive* part of original ſin; for though man hath loſt his firſt principles, yet he hath contracted others, and this is one quality of them, that they ſet him againſt that which is good, ſo that he is extreamly croſs to a cloſure with the law of God; there is in him a natural antipathy againſt, and abhorrence from it, Rom. 8. 7. *Becauſe the carnal mind is enmity againſt God: for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* And this notes the greateſt diſtance of nature that can be; an enemy may poſſibly be reconciled, but *enmity* never can, that muſt be deſtroyed, if ever there be a reconciliation.

(2.) *A violent propenſeneſs to all that is evil.* An eager inclination to break the command; hence the command it ſelf raiſeth motions in him to ſin, Rom. 7. 5. *For when we were in the fleſh, the motions of ſin which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.* Although he be dead to good, yet he is lively to evil. There is a thirſt in the man after it. It is livelily illuſtrated, Job 15. 16. *How much more abominable and filthy is man, who drinketh iniquity like water?* The thirſty man doth not more long for a draught of water,

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to ſatisfy his craving appetite, than he doth to be committing of ſin. The hart doth not more pant after the brooks of water, than the heart of man doth after iniquity; he delights in ſin, as the fiſh doth in water, which is his element: nothing better pleaſeth him than to enjoy it, nothing is more irkſome, than to be kept from it. Prov. 4. 16. *For they ſleep not except they have done miſchief, and their ſleep is taken away unleſs they cauſe ſome to fall.*

V. THIS depravation of nature is univerſal. I am not now ſpeaking of that univerſality which reſpects the *whole kind*; that hath been already treated of, but of that which extends to the *whole man*. And this may be obſerved in two things,

1. *THE image of God is wholly loſt.* It is not only crazed, & weakned, as ſome would have it, but there is none of it remaining. As to what men call the natural image, and the moral external, I do not here ſpeak; I know that man hath an underſtanding and will ſtill, and affections, and conſcience, and he hath a ſort of government over the creatures: but his original ſanctification is quite rooted out, and there are no remains of it in him. *Paul* is full for this, Rom. 7. 18. *In me (that is in my fleſh) dwelleth no good thing.* There remains no tincture of true holineſs upon any of his faculties or members; he hath no ſpiritual diſcerning left in him of the things of God. 1 Cor. 2. 14. *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the ſpirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs unto him, neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.* He is become bruitiſh in this regard, he can underſtand rationally but not ſpiritually. He hath no freedom of will to that which is good, ſo as to make choice of it. The natural freedom of his will is not gone; hence he hath a ſpontaneity in his elections, and his will is not forced, but he cannot chuſe the things of God: he hath no love of God left in him, he cannot go forth in his deſires after him, as his chief good: he is darkneſs it ſelf, and enmity it ſelf, and what can be ſaid more?

2. *THOSE corrupt principles do fill the whole man.* They are not only in him, but they run through him, and wholly occupy him; he is a mere lump of oppoſition to God and his ways. For,

(1.) *THIS corruption hath wholly perverted his ſuperiour faculties.* Man is principally and moſt properly accounted a moral agent, by reaſon of his underſtanding and will: for it is by vertue of theſe that he is to be treated after a rational manner; and therefore the moſt woful efficacy of this depravation is to be ſeen in theſe.

1. *IN his underſtanding.* This was to be eyes to him, to point out his way; and not only is it become blind and ignorant in ſpirituals, but perverſe too; it is filled full of curſed principles, which pervert and lead it out of the way; he calls good evil, and evil good; he judgeth of things juſt contrary to the truth; he reckons the ſervice of God to be unprofitable, and the ſervice of ſin only advantageous and delectable: accounts man's felicity to conſiſt, not in the fruition of God, but, in ſome other thing: and this judgment rules him. Hence this corruption is to be ſeen,

2. *IN his will.* This was to govern his elections; but not only can he not chuſe God for his portion, but he is wilfully ſet, and enclined to ſtand, at an everlaſting diſtance from Him; he therefore bids *God to depart from him*, Job 21. 14. ſaith that *Chriſt ſhall not reign over him*, Luk. 19. 14. he is not to be perſwaded *to come to Chriſt*, Joh. 5. 40. he refuſeth the good: his heart is ſet in him to do wickedly; *he will none of God*, Pſal. 81. 11.

(2.) *IT hath violated his inferiour faculties and powers*; making them ſervants to ſin. What this influence is, is not eaſy to deſcribe; but we know that all are the ſubjects of ſanctification. 1 *Theſ.* 5. 23. and therefore they are under this pollution. Hence,

1. *IN the affections there is a crooked biaſs.* Theſe are the feet of the ſoul, the handmaids of the will: but theſe are become exorbitant, all of them falſely placed, and violently acted, in a wrong way, and on wrong objects, he not only doth not love God, but he *hates Him*, Rom. 1. 30. nor only doth he not hate ſin, but he loves it, and inſatiably deſires it. Jer. 2. 25. *I have loved ſtrangers, and after them will I go.*

2. *IN his ſenſes and members, he is enſlaved to ſin.* Hence that, Rom. 6. 19. *Ye have yielded your members ſervants to uncleanneſs, and to iniquity, unto iniquity.* Every thing in him, his outward ſenſes, his eye, his ear, his taſte, his hands, his feet; his inward ſenſes, his fancy, cogitation, memory, all are ready to execute the commands of his depraved will, and yield obedience to every luſt of concupiſcence; ſo that there is nothing left in him but that which is unclean.

USE. I. *LEARN hence what a wretched creature man is become by the fall.* And this may help us to hide pride from us all. If the enquiry be, what is man? Here is an anſwer ſufficient to make us cover our faces, and hide our heads: he is a creature utterly void of all goodneſs, and a ſeminary of all manner of abominations. There are not the vileſt actions of the worſt ſinners, who have been monſters of men, whoſe actions ſtand as ſo many blots upon Scripture regiſter, but there are the ſeeds of them all in the heart of every child of Adam. There is not the leaſt part of any Theological good left in any of his poſterity, by nature. There is a concatenation of all ſins in the ſpawn of them within, a whole old man, that hath every luſt, as ſo many members, belonging to it; this is man: think of it, and be proud if you can.

USE. II. *SEE here the reaſon why there is ſo much actual ſin committed in the world.* When you hear of grievous enormities daily committed, wonder not at it, but wonder at the mercy of God, which hath kept you from the like. If we ſee a clock ſet wrong, and weights hung

on, we may expect it will ſtrike falſe. An inſtrument out of tune, if plaid upon muſt needs jar: a corrupt fountain, that is always running, will ever ſend out corrupt ſtreams. All theſe vile ſins are but the running over of the ſcum and filth that is within. Original ſin is the mother, and this is the fruitful progeny of it. What was the reaſon of the wretchedneſs of the old world? See, Gen. 6. 5. *And God ſaw that the wickedneſs of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually.* Hence it is that man's life is nothing elſe but a trade of ſin, ſhooting out actions, as ſo many arrows, and all miſſing the mark. Hence the heart ſwarms with evil thoughts, the tongue breaks forth into idle, fooliſh, and obſcene talk, and all the members into eccentrical actions: ſuch are the workings of corrupt nature in the children of men, and the beſt are not here wholly freed from them.

USE. III. *THIS tells us why children take ſo readily to evil from the cradle.* We have reaſon enough to obſerve it, they need no teacher; how ſoon do they vent anger, envy, wickedneſs? alas! they have it in them as ſoon as they are born. Iſai. 58. 3. *They are eſtranged from the womb, they go aſtray as ſoon as they are born.* It is their nature, they are *ſinful*, before they are *actual ſinners*; and therefore no wonder if they prove ſuch, as ſoon as they can act. And this, if rightly thought of, may be a ſolemn caution to parents, to take heed how they nouriſh this corruption in them, by taking delight in it, or ſetting them an example of it; yea to begin to lay early at this root, and endeavour the killing of it.

USE. IV. *HENCE it is not enough for us to repent of actual ſins.* Repentance, if true, muſt not tarry here, but go further: we muſt go to the fountain of Chriſt's blood, not only to heal the wounds and ſores made by actual ſins, but to dry up the fountain of original concupiſcence. There is a body of ſin, which we all carry about with us, and it will drag us down to the bottomleſs pit of everlaſting deſtruction, no leſs certainly, though poſſibly in a ſlower pace, than the groſſeſt abominations of the moſt lewd and enormous ſinners. Take heed then of skining over the ſore of natural corruption, by outward reſtraint; if your ſoul be not healed, you will dye of it.

USE. V. *LEARN hence that there are none of us but are undone without Chriſt.* It may be, ſome have lived ſoberly and laudably to men, but alas, original ſin yet abides, and there is death belongs to that; and there is none but Chriſt can deliver you from it. It may be, you Children think you are innocent, and out of danger, becauſe you have not lived to fall into thoſe lewdneſſes which others have fallen into; but remember you are by nature a generation of vipers, you have the adders poiſon in you, you are vile and curſed creatures, becauſe of that indwelling ſin, which took up its lodging within you as ſoon as you had a being; and without the blood of Chriſt to cleanſe you from this, you muſt periſh for ever without hope. Make haſte then, and get into Him, elſe you will find the wages of this ſin to be death.

[MAY 16. 1693.]

SERMON *LXI.*

III. *MAN's ſtate is become ſinful by vertue of actual ſins proceeding from it.* Actual ſin is *ours by converſation*; and this alſo is befallen us, in way of penalty of the firſt ſin. For the illuſtration of this we may enquire, 1. Into the *nature* of actual ſin. 2. *How man's ſtate is made ſinful* by it?

1. TOUCHING the *nature* of it; it may be thus deſcribed; *Actual ſin is the ſwerving of man's actions from the law of God.* Here it may be conſidered, 1. What we are to underſtand by an *action?* 2. In what reſpect it becomes *ſinful?*

1. *WHAT are we to underſtand by an action?*

Anſ. *AN action, in the common notion of it, is the application of the faculty to the object.* In every agent we conſider a power which is in it, and that ſeated in the faculties, and is in them a principle of operation, which is called the habit; and is that whereby it is fitted to ſerve to its end: and there is ſuch a power in every faculty, and that various, according to the end and uſe of it. Hence, there is the intellectual power, and the viſive power, &c. Now whenſoever this power is exerted by any faculty in the creature, that is properly an action; and that is always by applying to an object. Now theſe actions are ſome natural, and ſome rational and ſpontaneous. Hence the diſtinction between *natural* and *voluntary* agents; and theſe latter are either *elicit* or *imperate*. *Elicit* are ſuch as do immediately proceed from the will at the dictate and direction of the underſtanding, as chuſing and refuſing: *imperate* are, ſuch as are performed by the other powers in man at the command of the will. Theſe actions again are divided into *thoughts*, *words* and *deeds*: the former whereof are performed in and by the heart or inner man; the latter by the outward man or bodily members. And becauſe theſe are all of them under the influence of the underſtanding and will, they are therefore called *humane actions*; and all ſuch come under our preſent conſideration. Here alſo we are to obſerve, under the head of actions we rank omiſſions; not only becauſe they refer unto them negatively; but alſo becauſe they are in ſome ſort voluntary, and there is, at leaſt implicitly, an elicit act of the will about them; in which reſpect they may come under the denomination of actual ſins.

2. IN *what reſpect it becomes ſinful?*

Anſ. IN general, the *ſinfulneſs of an action is a moral reſpect cleaving to it, in regard whereof*

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it comes short of its last end. And this is vulgarly called the *Obliquity* of the action. The actions of moral agents, or causes by counsel come under a double consideration, *physical* and *moral*. *Physical* is nothing else but the exerting of a natural power, by applying it to an Object; and so there is a natural goodness cleaving to it as an act: nor can it be done without divine co-operation. *Moral* is a respect that it bears to a Rule, by which the agent is obliged, and either agrees with it, or is repugnant to it, and so is either right or wrong; and this repugnancy denominates it sinful. But this will be more distinctly cleared in these particulars,

1. *GOD having made man a reasonable Creature, transacts with him as such.* Though God hath an absolute Sovereignty over His own works, yet when He made the creation, with a design to govern it to His own glory, His manifold Wisdom exerted it self, in suiting of every sort or rank of Being, for the way in which He would have glory by it, and then managing it according to that aptitude which He hath put into it. Now he made a rational creature, able to know and chuse his own actions, and thereby capable of being treated with in the way of a Covenant, and, having so made him, He thus dealt with him. We therefore find such an account given of what past between God and him, *Gen.* 2. 16, 17. So that there is a special government which he is under the obligations of.

2. *FOR this end God gave him a Law to regulate his Life and Actions by.* He prescribed to him a Rule of living and obliged him to walk in Conformity thereto. This is that which we call the law *Moral*, because it was accomodated, both in the things commanded, and in the manner of giving it to a moral agent, and it consists of commands natural and positive; whence the distinction of Duties into *moral natural* and *moral positive*. *Natural* were such as were imprinted on the heart of man in his creation, and he was able to read them by the light of nature, which was at first put into him; being suited to the nature of man, as it was under divine government, and bound to serve to the glory of God; some remains whereof there are still to be found in fallen man; hence that, Rom 2. 14. *For when the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves.* *Positive* were, such as God expreſt His Sovereignty in, and the reason of his obedience to them upon God's revealing His will about them to man, was contained in the law of nature, telling him that God is his Lord and Lawgiver.

3. *THIS Law is made up of positive and negative Precepts.* There are two ways in which God required of man to express his Obedience to Him, viz. by *doing* the things which He *commands* him, and *avoiding* the things which He *forbids* him: hence therefore there are in this Rule directions given both about what he is to do, and what he is to avoid. God saith unto him, this thou shalt do, and that thou shalt not do; and though the precept be sometimes laid down *affirmatively*, and sometimes *negatively*, yet there are both of them implied in every one. And there can be no perfect obedience to God without a careful attendance unto both. Happiness therefore according to the tenour of the Law, is connected with doing, Rom. 10. 5. *For Moses described the righteousness which is of the law, that the man which doth those things, shall live by them.*

4. *THOSE Precepts extend to the Matter, Manner and End of the action.* These three go inseparably into the constituting of an act of Obedience; and it may not be without any one of them.

(1.) *THERE is the Matter, or thing on which the action terminates.* This is that which the Precept expresly points us unto; it regulates the action with respect unto its object, and so it directly saith, this thou shalt do, this thou shalt not do. We are to have a careful eye to the thing it self, and be exact in compliance thereto, else it is no Obedience; for this reason the command saith, thou shalt not Kill, thou shalt keep the Sabbath, &c.

(2.) *THERE is also the Manner*; and that is by the influence of a gracious principle in the man. There is not only the doing of the thing, but the heart with which it is done; hence we read, 2 Chron. 25. 2. *And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart.* All fruits participate in the nature of the tree that bears them; it must be a good tree if it bears good fruit. Man had God's Image on him at first, which was necessary, not so much to enable him to do the matter of duty, as to do it graciously; there must be holiness attending it.

(3.) *AND there is the End for.* The Rule is given Man to direct him to his End; if then he doth not aim at it in his actions, he doth not do acts of obedience to God. We are exhorted, 1 Cor. 10. 31. *Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.* For this is that for which we were put under the precept, that we might glorify God; and He requires of us that we should carry this before us, as the ultimate end of our whole life, and that all other designs which we may lawfully have an eye to, be entirely subordinated to this, and serve it.

5. *HENCE the sinfulness of the action consists in the failure of any one of these things.* Any one moral defect, in what regard soever, is enough to spoil the action. For, to the making any action reputed an act of entire obedience, it must want none of the things that are requisite; so that by the absence of one it becomes defective, and being morally so, it is therefore sinful. Hence it is not only sin for a man to do the things which are forbidden;

forbidden; but alſo not to do what is commanded: though indeed omiſſion and commiſſion are hardly, if at all ſeparable. Hence, though a man keeps to the letter of the law never ſo exactly, as to the material part of the duty, yet if his heart be not right in it, that makes it ſinful for all. That is the complaint, Pſal. 78. 36, 37. *Nevertheleſs, they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongue. For their heart was not right with him; neither were they ſtedfaſt in his covenant.* This is it that makes the plowing of the wicked to be ſin, and his prayer an abomination; becauſe they derive not from a gracious principle in them. On this ſcore it is, that all the ſpecious actions of the Gentiles, exerted by that which they call moral vertue, were but *ſplendida peccata*, becauſe they had no root of ſanctifying and ſaving grace to grow upon. The not doing of them alſo for a right end, puts the ſame denomination upon them. Faſting is in it ſelf a duty, but yet for this God rejected theirs, Zech. 7. 5. *Did ye at all faſt unto me, even to me.* Iſai. 58. 4. *Behold ye faſt for ſtrife and debate, and to ſmite with the fiſt of wickedneſs, ye ſhall not faſt as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.* Prayer and giving of Alms are good things, but ſee, *Mat. 6. begin.* Hence alſo though the end be right, and Men ſhould deſign the glory of God in what they do, yet if the thing done be materially againſt the law, a good end will not excuſe it from being ſinful, for we are cautioned againſt doing evil that good may come of it; and whatſoever is contrary to the letter of the law, is ſo.

6. THAT which makes the action ſinful, is, *becauſe the exorbitation is voluntary.* It is certain that ſin can be charged upon no other creatures, but ſuch as are cauſes by counſel. A beaſt cannot be ſaid to ſin, and why? but becauſe it hath no moral powers in it; it cannot make a rational and deliberate choice, but is acted by inſtinct. All humane actions are voluntary; and though the fall hath obliterated many principles *Theological* in man, and wofully blurred the reſt, ſo that he doth many things ignorantly, and calls good evil, and evil good, by which his will is perverted, yet this belongs to original ſin, which hath left ſuch an imporency, and exorbitancy, on the faculties, and doth not make the action not to be voluntary, but only diſcovers the unhappineſs that is befallen man. Becauſe a man chooſeth his own actions, and they are ſo many aberrations from the law of God, therefore are they ſinful actions; hence the Scripture ſo frequently chargeth the ſin upon Men's wills.

II. *HOW Man's State is made ſinful by actual Sins?*

A. WE are here to remember that we are *conſidering this as part of Man's puniſhment for the firſt ſin.* And we have already obſerved, that God doth puniſh ſin with ſin, and it is indeed a moſt fearful puniſhment; yea all puniſhments refer to it as the meritorious and procuring cauſe. Here let us obſerve,

1. *THAT Man's whole State is rendred ſinful by reaſon of Original Sin.* That hath emptied him of all that is good, and filled him with all evil. He cannot be more univerſally, habitually ſinful, than he is, as he derives from fallen man. The moral image of God which was once on him, is quite gone. Read but that deſcription of a natural man, *Rom.* 3. 10, &c. and it will certify us that he is evil, and only evil. He hath loſt all power, and all inclination to good, and is filled with a greedineſs after evil. And what can be ſaid more as to his real ſtate.

2. *THAT all actual ſin, in fallen Man, doth certainly flow from original ſin in him.* The firſt Tranſgreſſion was an actual ſin, or rather a complication of many actual ſins; this brought upon man the loſs of his created holineſs, and the corruption of a depraved nature. And now out of this fountain flow all theſe bitter ſtreams; ſo that it is nothing but the eruption of the inbred corruption that man is full of, which hath put him under that unhappy neceſſity, that if he doth any thing, he muſt ſin, he cannot think one thought without it, *Gen.* 6. 5.

3. *THIS notwithſtanding, actual ſin hath an influence into the rendring Man's ſtate more ſinful.* It is true, that which is only evil, and nothing elſe, cannot be more ſo, in its own nature, but yet it may receive additions or augmentations in its kind; whereby it comes to paſs, that there is more of the evil. And there are ſeveral things in which this may be inſtanced, eſpecially,

(1.) *EVERY ſin leaves both guilt and a ſpot behind it.* Theſe two are inſeparable from all ſin, as it refers to the firſt covenant, under which men are in their natural ſtate.

1. *THERE is guilt cleaves to it.* This refers to that ſanction of the law which is contained in the threatning. Now this threatning is out againſt the ſinner for every ſin. *Ezek.* 3. 4. Hence that, Mat. 5. 22. *But I ſay unto you, that whoſoever is angry with his brother without a cauſe ſhall be in danger of the judgment: and whoſoever ſhall ſay to his brother, Racha, ſhall be in danger of the council: but whoſoever ſhall ſay, Thou fool, ſhall be in danger of hell fire.* It is true, though there be the merit of death in every ſin of God's children, and they can and do confeſs it, *Dan.* 9. 8. *Pſal.* 130. 3. Yet becauſe their perſons are juſtifyed, they are not properly guilty; but every unconverted ſinner, contracts new guilt, by every ſin that he commits, becauſe the law hath a particular threatning for every act of ſin.

2. *THERE is alſo a ſpot cleaving to it*; and this attends upon the ſins of the children of God as well as others. For, though guilt, being a relation to the law, is removed from them, becauſe they are not under the law, but under grace; yet, in as much as this ſpot

is

is a defilement, which cleaves unto ſin inſeparably, it is impoſſible for a man to meddle with ſin without being defiled by it. Sin is therefore called *filthineſs* in Scripture, and reſembled by thoſe things that are moſt loathſom; and the reaſon that is given, why God cannot endure it, is His purity, Hab. 1. 13. *Thou art of purer eyes then to behold evil.* So many ſins then as the man commits, ſo many dirty ſpots he pollutes himſelf withal.

(2.) *HENCE every actual ſin ſets the man at a farther diſtance from God.* It is a proper and natural effect of ſin to make a ſeperation between God and his creature, Iſai. 59. 2. *Your iniquities have ſeparated between you and your God.* It makes a wall to part them one from another, and every ſin adds a ſtone to this wall, to make it higher. Mens living in a courſe of ſin, is called a *departing from the living God*, and every ſin that is committed is one ſtep taken in this departure; and therefore by multiplied acts, men are ſaid to be *gone far away from Him*, Jer. 2. 5. Now the way in which this is done, is by ſtrengthening and eſtabliſhing ſin in the heart; it fortifies the malignity, and maketh the man more vile: we are apt to ſay that acts ſtrengthen the habit, and ſo it is here; and the more wickedneſs that men commit, the more wicked they grow. Hence that, 2 Tim. 3. 13. *Evil men ſhall wax worſe and worſe.*

(3.) *FOR this reaſon every actual ſin makes the ſinner more unreclaimable.* There is a ſtrange ſort of obdurating influence that actual ſin hath upon the hearts of men, and therefore the longer that men drive a trade or courſe of ſin, the harder it is to reclaim them. There is emphaſis in that, Jer. 13. 23. *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his ſpots? then may ye alſo do good, that are accuſtomed to do evil.* If cuſtom be a ſecond nature, then cuſtom in ſin, muſt needs fortify the old nature that is in the ſinner; and it is a thing very obvious, that the repeated acts of any ſin do make men more in love with it, more ſhameleſs in the perpetration of it, more obſtinately ſet to deſpiſe all counſels and warnings againſt it: Old ſinners are therefore harder to treat and deal with than young ones.

(4.) *EVERY actual ſin alſo lays in more wrath for the ſinner.* And that alſo ſhews that his ſtate is rendred more ſinful by it. Now wrath always holds a proportion to guilt, it is the wages that are paid the ſinner for his work. *Rom.* 6. 23. And it is ſaid that God will *render to men according to their deeds*, Rom. 2. 6. Now it is certain that original ſin is equal in all the children of Adam; the ſtate of one by birth, is not more ſinful than of another; ſo that on this account their wages are alike; and yet there will be found a vaſt difference in the day of judgment between the penalties of theſe and thoſe: it ſhall be more tolerable then for ſome than others, and why? but becauſe ſome have a greater guilt cleaving to them than others; and that muſt be, becauſe they have ſinned more than they: for this reaſon we are told what ſinners are doing, whiles they live and go on in the ways of ſin, in, Rom. 2. 5. *But after thy hardneſs and impenitent heart, treaſureſt up unto thy ſelf wrath againſt the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.* The more actual ſin then that men fall into, the more miſerable they make themſelves by it.

USE I. LET *this ſerve to convince ſinners of their actual ſins, and their lamentable condition by reaſon of them.* And it concerns young and old. Here is matter of humbling to God's people; but what terror doth it offer to the unregenerate. Here then let me make theſe remarks,

1. *WHATSOEVER you think, ſpeak, or do, is all of it ſin.* *Gen.* 6. 5. *Pſal.* 58. 3. There is an *Anomy* accompanying of all. You never thought any thing, ſpake any thing, did any thing, but in it you ſwerved from the holy and righteous law of God; there is iniquity to be charged upon all; and now think what a world of ſin you ſtand guilty of. Well might the Pſalmiſt make that demand, Pſal. 19. 12. *Who can underſtand his errors?* can you count up all the words, and deeds, that paſs in a day? how much leſs then are you able to enumerate the innumerable thoughts that are inceſſantly paſſing through your hearts? what unaccountable ſins then have you to anſwer for?

2. HENCE, *Your lawful actions, yea, and your duties are ſins to you.* It may be you think, you do not ſo tranſgreſs the letter of the law as ſome others do, you avoid all forbidden things, and you attend on commanded duties, but remember that you ſpoil all thoſe; the very things that are in themſelves good, and laudable, are yet ſin before God; you ſin in eating, and drinking, and following your calling, yea in reading, praying, hearing, &c. you do them without grace, without a deſigning of God's glory, and they are an abomination.

3. *AND if you omit the doing theſe duties, you ſin ſtill.* Many will ſay, I will leave off, becauſe I ſin in doing this thing, but you do not ſo get out of the labyrinth, for that is ſin too, and worſe than the other; for you are under an obligation actually to ſerve God, and you break that obligation by your omiſſions. Hence there is fury, *Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name: for they have eaten up Jacob and devoured him, and conſumed him, and have made his habitation deſolate*, Jer. 10. 25.

4. *HENCE the longer you live in ſin, the more fearful account you lay in for your ſelves.* Every day adds to the amazing ſcore; you were children of wrath when you were born, but there is more wrath continually laying in, the more you act; remember all theſe are on record, Jer. 17. 1. *The ſin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point*

of a diamond. One ſin is enough to damn you; how deep then will you ſink, by the weight of ſuch a company of ſins as you are heaping up? what a lamentable trade then are ſinners driving in this world?

USE II. *LEARN hence the admirable patience of God towards the children of men.* Are they fallen into ſuch a ſtate as that they do nothing but ſin againſt God? what a wonder is it that the world ſtands ſtill, and ſuch creatures are ſuffered to breath in it. There is not the youngeſt child that is able to ſpeak, but hath reaſon to admire at rich mercy that hath ſpared him, on the account of his actual ſins; not only for Adam's ſin, or original ſin, hath he deſerved to die, but you have done enough already to damn you a thouſand times over. See it, and bewail it.

USE III. *LET this thought then drive ſinners apace to Jeſus Chriſt.* If you know what actual ſin is, you cannot but know that you are guilty of it. Well, if there be but one it will undo you except He ſave you. Have you had but one vain thought, or ſpoken but one idle word, His blood muſt expiate it, or you are for ever undone! Get then from under the Law, by getting into Chriſt as faſt as you can; and the more ſins you have committed, be the more perſwaded of your need of Him, as a Saviour; He came to take away the ſins of His people; ſee then that you be of that number. Fly from all your ſins unto Him, and ſo iniquity ſhall not be your ruin.

[JUNE 13. 1693.]

SERMON *LXII.*

QUESTION XIX.

WHAT is the Miſery of that Eſtate whereinto Man fell?

ANSWER.

All Mankind by their Fall loſt Communion with God, are under His wrath and curſe, and ſo made liable to all the Miſeries in this Life, to Death it ſelf, and the pains of Hell for ever.

II. HERE we have an account of the ſecond part of the puniſhment, namely, the *miſery*, under which the Apoſtacy hath brought Adam and all his poſterity. A ſinful ſtate is indeed in it ſelf a miſerable ſtate; to be carnal and ſold under ſin is a woful infelicity; but when we ſpeak of ſin and miſery, *diſtributively*, the latter intends the unhappy fruits of ſin; as thoſe effects whereof this is the moral cauſe, by which man is become wretched. And theſe fall under our preſent conſideration. I am not now to prove, that theſe things are befallen mankind, by reaſon of the firſt ſin; or to give account of the equity that is in it, that hath been done already, under another head. My preſent buſineſs is to lay open this forlorn ſtate, and give it its true colours, that ſo we may know what we all are out of Chriſt; it being a conviction neceſſary in order to our ſerious enquiry after ſalvation by Him.

THIS Anſwer like the former, is rather a diſtribution than a definition; directing us to thoſe heads unto which this miſery is to be reduced. And here we are to obſerve two things, 1. The *condition* that man is in from whence thoſe miſeries derive. 2. The *miſeries* themſelves that derive from it.

I. *THE condition that man is in*, from whence theſe miſeries derive. And this conſiſts in the relation that he ſtands in unto God, who, as He is the object and author of all the bleſſedneſs of the creature, ſo He is the principal agent in all the puniſhment that is inflicted on them for ſin: which relation is expreſt, 1. *Privatively*, they have loſt, &c. 2. *Poſitively*, they are under, &c. And needs muſt their miſery be great beyond conception, whoſe ſtate is ſuch as this. To the former of theſe we may refer the puniſhment of *loſs*, to the latter the puniſhment of *ſenſe*, as Divines expreſs them. I ſhall begin with the former.

1. THE *privative* part of this miſery is, *that he hath loſt Communion with God*, and hitherto belongs the whole puniſhment of *loſs*; we may take a brief account of it, in theſe following particulars.

1. *THAT God is the objective happineſs of the reaſonable creature.* Every being that is capable of happineſs, muſt have an object to make it ſo. God who is abſolutely the firſt Being, is His own object, and conſequently His own felicity, the ſecond Being muſt have its happineſs from abroad, and therefore its object muſt be out of it ſelf, and every one is not ſufficient, becauſe nothing elſe will happify, but that which can give compleat ſatisfaction, which no other Being is able to do for the reaſonable creature, but God alone. Hence that, Pſalm 73. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I deſire beſides thee.* There is nothing elſe that can, for ſuitableneſs, for fulneſs, for duration, anſwer all the reachings of ſuch a Being; as hath been fully evinced under the firſt queſtion.

2. *THAT hence mens actual felicity muſt needs derive from Communion with this Object.* Active bleſſedneſs is properly a reſultancy from the cloſing of the faculty with its object, and deriving from it that which giveth it ſatisfaction: except there be a participation in it, and the continued influence of it upon the ſubject, it is not happy. Hence though

though there is enough in God to make all bleſſed, yet all are not really ſo, and the reaſon is not for want of ſufficiency in Him, but becauſe they have not this communion with Him. Hence that, Pſal. 36. 9. *For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light ſhall we ſee light.* If then, they be not in this light, they cannot ſee it, or enjoy it. And therefore every diſtance from God is a miſery. Pſal. 73. 27. *For lo, they that are far from thee ſhall periſh.* This communion is nothing elſe but God's gracious communication of Himſelf to the creature, and its living upon it.

3. *THAT the ground of this communion, was man's union to God, in the covenant of life.* All communion requires an anſwerable union, on which it is founded. There is an infinite diſtance and diſproportion between God and the creature, in reſpect of Beings, ſo that there can be no natural union between them; but God was pleaſed to take man near to Him in the covenant that He made with him, in which He promiſed him to be his God, and his portion, if he would take Him as ſo, and accordingly live upon Him alone. A covenant people, are on this account ſaid to be *near unto God*, *Pſal.* 148. 14. In this covenant way God and man were to have an everlaſting friendſhip and fellowſhip.

4. *HENCE the bond of this union being broken, by man's ſin, this communion was alſo interrupted and violated.* For, as God had engaged Himſelf to man to be all to him that he could any way want, on condition that he would reſt ſatisfied in Him, and yield obedience to Him, ſo he threatned to reject and caſt him off, in caſe he did otherwiſe. Theſe terms were the bond of the covenant, and as long as they abode inviolate, that remained firm; but when once they were gone from, the covenant was now broken, and man fallen under the threatning of it. God and he were fallen out, and could walk together no longer. Amos 3. 3. *Can two walk together except they be agreed?* This puts an end to that glorious fellowſhip.

5. *THE miſery ariſing from this is very great and manifold.* That privations, or loſſes may make the ſufferer of them miſerable, is not to be denied, in as much as felicity conſiſts in fruition; ſo, that if we ſeperate him from his object, we thereby cut him off from his actual happineſs; and what is miſery, if this be not? Now this union being broken, it hence follows.

(1.) *THAT man hath loſt God's favour.* And this one thing is the abſtract of all miſery. What ſaith the Pſalmiſt on this account? Pſal. 30. 5. *In his favour is life.* And 63. 3. *Thy loving kindneſs is better than life.* What a loſs then is ſuſtained by falling out of this? God had a great favour for man at firſt, and gave eminent teſtimonies of it, in that he took him ſo near Himſelf, entertained him in ſuch a covenant, made ſuch liberal promiſes to him, not only put the viſible creation in ſubjection to him, but alſo appointed the glorious Angels themſelves to be miniſtring ſpirits for him. But now he is put out of this favour, he hath loſt it, and as a token of this, God turned Adam out of Paradice, where He manifeſted Himſelf to him, and guarded the place againſt him with Cherubims and a flaming Sword.

(2.) *HE hath alſo loſt all the benefits, which ſhould have flowed from this favour.* There were unſpeakable kindneſſes that He had laid up with Him, to have beſtowed upon man, in caſe he had kept His favour, but by falling out of that, he hath loſt them all. And here, in general, he hath loſt the claim to all that good which was laid up in the covenant promiſe. It was life, that was promiſed, in oppoſition to the death that was threatned; and that life comprehended in it innumerable and unknown benefits, both for body and ſoul, for time and eternity; and he might have called them his own, and made a challenge of them as ſuch, upon the credit of that promiſe. But now he hath no claim at all; the obedience unto which they were connected is gone, and by that means he hath nothing to ſhew for them. God Himſelf is now no longer his God, though He be his maker; and having loſt his God, he muſt needs looſe all that is good: but what his loſs hereby is in particular, will fall under the ſecond head; when we come to conſider the miſeries themſelves deriving herefrom.

2. THE *poſitive* part of this miſery is, *that he is under God's wrath and curſe.* And to this refers all the puniſhment of *ſenſe.* We may here conſider, 1. What we underſtand by God's wrath and curſe? 2. That man is become very miſerable by falling under them.

1. *WHAT we underſtand by God's wrath and curſe?*

A. WE may take a ſhort account of them *ſeverally.*

1. THE *wrath* of God is *His revenging Juſtice, inclining Him to take vengeance on ſinners, according to their deſerving.* Anger and wrath are aſcribed unto God frequently in Scripture, not as if He had any ſuch affections or paſſions in Him; but becauſe he doth ſuch things in His providence, as among men are the uſual effects of ſuch an affection; but they refer to his *relative Juſtice*, of which we have formerly had an account. Only let us here call to mind, that this juſtice exerts it ſelf to men, according to the reſpect they bear to the rule of it, Rom. 2. 6. *Who will render to every man according to his deeds.* They are ſuppoſed to come under either the promiſe or threatning, and juſtice is concerned in both. With reſpect to the former it is called *rewarding*, to the latter *revenging* juſtice. This latter is called His anger and wrath, becauſe He herein makes it appear, how diſpleaſing ſin is to Him. He verifies the truth of that, Hab. 1. 13. *Thou art of*

purer eyes than to behold evil, and canſt not look on iniquity. This wrath then is contrary to His Favour, and comes in upon the removal of that; ſo that it is impoſſible for a creature to fall out of His Favour, but it muſt upon it fall under His Diſpleaſure. And it is a very righteous wrath, it is nothing elſe but what ſinners juſtly deſerve for their ſin. 2 *Theſ.* 1. 6. For, ſince that ſanction of the law in which this was threatned is juſt, the execution of it muſt needs be ſo too.

2. THE *Curſe* of God is properly *the ſentence which falls upon man for ſin, which binds him over to ſuffer according to the Law.* We may here conſider the curſe either as to the *matter* or *form* of it.

(1.) AS to the *matter* of it, it *contains under it all the evils that is comprehended in the Threatning.* It is ſummed up in that one word, *death*, *Gen.* 2. 17. The word uſed, *Gal.* 3. 10. ſignifies a thing that is devoted to all direful miſchiefs. And the word frequently uſed in the Old Teſtament is of the ſame import. The curſe then, is made up of every thing that God hath ſaid He will teſtify His wrath in, againſt ſinners; (of which we may take a diſtinct account hereafter;) only here obſerve, that there are innumerable evils comprehended under it; and therefore it is often expreſſed in the plural, *Curſes*, & we have an account of a fearful roll that was full of them, in *Zech.* 5. *begin.*

(2.) IN reſpect of the *form* of it: it is properly *the ſentence falling upon the man, whereby he is bound over to ſuffer theſe evils.* It is the condemnation which comes in upon guilt, which man contracted to himſelf by his ſin. What that guilt is, we have been already told; now the difference between that, and the curſe lies here, *Guilt* is that which makes the man obnoxious to the law in reſpect of the threatning, he is by it fallen under that condition; now the *Curſe* is the ſentence it ſelf, which comes in immediately upon that Guilt, and is inſeperable from it: by guilt the man lies open to the curſe, and therefore this preſuppoſeth that; and upon it, it takes hold of him, and dooms him to ſuffer all that which he hath merited by his ſin; he is now devoted, as the malefactor, after the Judge hath paſt a ſentence upon him, is a man dead in law.

2. *THAT man is become very miſerable by falling under this wrath and curſe.* Here two things,

(1.) *THAT all men are in their natural ſtate under theſe.* How they came to be under theſe, and that righteouſly, hath heretofore been made evident: that they are certainly ſo, the Scripture is clear for it, Eph. 2. 3. *Were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.* And hence we have that, Pſal. 7. 11. *God is angry with the wicked every day.* And for the curſe, Gal. 3. 10. *For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curſe: for it is written, Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.* That God ſhould be angry at ſin, and ſinners for it, proceed from His Holireſs, by which He is bound for His own glory, and cannot bear with that which ſets it ſelf againſt it, as all ſin doth. *Rom.* 3. 23. Hence we have ſuch a declaration of it, Pſal. 5. 4, 5. *For thou art not a God that hath pleaſure in wickedneſs: neither ſhall evil dwell with thee. The fooliſh ſhall not ſtand in thy ſight, thou hateſt all the workers of iniquity.* That they muſt needs be under the curſe follows upon their relation to that covenant and becoming tranſgreſſors of it; becauſe God engaged Himſelf to to the ſanctions of that covenant, and He is a God of Truth, ſo that a man can no ſooner become a ſinner, but that curſe takes hold of him, and dooms him to ſuffer all that is contained in it: ſo that the Apoſtle makes fallen man's being under the law, and under the curſe inſeperable, *Gal.* 3. 10.

(2.) *THAT by their being under theſe they are very miſerable.* What elſe is miſery, but a ſuffering of ſuch things, as are afflictive and deſtructive to the creature? and ſuch certainly are thoſe things that are contained in the curſe, and are the effects of God's wrath; as will appear convincingly, when we ſhall come to rip them up, and lay them open. Here only in general, I ſhall endeavour to clear it up in the following remarks,

1. *THAT God doth all things like Himſelf.* All God's works of efficiency are deſigned by Him, to be the diſplays of His glory; He is in them making Himſelf known to be God; and that is by the manifeſtation of His Divine Perfections, ſo as that the reaſonable creature may be led by the things that are ſeen to diſcern and adore Him. *Rom.* 1. 20. Which that they may do, it is requiſite that He ſo work, as no other Being doth or can. Hence is the Pſalmiſt's acknowledgment, Pſal. 86. 10. *For thou art great and doeſt wondrous things; thou art God alone.* Herein alſo Chriſt evidenced His Deity, when by His works He forced that confeſſion from them, Mat. 14. 33. *Of a truth thou art the Son of God.*

2. *THAT hence whatſoever attribute He deſigns to declare, He will give it its luſtre.* God is made known to us in His back parts; thoſe Perfections which are in Him one and the ſame God, are variouſly diſplayed unto us: accordingly there are ſome works in which He deſigns the more peculiar diſcovery of one, and in ſome another of theſe Perfections. Hence that, Rom. 9. 22, 23. *What if God, willing to ſhew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-ſuffering the veſſels of wrath fitted to deſtruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the veſſels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory?* Now His infinite Wiſdom contrives every one of theſe ſuitably to the purpoſe, and His mighty hand performs

forms them accordingly. And hereupon are thoſe two things aſcribed to His whole efficiency, Iſai. 28. 29. *Wonderful in counſel and excellent in working.* And this they celebrate him for, Exod. 15. 11. *Who is like unto thee, O Lord, amongſt the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holineſs, fearful in praiſes, doing wonders!*

3. *IT muſt therefore needs be a terrible thing to be under the wrath of this God.* The wrath of God is that whereby He is ſet againſt the creature, and engaged to do it hurt, and when He once comes to declare Himſelf to be ſo, it is enough to fill it with conſternation. Hence that, Ezek. 5. 8, 9. *Therefore thus ſaith the Lord God, Behold I, even I am againſt thee, and will execute judgments in the midſt of thee, in the ſight of the nations. And I will do in thee that which I have not done, and whereunto I will not do any more the like; becauſe of all thine abominations.* Joſh. 24. 20. *If ye forſake the Lord, and ſerve ſtrange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and conſume you, after that he hath done you good.* And when He is thus ſet, and gives way to his anger, it is moſt dreadful; ſee what He himſelf ſaith of it, Deut. 32. 41, 42. *If I whet my glittering ſword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood (and my ſword ſhall devour fleſh) and that with the blood of the ſlain, and of the captives from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy.* And what a reſentment holy men have had of it, Pſal. 76. 7. *Thou, even thou art to be feared, and who may ſtand in thy ſight when once thou art angry?* Heb. 10. 31. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* Surely nothing leſs than ruin can befall thoſe that muſt meet Him as a God taking vengeance.

4. *THE execution of God's wrath conſiſts in the fulfilling of the curſe upon ſinners.* So that by reading over the curſe, and taking an account of the contents of that, we may know what is like to be the portion of thoſe on whom His wrath muſt fall. For, ſince God's wrath is nothing elſe but the application of His revenging Juſtice to the ſubject that is fallen under it, it muſt have an eye to and take its meaſure from the rule of Juſtice, which is the law with reſpect to the threatning; in which threatning is contained the whole curſe, and it is to be collected from it.

5. *THE things contained in the curſe are fearful things.* There is nothing there but what carries conſternation in the aſpect of it: it is enough to aſtoniſh the creature to read it over. What ſaith *David?* Pſal. 119. 120. *My fleſh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.* We have a ſhort volume containing but ſome of them, and that ſuch as are the leaſt, *Deut.* 28. 15, &c. And yet who can read them ſeriouſly without horror? but there are ſuch as are more terrible on record in the book of God. Nature cannot but relent, and look at them with abhorrence; needs then muſt it be ſwallowed up of miſery, when it is ſeized on by them.

6. *GOD ſtands firmly obliged by the Curſe.* Not only muſt He needs be diſpleaſed at ſin, becauſe it ſets it ſelf againſt his glory, which His Holineſs will not ſuffer Him to part withal; but he doth by the curſe ſtand bound to the execution according to the tenor of it: for what elſe is it but a declaration of his holy will, and a paſſing ſentence upon the creature according to that law, which he confirmed to man in a covenant; and having declared it, His truth and immutability ſtand to ratify it, and he will not go back from his word. This we have aſſerted in this reſpect, 1 Sam. 15. 29. *And alſo the ſtrength of Iſrael will not lie, nor repent: for he is not a man that he ſhould repent.* And our Saviour Chriſt hath told us, Mat. 5. 18. *For verily I ſay unto you, till heaven and earth paſs, one jot or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled.*

7. *HENCE thoſe that are under God's wrath and curſe have Him certainly for their enemy.* God loves his friends, and though he may ſometimes be angry with them, yet they are not the ſubjects of his wrath and fury, as all who are under the curſe, are; but wicked men are called God's *enemies*, *Pſal.* 37. 20. And he is *always angry* with them, *Pſal.* 7. 11. And if that be not a miſery with a witneſs, to have the infinite, eternal, almighty, holy and righteous God armed againſt them to their deſtruction, what can be reputed ſo? We are told, that whiles we are in our natural ſtate, *we are enemies*, Rom. 5. 10. And if a man find his enemy, will he not deſtroy him? And ſhall not God do ſo?

8. *HENCE to fall into God's hands as an enemy, contains the quintiſcence of all miſery in it.* There is every afflictive evil contained in it; and that in the height and tenor of it; for as the man is, ſo is his ſtrength; what is He then who is God? And when He comes to meet His foes in His fury, He will not do it as a man? As there is no eſcaping, for whether ſhould he flee from an Omnipreſent God? ſo there is no enduring. Exek. 22. 14. *Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be ſtrong in the days that I ſhall deal with thee.* Him therefore our Saviour gives us warning to be afraid of, Mat. 10. 28. *Fear Him which is able to deſtroy both ſoul and body in hell.*

USE. I. LET this be a word of ſolemn awakening to *convince ſinners of the preſent miſery that is upon them.* It may be, for the preſent, you are under the patience of God, and the miſeries which are the portion of ſinners are not fallen, in their full weight, upon you, and you begin to bleſs your ſelves, and ſay, the bitterneſs of death is over; but come hither, and think on the things but now repreſented, and ſay, whether ſuch as you are be not in a forlorn condition. And it concerns

Children as well as others. Know then, that if you are Adam's poſterity, and ſtill under his Covenant, as all unconverted ones are, this is your real ſtate; there is an entire breach between God & you, You have no fellowſhip with Him, you are far from Him, at an everlaſting diſtance; you are the ſubjects of his wrath, and ſtand juſt in the way of the floods of his indignation; you are the very butts ſet up for Him to ſpend his arrows upon; you are curſed creatures, devoted to direful deſtruction, and muſt needs therefore be in danger of it every moment; and is this a condition to be quiet and contented in? can you live a night longer thus? can you go up and down jocund and merry for all this, as if you ailed nothing? ſurely madneſs muſt be in your hearts. Hence,

Use. II. *LET this conſideration make Chriſt precious to you, and drive you apace to Him.* Bleſs God that you hear, that there is a city of refuge, and that you are invited to repair to it from the avenger of blood: that there is a Saviour that can reconcile you to God, and reſtore you to communion with him, and remove you from under his wrath and curſe, and bids you to come unto him, that he may do it for you. Let the terror of the Lord then perſwade you; be afraid of his wrath and vengeance, and let that fear give wings unto you, that you may, with preſent ſpeed, betake your ſelves to his wings for refuge, leſt the curſe ſhould overtake you, and fall in its weight upon you, and then there will be no remedy.

[July 11. 1693.]

SERMON *LXIII.*

II. IT now follows that we take a view more particularly of *thoſe miſeries*, that ariſe from this condition. And what is he not to expect, who is fallen out of God's favour, and fellowſhip, and ſubjected to his wrath and curſe? Theſe are variouſly diſtributed by Divines: our Catechiſm refers it to three heads; unto one of which all that can be thought of may be reduced: and I ſhall take them up in order.

1. *THEY are made liable to all miſeries in this life.* Here are two things. 1. Their *obnoxiouſneſs* to theſe miſeries. 2. The *miſeries* themſelves.

I. AS to their *obnoxiouſneſs* to theſe miſeries; This refers to all three heads, and may be here ſpoken to, once for all. This flows immediately from that guilt, of which we before had an account, under which all mankind are fallen, by vertue whereof they are thus expoſed. And this indeed is a very miſerable condition in it ſelf; and yet withal it affords ſome relief to thoſe unto whom the law is delivered in the hands of a Mediator. Give me leave then a little to lay it open in the following concluſions.

1. *THAT all theſe miſeries are comprehended in the curſe of the law.* That there were ſanctions annexed to the command in the firſt covenant, contained in the promiſe and the threatning, we have already obſerved. Now the curſe is wrapt up in the threatning, and co-extenſive with it, having for the matter of it, all the evil that is ſo threatned. This is ſummed up in that one word, *Death*, (Gen. 2. 17.) but the word graſps in it all the ſorrowful evils that can be named; any grievous calamity is therefore in Scripture *ſo* called. *Exod.* 10. 17. 2 *Cor.* 11. 23. Whatſoever ſorrows the creature is capable of undergoing, in Soul or Body, come within the compaſs of this curſe.

2. *THAT man's guilt hath bound him over to ſuffer this curſe.* Man by making himſelf guilty pulls all this upon his own head; the ſentence which was generally & conditionally declared in the covenant, now particularly and expreſly takes hold of him; and he thus ſtands condemned by the law; i. e. the condemnation of it belongs to him; becauſe, as he is under the law, ſo he is come within the reach of this ſanction of it, or he is one of thoſe which that hath ſaid, ſhall die: and the guilt that lies upon him, is as a chain that fetters and holds him faſt to it, and he cannot wring himſelf out of it. Gal. 3. 22. *The Scripture hath concluded all under ſin.* Concluded, a metaphor from ſuch as are cloſe ſhut up in a dungeon.

3. *THAT God's Juſtice ſtands engaged to the execution of this curſe upon the guilty ſinner.* Relative Juſtice, to which we muſt have reſpect in the tranſactions between God and man, according to the firſt covenant, is, God engaged to proceed according to the tenour of the law, as it was fixed between him and his creatures. The righteouſneſs therefore of that law in all it's parts, being ſuppoſed, (&it muſt be acknowledged,) the righteouſneſs of God appears in his ſtanding by it, and treating men according to it: ſo that man having unhappily brought himſelf under the threatning, God's revenging Juſtice is now ſet againſt him, to bring upon him the curſe in its full weight. Hence that, (*Rom.* 2. 6.) He hath ſtated this rule of proceeding, and he cannot go back.

4. *GOD uſeth an holy arbitriment in executing this curſe upon ſinners.* Not that he doth any way baulk or infringe his own Juſtice, as will appear in the conſideration of it; but to diſplay his infinite Wiſdom, and ſpotleſs Sovereignty in his procedure in this regard; and becauſe ſinners are apt to miſinterpret and abuſe this to the hardening of their hearts againſt God, let us take a more diſtinct view of it, in the following remarks.

(1.) *THERE are ſome of theſe miſeries that do preſently fall upon every ſinner, and there are none that eſcape them.* The whole world of mankind, and every individual, do feel ſomething more or leſs of the curſe, and that both in Bodies and Souls, their outward and inward man. Man and miſerable are become terms convertible; and there is none of this

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unhappy race, but have cauſe to bewail their own infelicity. Hence we have ſuch expreſſions as thoſe, Job. 5. 6, 7. *Man is born unto trouble as the ſparks fly upwards.* 14. 1. *Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble.* Hence the word *Eniſh*, which ſignifies *ſorrowful*, is uſed as an appellative for man. *Pſal.* 9. *ult.* Man is therefore ſaid to *come into the world with vanity*, Eccl. 6. 4.

(2.) *THERE is no ſinner dying in his ſins, but ſhall undergo the conſummation of all theſe miſeries.* Whatſoever his lot may in this life, by God's holy Providence, fall out to be, yet if he live and dye under the law, and be not delivered from the ſentence of it, the whole curſe will at length at once fall upon him in its weight, and ſink him down into irrecoverable deſtruction; in which deſtruction all miſeries are eminently contained; this is the doom which is paſt upon all ungodly men, however they may live in this world. *Pſal.* 49. 9, 17.

(3.) *THERE is a great variety in God's inflicting theſe miſeries upon ſinners in this world.* He aſſerts his liberty in this affair more ways than one: ſome feel more of the curſe for the preſent than others do; there are ſome that have abundant health, peace, proſperity, eaſe, delight: others who encounter manifold troubles, ſickneſs, poverty, moleſtation, and inward vexations. Again, ſome enjoy a longer, others a ſhorter time of the moderation of the curſe; ſome are cut off early, others live a great while in proſperity. Yea, and there are various degrees in which afflictions of the ſame kind are meaſured to ſome and to others, at this or that time. *Job.* 21. 23, &c. And in theſe things God acteth his own pleaſure.

(4.) *THERE are two Attributes which God purpoſeth the manifeſtation of to ſinners*; and this notwithſtanding the miſeries which they are doomed to in the curſe.

1. *THERE is his Mercy, which he intends to make appear in common to the world.* Hence his mercy is ſaid to be *over all his works.* Now mercy hath always a reſpect to ſuch as are miſerable, as the ſubject it falls upon, and it expreſſeth it ſelf in moderating of thoſe miſeries, ſo as that they do not fall upon them to the uttermoſt, and this is deſigned for ſinners in this life: From whence it comes to paſs,

(1.) *THAT he doth not bring the whole curſe in its efficacy upon them at once.* His hand of compaſſion holds back his hand of vengeance; and though they feel ſome of the ſcalding drops of his anger at preſent, yet they do not ſuffer all his fury. They have great reaſon to make that confeſſion, Pſal. 103. 10. *He hath not dealt with us after our ſins: nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.* It is but a little part, not only of the whole miſery which they are doomed to, but of the preſent ſorrows which belong to them, that they are under the impreſſion of.

(2.) *THAT he beſtows upon them in his bounty, a great many of the favours which they had forfeited.* Man hath by his fall forfeited all good things; hath not only loſt his title to eternal felicity, but alſo to every comfort of this life, and God owes him not a draught of water, or a cruſt of bread; and by the curſe he is condemned to loſe them all: but God doth not at preſent ſtrain this to the height, but allows him a great many of theſe bleſſings, and poſſibly in a great plenty; He gives him rain from heaven, &c. He ſpreads his table for him, and the waters of an overflowing cup are wrung out to him; he makes his ſun to ſhine, and his rain to fall upon him; and it may be, he lives in ſuch fulneſs as if there had been no ſuch forfeiture made. We have an account of ſuch as theſe, though ungodly, *Job* 21. *Pſal.* 73. and we have that remark, ver. 12. *Behold theſe are the ungodly, who proſper in the world, they increaſe in riches.*

(3.) *HE lays a reſtraint upon thoſe miſeries which they do undergo.* Though they do meet with and ſuffer theſe and thoſe calamities, and have experience of ſome of the ſtings of the curſe, yet they are greatly moderated; when he doth give a vent to his anger, yet he doth not let it all out; the miſeries threatned are boundleſs, but he ſets bounds to theirs; there is a great deal of the mixture of mercy in their afflictions; every ſickneſs that comes upon them, is not deadly; though they are reduced to poverty, yet they are not ſtarved; though they are in pain, yet it is tollerable; ſo that in his very judgments he remembers mercy for them.

(4.) *AND he oftentimes ſuccours them in their miſeries, and brings them out of them.* There are many temporal ſalvations that he affords to them. They, when they are groaning under their oppreſſions, cry, and he ſo far hears them, as to ſend them relief, and they are freed again. This the Pſalmiſt obſerves in many kinds of diſtreſſes, and that is the burden of the ſong, Pſal. 107. 6. *Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their diſtreſſes.* And the vileſt ſinners upon the earth, have ſuch experiences as theſe, if they would obſerve and improve them. Now all this is the common mercy of God, which is no obſtruction to the due execution of juſtice, in the due ſeaſon of it, nor gives to ſinners any the leaſt ſecurity againſt it.

2. *THERE is his ſpecial ſaving grace, which he purpoſeth to extend to ſome.* This is not, as the other, a common favour; but it is intended for ſome, who yet are of the ſame number, and are fallen under the ſame condemnation with others; but yet God hath in his good will to them, ordained them to everlaſting life; but in their natural ſtate they are equally children of wrath with the reſt, *Eph.* 2. 3. Now with regard to theſe let us obſerve,

(1.) *THAT God hath executed the curſe on His own Son ſtanding in their room.* As they ſtood devoted to all miſeries, by the ſentence

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of the law, and juſtice ſtood engaged to that ſentence, ſo was the Son of God ſurrogated in their place, to bear the wrath of God, inſtead of them, that ſo they might be ſaved, and yet juſtice have its triumph. For this reaſon is he ſaid to be *made ſin for us*, 2 Cor 5. 21. *To have all our iniquities laid upon him.* Iſai. 53. 6. *To be made a curſe for us*, Gal. 3.13. For the caſe ſtood ſo, that we muſt needs have ſuffered in perſon, except ſome ſurety interpoſed, and was accepted for us.

(2.) *THAT now He uſeth the miſeries which they are under by the curſe, to drive them to Chriſt.* The curſe lies on theſe as well others, whiles they are unregenerate, and all the evils they ſuffer are from it; but by theſe the Spirit of God diſcovers to them their woful miſery, and together with it reveals the remedy, ſo that they are made ſerviceable to ſhew them their abſolute need of a Saviour, and put them upon ſeeking after him, which they would not be willing to do, if they felt not their miſery.

(3.) *THAT He takes out the curſe from the miſeries they meet with, after they are in Chriſt, and ſanctifies them for their benefit.* There are a great many miſeries which the children of God undergo in this life, during their pilgrimage in an evil world, and ſome of them are plagued every day, and chaſtened every morning; but though theſe are for the matter, the ſame with thoſe that wicked men meet with, and for degree are oftentimes more intenſe, yet the quality or form of them is altogether altered: for, though the bitterneſs be not, yet the poyſon is wholly taken out of them; they are croſſes ſtill, and hard to bear, but they are not curſes: they are death, but the ſting is taken out, 1 Cor. 15. 55, 56. *O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory? The ſting of death is ſin: and the ſtrength of ſin is the law.* And beſides this, they are made ſerviceable to their beſt advantage, there is now a bleſſing in them, and their operation is profitable. Rom. 8. 28. *And we know that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpoſe.*

(4.) *AND He wholly cuts off the entail of everlaſting miſery from them.* All the miſeries they are like to meet with are whiles they are in the body; it is but *this ſeaſon*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 6. They were doomed to the other as well as theſe; but though they may be exerciſed with the ſorrows of the *firſt*, they ſhall never be hurt by the *ſecond death.* They were once in great danger of this, but now the danger is paſt, and their ſoul is brought out of priſon and enlarged: for why, the law ſentence is removed, there is *no condemnation* abides them, *Rom.* 8. 1. And this is a privilege which ſome have by grace obtained. To proceed,

5. *BUT every child of fallen Adam, is in his natural eſtate continually liable to all theſe miſeries.* Though thoſe who are in a ſtate of grace are exempted yet there are no other but lie open to the invaſion and oppreſſion of the curſe in all the parts of it. It is true, there are ſome among theſe, for whom God hath a ſecret purpoſe of good, but for the preſent they alſo are open, their preſent condition is obnoxious; nor are all the mercies which others enjoy, any ſecurity to them. And this liability of theirs may be taken notice of in theſe particulars.

1. *ALL theſe miſeries are their portion.* This is the unhappy legacy which their firſt father hath left them; it is that which he brought into the world, and it hath paſt over to all his poſterity, *Rom.* 5. 12. Theſe are the recompenſe which was laid in, in the firſt covenant for ſinners, it was the *wages* appointed for ſin, *Rom.* 6. 23. It therefore belongs to them all; the holy God once ſaid it, and He will never go back from his word, that *the ſoul which ſins ſhall die*; it is that which God owes the ſinner, and he will pay it.

2. *THEY are already condemned to theſe miſeries.* It is true, there is a farther condemnation abides them in the great Day. But for the preſent they are under a ſentence of condemnation; the law hath condemned them, in declaring againſt all ſuch as they are; hence that, John 3. 18. *But he that believeth not is condemned already.* Their own conſciences have alſo condemned them, whether they hearken to them or no, yet there are theſe records in them, which will one day be produced, and they be ſilenced, *Rom.* 1 *ult.* And the Apoſtle argues thus, 1 John 3. 20. *For if our heart condemn us, God is greater then our heart, and knoweth all things.* It is certain, that the ſtate of every unregenerate man is a ſtate of condemnation; and therefore to the juſtification of a ſinner, there is required the abſolving him from it, which is called, a *paſſing from death to life.*

3. *HENCE there is no one miſery but he is every moment in danger of.* All are, as we obſerved, included in the ſentence which is paſt upon the ſinner; now we know that when once a perſon ſtands condemned, he is dead in law, and it is at the Judges pleaſure when to ſign the warrant for his execution; ſo that though he is now in health and life, as ſound as any other, yet he may be fetch'd away, and turned out of the world before an hour to an end; and ſo it may be with the ſinner, though at preſent nothing ſeems to ail him. Hence that, Job. 20. 22, 23. *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiency he ſhall be in ſtraits: every hand of the wicked ſhall come upon him. When he is about to fill his belly, God ſhall caſt the fury of his wrath upon him, and ſhall rain it upon him while he is eating.*

4. *HE hath therefore ground of continual expectation of theſe miſeries.* And this is a fearful thing. Though he ſhould eſcape them, yet hath he no ſecurity of it, but all reaſon to be looking out for them; as the condemned priſoner is afraid of every noiſe he hears, leſt the meſſenger of death is coming for him. We read of ſome, Heb. 2. 15. *Who through fear*

of

of death were all their life time ſubject to bondage. And truly this would be the caſe of every one of Adam's poſterity, were they not in a deep legarthy of carnal ſecurity; every moment of their lives they have cauſe to think their laſt; every Judgment they ſee or hear of, they have reaſon to look for it to fall upon them: they may ſee the ſword of vengeance pointed againſt them, which way ſoever they turn themſelves.

5. *AND there is but one only way for them to eſcape the perfection of miſery.* It is God's rich mercy that there is ſuch a way, and that it is heard of, viz. *by Jeſus Chriſt*; and believing in him: but there is *no other*, Act. 4. 12. And if men fail of this, though they ſhould eſcape many parts of the inchoated miſeries in this life, which are due to them, yet this comprizeth them all, and in ſuffering of this, they ſuffer at once. And there are two things which will diſcover how liable they are for all this.

1. *THAT all are not acquainted with this one way.* It is a ſolemn word of the Apoſtles, 2 Cor. 4. 3. *But if our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt.* They that know not Chriſt, are not profited by him: they that never heard of him, never believed in him, and conſequently cannot be ſaved by him. And yet this is the forlorn ſtate of many Nations in the world, to whom God hath not vouchſafed to ſend the Goſpel, who lie in ignorance, enveloped in darkneſs: and needs muſt all theſe be under the efficacy of the curſe, and lye hopeleſly open to the impreſſions of it, having no City of refuge to fly into.

2. *THAT all to whom this way is declared, do not make uſe of it.* Where the Goſpel of Salvation is ſent, and men told how they may eſcape the wrath and curſe of God, there are multitudes that regard it not; who either will not be perſwaded to believe themſelves to be in ſuch danger, or entertain prejudices at the way of their being recovered out of it, and accordingly they live in the neglect of complying with the terms on which they might obtain it, and ſo remain in their ſins, and thereby go every day in danger of eternal perdition.

Use. *AND let this be an awakening call to every one, Young and Old, to make haſte and get under the wings of Chriſt.* See your danger, and let that rouſe you to ſeek after the remedy. Let every Chriſtleſs Soul come hither to ſee his woful danger, and be awakened by it, to fly with ſpeed to the refuge that is ſet before us.

YOU Children, do you think of this; you are children of wrath, and all miſeries are hanging over your heads, and ready every moment to fall upon you; nor do you know but that this night the curſe may ſeize upon you, and drag you down to everlaſting deſtruction. Believe it, you cannot enjoy one hours ſafety out of Chriſt.

YOU Young Men, who are in your health, and ſtrength, and vigour, and pleaſe your ſelves in your vanities, and ſay to morrow ſhall be as this day; remember, you are condemned caitiffs, you ſtand continually upon the very brink of miſchief; there is wrath out againſt you, and every miſery belongs unto you, and may fall upon you ſuddenly while you are crying peace to your ſelves.

YOU Old Sinners, that have hitherto been daring of the moſt High, and tiring out his patience with your impenitency, come hither and ſee what a precipice you have ſtood upon all this while; wonder at the forbearance of God, that hath held back revenge thus long, and be afraid of tempting it any longer. Know, that there is but an hairs-breadth between you and all miſchiefs; and let it fright you in your preſent condition, and cauſe you to make haſte and fly for your lives. Bleſs God that he hath provided a ranſom and relief for ſuch as you, and that he hath pleaſed to reveal it to you in the Goſpel: and remember, that if for all this you neglect to accept of the offer, and comply with the terms on which it is to be had, if you delay and procraſtinate, the Judgments written may fall upon you unexpectedly, and then you are miſerable beyond any remedy. See then your danger, and upon what ſtrong grounds it is built, even the wrath and curſe of God, and his righteous revenging juſtice, which will as certainly take place on you, if you lie in its way, as you have a being. Give then no ſleep to your eyes, nor ſlumber to your eye-lids, till you are gotten to the rock of Ages, and ſecured under the wings of a Saviour.

[August 8. 1693.]

SERMON *LXIV.*

II. IT follows to conſider the *Miſeries themſelves*, which they are thus liable to; and they are ranked under three heads, the firſt whereof we are upon, viz.

I. *THE miſeries of this life.* There are two ages in which every one is concerned, Time, and Eternity; and by man's fall, death is become man's paſſage from the one to the other: now in each of theſe there are miſeries contained, which call for a ſeveral diſtinct obſervation. There are the inchoations of all miſeries in this world, after which death comes, and paſſeth ſinners over to the conſummation of them in another. And theſe are all contained in the curſe which is fallen upon man; and that one word, *Death*, engroſſeth them all, and there is ſomething of death in every miſery. Man begins to die as ſoon as he begins to live, and he goes on till he is ſwallowed up of death. His miſeries begin here, and are compleated hereafter. Hence we have that expreſſion of our Saviour, Mat. 24. 8. *All theſe are the beginning of ſorrows.* And ſo ſome underſtand the import of that expreſſion, Gen. 2. 17. *Dying thou ſhalt die.* q.d. Thou

Thou ſhalt be always dying, dying, till thou art perfectly dead. So that the miſeries of this life differ not from thoſe that follow, ſo much for kind, as degree.

THE miſeries then of this life, are *all thoſe evils which befall the man from his conception to his death.* Man hath a *ſhort* life to run over in this world, but it is a *troubleſome* one. Job 14. 1. *Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble.* It is true, mercy moderates theſe troubles, to ſome more, to others leſs; but as every one is liable to all, ſo there is none but hath a ſhare in them. And hitherto belongs every thing that is afflictive to the creature: and that we may take a more diſtinct view of theſe things, they may be ranked under two heads.

THE miſeries undergone in this life are either *corporal* or *ſpiritual.* Theſe are the two kinds of miſery that ſinful man is puniſhed withal. The ground of this diſtribution is, from the two eſſential or conſtituting parts of man, viz. Soul and Body, as both of theſe do participate in ſin, ſo are they both expoſed unto puniſhment: and as they are vaſtly different in nature, ſo are the penalties belonging to each diverſifyed, their miſeries being ſuited to their capacities. Soul and Body make one perſon, and ſin is perſonal, committed by the Soul as the principal, with the Body as its organ or inſtrument. The perſon therefore ſuffers in both. Theſe miſeries are uncountable. Hence that, Pſal. 40.12. *Innumerable evils have compaſſed me about.* But we may reduce them to ſome general heads.

Here then,

I. *CORPORAL Miſeries are all thoſe Miſeries which befall the Body in this Life.* They are ſuch as nextly harm the outward man. Whatſoever he meets with which is moleſtful or uncomfortable to him, with reſpect to his temporary concerns, belongs to this head. Temporal Judgments are therefore called, *Death*, *Exod.* 10. 17. Not only becauſe they help forward the death of the body, but alſo in that they abate of its comfort and delight, which is the life of its life.

THESE evils meet the man in the womb before he is born, and they follow him to his grave; and every affliction gives a chop at the tree of the life of the outward man, till at laſt it falls, and he dies.

THESE Miſeries are either *privative*, or *poſitive.* The one belongs to the puniſhment of loſs, the other to that of ſenſe: for in both of theſe ways the man is capable of being made miſerable. Man is a dependent creature, the withdrawing of that on which he depends makes him miſerable; and he is a ſenſible creature, and it muſt be a miſery to be under the feeling of things hurtful to him.

(1.) THE *privative* miſery is, in *his being deprived of the Good things of this Life.* There are a great many things go in to make the outward life comfortable. Man was at firſt priviledged with them all; but by ſin he hath forfeited them, and God puniſheth him by withholding them from him. And hence, whatſoever he wants of what man in innocency enjoyed, belongs hither: and this loſs either refers to the ſtate of the body itſelf, or the ſupplies of comfort which it had from abroad.

1. *IN reſpect of the ſtate of the Body it ſelf.* Here is a miſerable loſs that man hath ſuſtained, and that may be reduced to two particulars.

1. *THE loſs of his health and vivacity.* Man was made at firſt of a very hail conſtitution; the craſis of his body was ſo curiouſly attempered, that there was not the leaſt indiſpoſition in it, and by reaſon of this, he was exceeding vigorous and lively; he was made ſuited to immortality: and hence there was nothing in him tending towards a diſſolution: but now his health is loſt, and from the very conception he is diſtempered and unhealthy, and ſo liable to all diſeaſes; by which means there is an heavineſs and dulneſs come upon him. Now this privation, both is a miſery in it ſelf, and a foundation for many more poſitive ones; by this loſs, the bond of life is weakened, 1 Cor. 11. 30. *Many are weak and ſickly among you, and many ſleep.*

2. *THE loſs of his beauty and majeſty.* Man's body in the Creation was a ſtately, comely, majeſtick thing; the other creatures had an awe of it upon them; nor was there any thing ſhameful in them. *Gen.* 2. 25. But man no ſooner ſinned but he became a ſhame to himſelf, *Chap.* 3. 7. Man's beauty is blaſted, his viſage is marred; and beſides that which is befallen all without exception, there are great deformities which ſome are born withal, diſproportion in the parts, making an aſymetry in the whole, beſides many monſtrous deficiencies or redundancies, which either unfit the body for it's ſervice, or expoſe it to contempt.

2. *RESPECTING thoſe ſupplies of comfort that it hath from abroad.* Here alſo man is at a miſerable loſs; and that many ways; the more principal are ſuch as theſe.

1. *HE hath loſt that Government which once he had over the creatures.* There was ſuch a dominion given him, *Gen.* 1. 28. And they paid him their homage, when they came to him to be named by him: and though God continues in them generally a fear of man, yet the natural reſpect they bear to him is gone; and they have drawn their necks out of the yoke, and they are not ſpontaneouſly obedient to him; yea there is in many of them a rooted malignity, making them to hate him; and in all of them a reluctancy againſt ſerving him, and they are with difficulty broken, and brought to it; their ſervice being now a real bondage, *Rom.* 8. 20, 21.

2. *HE hath loſt thoſe pleaſures of his life which he was at the firſt poſſeſſed of.* When God, had made man, He placed him in a garden planted for him with His own hand, where all ſuitable delights were provided him: and it was an emblem of that delectable life which

Man

Man ſhould have led in that world. It was called *Eden*, which ſignifies, pleaſure, jucundity, delectableneſs, the rivers of it, were rivers of pleaſures, for to them the Pſalmiſt alludes, Pſal. 36. 8. *Thou ſhalt make them drink of the river of thy pleaſures.* His life ſhould have been every way eaſy and comfortable to him, but it is now become otherwiſe; he is turned out of paradiſe into the wide world, and this is a miſery: for life is truly life no farther than it is delectable.

3. *HE hath loſt the priviledge of the earth's fertility.* It was made for Man, and exceeding fruitful of all that was requiſite for the ſupport and comfort of his life; it readily brought forth its fruits for him; but now it is under a curſe for his ſake, and is made barren of good fruits, and brings them forth ſcantily, and not without a kind of force. Gen. 3. 17, 18. *Curſed is the ground for thy ſake: in ſorrow ſhalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns alſo and thiſtles ſhall it bring forth to thee: and thou ſhalt eat the herb of the field.* It readily brings forth things that are noxious and hurtful, but difficultly thoſe that are uſeful and beneficial.

4. *HE hath loſt the vertue of theſe things for the preſervation of his health and vigour.* It is more than probable that the things themſelves are not of that vertue which they had at the firſt; but it is certain, that man hath not that benefit by them which he ſhould have had; they are the *media* of the continuation of that athletick conſtitution of his, but now there is but a faint ſupport they afford him, and notwithſtanding all, his life goes to decay when he hath made the beſt of them; the ſtay and ſtaff in them is greatly impaired, *Iſai.* 3. *begin.*

(2.) THE *poſitive* miſery is, *in his being ſubjected to all thoſe evils which deſtroy the comfort of this life, and have a tendency to the taking of it away.* They make it troubleſome whiles it laſts, and cut it ſhort too of its continuance; and here is an iliad of miſeries to be taken notice of, which cannot be enumerated; a few may here be reflected on: and theſe alſo refer to the ſame heads with the former, viz.

1. *TO the ſtate of the body it ſelf.* And there are three things that more eminently refer hither.

1. *HIS body is become a ſeat of all manner of diſeaſes and maladies.* His health is gone, and all manner of diſeaſes are ready to prey upon him, theſe belong to the curſe, *Deut.* 28. 59, 60, 61. And, 26. 31. There is a diſpoſition come into his body, that expoſeth him to take the infection of every diſeaſe that is Epidemical; all the ſores, and pains, all the chronick and acute diſtempers which any are viſited withal, belong to this; theſe make the mans life to hang in doubt before him, take away the comfort of all his comforts from him, and preſent him with the terrors and fears of death it ſelf; and though the curſe influence other creatures in this reſpect, yet there is none that lies open to the one half of thoſe maladies which man doth: many of which are extreamly tormenting, and all are pining and waſting unto him.

2. *HE is expoſed to wearineſs in his labour.* Man was made for buſineſs; he would have had an employment, if he had never ſinned, *Gen.* 2. 15. But it would have been a recreation and delight, without any wearineſs at all, by reaſon of his great vivacity and agility: but now his work tires him, his ſpirits ſpend, and he grows faint, ſo that his buſineſs is a burden to him, and a little matter puts him out of breath, and his body to pain: and this attends all his affairs, Eccl. 1. 8. *All things are full of labour.*

3. *HIS bodily wants, and therewith his labour, are greatly encreaſed.* Man needs more for his life's ſupport and comfort now, than he did in the ſtate of innocency; and there needs more labour to obtain it; man now needs not only for food but for cloathing too, as to defend him from the injuries of the ſeaſons, ſo to cover his nakedneſs, and hide his ſhame; and man is now in need not only of food, but phyſick too, to remedy the maladies which are often ſeizing of him, that ſo a dying life may be a while ſhored up: the curſe alſo that is on the earth makes it harder to obtain this ſupply, and coſts him the more pains; ſo that there is no end of his toil and travel. Eccl. 2. 23. *For all his days are ſorrows, and his travel grief: yea, his heart taketh not reſt in the night. This is alſo vanity.*

2. *TO things abroad, or without him.* And here miſeries come crowding in upon him from every quarter. I ſhall endeavour to ſum up the principal of theſe under a few heads.

1. *THE elements and the elementary bodies are noxious to him, and do him harm.* The whole creation indeed is armed againſt him, in the quarrel of their Creator; the ſun, moon and ſtars in their conſtellations, which were made to give him light and comfortable ſeaſons, do now ſmite him with their malignant influences, which produce many afflictions for him. We read, Judg. 5. 20. *They fought from heaven, the ſtars in their courſes fought againſt Siſera.* That therefore is one bleſſing promiſed in the new covenant, Pſal. 121. 6. *The ſun ſhall not ſmite thee by day; nor the moon by night.* Intimating, that ſinful man is expoſed to theſe. The air is filled with peſtilential vapours, by which it infects and poiſons them, with contagious diſeaſes, which they ſuck in with their breath. The waters many times break in upon them, and ſweep them away with violence, and deſtroy their ſubſtance. The earth alſo where they tread ſometimes gives way under them, and by amazing ruptures opens its mouth and devours them; and carries, Men, Towns, Cities into its bowels, and cloſeth upon them.

2. *THE brute creatures riſe up in rebellion againſt him, and do him miſchief.* How often doth God threaten ſinners in the Scripture, with turning beaſts of prey upon them, and

that not only metaphorically, but litterally; God ſent *Lions* among them, 2 *King.* 17. 25. *Bears* on the mocking children, *Chap.* 2. 24. And there is a particular enmity in all *Snakes*, and venemous Serpents, againſt man; which ly lurking in a readineſs to do him a miſchief; yea the very beaſts which man keeps for his own uſe, oftentimes do him harm.

3. *THERE are croſſes and diſappointments upon all men's labours.* Not only do they get their livelihood with a world of toil; but when they have done all, it comes to nothing, but is blaſted, and ends in fruſtration; which joins vanity and vexation together. We read, Hab. 2. 13. *Behold, is it not of the Lord of hoſts, that the people ſhall labour in the very fire, and the people ſhall weary themſelves for very vanity.* Sometimes there is a ſecret curſe upon men's labours, they are croſt in all their deſigns, and they know not how it comes to paſs; there is a moth that eats out all, without any noiſe; at other times there are more open and obſervable croſſes that befall men, and there is an hand out againſt them in every thing they undertake, and there are many ways in which God waſteth their ſubſtance; by inſects, unſeaſonable rain or drought, tempeſts, fires, &c. and by theſe means they are reduced to poverty and diſtreſs, yea, pined away with famine and ſcarcity. This therefore is one of God's great plagues which he puniſheth them with in this world.

4. *HE is expoſed to reproach and contempt.* Credit and eſteem among men is an outward bleſſing, and man ſhould have always enjoyed it in his integrity; but ſin having put him out of God's favour, hath alſo laid him open to men's ſcorn, to be deſpiſed of every one. Hence that threatning, 1 Sam. 2. 30. *They that deſpiſe me, ſhall be lightly eſteemed.* And by this means they ly open to all manner of abuſes, both of tongue and hand, yea, the very abjects make a may-game of them, and they ſerve for ſport to the vileſt of men.

5. *MANKIND are alſo ſet at variance one with another.* Man was made a ſociable creature; love and friendſhip were the bond of this ſociety, and had he kept his innocency, there had never been animoſities or contentions between them: but now men are turned into Wolves and Bears one to another. God hath ſown a perverſe ſpirit among them, and they are always ready to quarrel, and take one another by the throat; and theſe contentions are either *private* between neighbours, alway vexing each other, with wranglings, ſecret underminings, injurious dealings, lawſuits, which makes their life a continual vexation: or *publick* between Province and Province, between Kingdom and Kingdom, one Nation and another; and hence, wars, tumults, depredations, depopulations, waſting by fire and ſword, miſerable oppreſſion, captivity and ſlavery; yea, all manner of diſtraction and diſtreſs. 2 *Chron.* 15. 5, 6. Now all theſe things are the moral *effects* of ſin; God ſaith of them, as he did to Judah, Jer. 2. 17. *Haſt thou not procured this unto thy ſelf, in that thou haſt forſaken the Lord thy God.* They are contained in the threatning; and whenever we meet with them, they point us hither, and are to bring ſin to remembrance; they derive from the curſe, and are the genuine fruits of it.

Q. IF it ſhould here be inquired, *whence is it then that the children of God meet with theſe evils as well as others*, as we have holy men often complaining in Scripture? and yet they are delivered from the curſe of the law, and are under the bleſſing of the new Covenant.

A. IT may be anſwered, that though the curſe it ſelf be taken out, yet God ſees meet to exerciſe his children with ſuch things on a threefold account.

1. *TO put them in mind what once they were.* God would have them to remember it, that ſo they may the more admire at His free grace which hath delivered them. *Paul* would have his *Epheſians* look back, *Eph.* 2. 2, 3. And that they may have a remembrance of it, they feel ſome of thoſe things which they had deſerved for ſin; and this is part of the meaning of that in, Rom. 8. 10. *The body is dead becauſe of ſin.*

2. *THERE is a great deal of ſin yet in God's children*; and God uſeth theſe to help to purge it away. The curſe had made poiſon of all theſe afflictions; but that being removed from them, and a bleſſing put into them, they now become medicinal, and though they are grievous, yet profitable; this therefore is the encouragement which God gives his people under them, Iſai. 27. 9 *By this therefore ſhall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his ſin. Deut.* 8. 15. Heb. 12. 11. *Now no chaſtning for the preſent ſeemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheleſs, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteouſneſs, unto them which are exerciſed thereby.* And therefore the Pſalmiſt could draw up that plump concluſion, Pſal. 94. 12. *Bleſſed is the man whom thou chaſteneſt, O Lord, and teacheſt him out of thy law.* The remains of concupiſcence in us are to be mortified, and God makes theſe ſerviceable to the mortification of them; he thus makes ſin an evil and bitter thing to them.

3. *THEY ſometimes fall into ſcandalous ſins, and God uſeth theſe as rods to correct them withal.* It is therefore an article in the new Covenant on the ſuppoſal of ſuch a thing, Pſal. 89. 30, 31, 32. *If his children forſake my law, and walk not in my judgments, If they break my ſtatutes, and keep not my commandments: Then will I viſit their tranſgreſſion with the rod, and their iniquity with ſtripes.* And this is a fruit of His love, and not of His wrath, Heb. 12. 6. *For whom the Lord loveth he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth.* Hence the children of God may have other reſentments of theſe things than ungodly men, and though the things are for the matter the ſame, yet both the deſign and operation of them

them is contrary: nor are they leſs curſes to natural men, becauſe they are turned into bleſſings to the regenerate.

USE I. *LEARN we hence to Juſtify God and Condemn our ſelves, in all the ſorrows and miſeries of this life.* This is enough to ſilence us for ever, from grumbling and complaining againſt God, under the worſt of evils that aſſault us. Lam. 3. 39. *Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the puniſhment of his ſins?* Remember then always, that God is the author of all theſe afflictions, and ſin is the procuring cauſe of them, who or whatſoever the inſtrument may be: they are therefore righteous Judgments, and let us ever confeſs them to be ſo. Remember, theſe are but part of that death which is the wages of ſin. *Rom.* 6. 23. And ſhall God be charged for unjuſt in paying you your wages? when you feel the ſmart of theſe ſorrows, look upon ſin, ponder on the deſerts of it, ſee what an horrid thing it is, how infinitely injurious to the great God, and then ſay, that God hath wronged you, if you can: when you fall into any miſchiefs, remember it is by your iniquity. *Hoſ.* 14. 1. It is the ſin you are guilty of that thus purſues you.

USE II. *LET us hence ſee and acknowledge God, in all the moderation which He uſeth, in inflicting of theſe miſeries upon us.* Remember, they are all of them contained in the curſe, and due to be executed on us, from the firſt moment that we began to be ſinners; how much mercy then do ſinners enjoy in the midſt of all the ſorrows they encounter? Sinners, it is a wonder of mercy, that you enjoy any comfort of life: that you have any meaſures of health and ſtrength, and are not conſumed by conſtant pining ſickneſſes, or inceſſant torturing pains; that you have any of the good things of God to ſupport you, food and raiment; that you enjoy any credit, liberty, proſperity in your affairs, that you are not made a terror to your ſelves, and all that are about you: that you have any friends, &c. God owes you none of theſe favours, but the contrary miſeries. Let this thought humble us, and make us vile in our own eyes for our ſin; and encourage ſinners to adventure to ſeek peace and pardon of God through Chriſt.

[SEPTEMBER 5. 1693.]

SERMON *LXV.*

II. SPIRITUAL *Miſeries are all thoſe evils to which the Soul is ſubjected in this life.* They are ſuch as the inward man is nextly harmed by; and though this be leaſt regarded by ſinful man, by reaſon of that ſtupidity which he labours of, yet it is indeed the moſt awful: all the outward evils we before took notice of, are little in compariſon of it: ſpiritual death is the moſt amazing death.

For,

1. *THE Soul is the moſt excellent part in Man, and conſequently the miſery which befalls it muſt be the ſorer.* If a man had a thouſand bodies he had better loſe them all, than one ſoul. This was fitted for communion with God, and is the immediate ſubject of bleſſedneſs; the body ſhares in theſe by participation: one ſoul is of more worth than a world, and the loſs of it cannot be compenſated by the gain of that. Mat. 16. 26. *For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul? or what ſhall a man give in exchange for his ſoul?*

2. *THE ſoul is of large and vaſt capacities.* It's endowments were many and great, and unſpeakably more than thoſe of the body; and for that reaſon is capable of loſing more, and ſuffering more than that. God endowed the ſoul with more than he did the body, it had therefore more to loſe; and the miſeries of which it is capable are more terrible. Hence we have that aggravation, Jer. 4. 10. *The ſword reacheth unto the ſoul.*

3. *A man may undergo all bodily miſeries and yet be happy.* We obſerved before, that God's Children are often encountred with them in this Life; and yet are beloved of God, and heirs of the Kingdom. Whereas he that is under the efficacy and power of theſe ſpiritual miſeries, is miſerable indeed, and all the enjoyments of outward favours, cannot make him happy.

THESE miſeries alſo are either *privative* or *poſitive.* The ſoul is not like the body, ſubject to a natural Death. It was made immortal, and is capable of no other diſſolution, but annihilation, which ſhall never be. It's death therefore conſiſts in the infelicities that come upon it. Theſe have their inchoations in this life, and their conſummation after death. And they come under theſe two heads.

1. *THE privative miſeries of the ſoul are contained in the loſs of all thoſe things wherein it's happineſs did conſiſt.* Privative miſery is nothing elſe but a privation of felicity. When therefore we have conſidered wherein the happineſs of the ſoul doth ſtand, and ſeen it under the loſs of all this, we have a right diſcovery of this part of it's infelicity. And the things which are moſt remarkable here, are ſuch as theſe.

(1.) *THE ſoul is deprived of the image of God, and thereby utterly incapable of ſerving Him.* Man was made for God's ſervice, this was his laſt end, and his formal happineſs conſiſted in it. For the creature can only attain it's felicity, in reaching it's laſt end: Hence that, *Iſai.* 56. 2. It is true, the whole man was appointed for this ſervice, but the ſoul as the principal, and the body as the inſtrument. This image was the ſpiritual life of the ſoul, it was that which enabled it to it's ſervice; and therefore in the loſs of it, it is become dead, Eph. 2. 1. *And you hath he quickened who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.* It was a

fearful word that he ſpake, Joſh. 24. 19. *Ye cannot ſerve the Lord; for he is an holy God: he is a jealous God.* We formerly obſerved that this loſs was fallen upon mankind as a puniſhment; and the ſoul is undone by it; and labours under miſerable vanity. It is become uſeleſs for the end it was made for, being fallen ſhort of the glory of God: it cannot pleaſe God, and what then doth it live for? he hath now left him no knowledge how to do it, no will or inclination to it, nor any ſtrength, no not ſo much as deſire to glorify God.

(2.) *THE ſoul hath loſt all the joy or comfort of the promiſed life.* The life of life is the delight which we have in it, and if that be ſeparated, it is but a living death. Now the only ſpiritual comfort of man was, that God had promiſed him life in the covenant, Rom. 10. 5. *The man which doth thoſe things, ſhall live by them.* By vertue of this he was in the way to, and had a fair proſpect of happineſs. But now the promiſe is violated, and all his claim loſt. His ſin hath cut him off from it, and made it void. This life was his ſubjective happineſs, ſo that the loſs of it makes him very miſerable. It was a vaſt deal of goodneſs that was laid up in the promiſe, but it is all of it gone: it was it's livelihood, how then ſhould it live?

(3.) *THE ſoul hath loſt it's intereſt in God, and his favour.* God is the ſouls objective happineſs: nothing but he can be a portion for it; it's bleſſedneſs is when it can make that claim, Lam. 3. 24. *The Lord is my portion, ſaith my ſoul.* Nothing ſhort of the ſovereign truth and chief good can be adequate to it; Pſal. 73. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I deſire beſides thee.* Hence that, Pſal. 144. ult. *Happy is that people that is in ſuch a caſe: yea, happy is that people, whoſe God is the Lord.* God is ours when we enjoy his favour and loving-kindneſs, and how great a felicity is that? Pſal. 30. 5. *In his favour is life.* And, 63. 3. *Thy loving-kindneſs is better than life.* But this is gone; he hath now no more claim of title to him; God is no longer his God, but his Enemy. There is a ſeparation made by ſin, *Iſai.* 59. 2. And hence is afar off, *Pſal.* 73. 27. And who can expreſs the miſery of that ſoul that hath loſt it's God? The fruition of a thouſand worlds cannot compenſate it. All woes are comprized in it, Hoſ. 9. 12. *Yea, wo alſo to them when I depart from them.*

(4.) *THE ſoul hath loſt it's hope.* Hope is the remainder of life in a languiſhing ſoul, and the only ſign that it hath any breathing in it, Rom. 8. 24. *For we are ſaved by hope.* But this alſo man hath loſt by his fall. That therefore is one piece of the character of the natural man's ſtate, Eph. 2. 12. *Having no hope.* It is true, there is a door of hope ſet open to man in the new Covenant, which ſhould make the Goſpel precious to all that enjoy it; but in the firſt covenant, under which all have their natural birth, there is none at all. There was no room left there for fallen man to recover any of his loſſes. The damage that he underwent was irreparable. There was no poſſibility for him to recover God's image, and favour, and promiſe again.

USE. BEFORE I paſs hence, *Let me call upon ſinners Young and Old, to ſtand ſtill and contemplate their fearful miſery by reaſon of this loſs.* It may be you little regard it; and if you enjoy health, and eaſe, and plenty, and pleaſure, you think all is well; but what will you do for your poor ſouls, which have loſt their life and livelihood? hence they loſt their end, and their joy, and their God, and their hope; what have they then left to ſupport them? muſt it not be a periſhing ſoul indeed that is thus ſtript naked of all it's ſupports and ſupplies? are your ſouls of no value with you? can they be undone, and you do well? are they thus every way ruined, and can you laugh, and ſing, and ſport your ſelves as if nothing ailed them? Awaken out of this ſenſeleſs ſtupidity, and be ſenſible of your miſery; and let this ſenſe make a Chriſt precious to you, who came to repair this loſs, and reſtore wretched ſinners to ſpiritual life again, by entitling them to God's favour, reſtoring his image, beſtowing on them better promiſes, and giving them an hope that ſhall not make aſhamed.

2. *THE poſitive miſeries of the ſoul are contained in the ſuffering of all thoſe things, which are contrary to it's felicity.* There are ſpiritual plagues as well as bodily, which man's fall hath expoſed him to, and brought him under. And the principal of theſe may be reduced to three heads.

1. *HE is under the power and dominion of ſin.* This is a ſpiritual evil, and the ſoul is firſtly concerned in it. Sin reigns in him, and his ſoul is under the abſolute tyranny of it. He hath the image of ſin on him, and the influence of it altogether governs him; but of this we took an account under a former Queſtion. All that I ſhall here ſay to it is, That the ſoul is utterly undone by reaſon of it. He is always heaping up treaſures of wrath, laying in fuel for the devouring fire, he doth not, he cannot pleaſe God, he cannot but diſpleaſe him. He is always wronging his own ſoul, giving new wounds to it, he is enſnared into deſtruction, and can by no means deliver his own ſoul; it is the creatures happineſs to be reſcued from this ſubjection. Rom. 6. 14. *For ſin ſhall not have dominion over you.* It muſt then needs be his woful miſery to be detained under it: the ruling luſts in natural men are the moſt cruel lords.

2. *HE is become a vaſſal of Satan.* This alſo is a ſpiritual evil, and a moſt diſmal one it is. Here obſerve,

1. *THAT the fall hath brought mankind under the Devil's power.* It is true, it is not as their rightful head; for God hath not loſt his right to man's obedience, though man hath renounced it: he is God's ſubject, *de Jure*, though

though he is become the Devils *actually*; and this he ſhall know to his coſt one day. Nor is it meerly by uſurpation neither; although Satan hath thruſt himſelf into it, and hath by an undoing wile gotten man into his own hands, and made himſelf the god of this world. But there is alſo man's own choice, and God's judicial tradition. In a word, it is the puniſhment of ſin; man in his apoſtacy voluntarily rejected God's government, and followed Satan's ſuggeſtions, and God thereupon delivered him to Satan, by a permiſſive providence, and ſuffered him to rule over him, whom he choſe to follow. Hence we read, of the great power that he hath over all ſuch, Eph. 2. 2. *The ſpirit that now worketh in the children of diſobedience.* 2 Tim. 2. 26. *Who are taken captive by him at his will.* And that title put upon him, 2 Cor. 4. 4. *The God of this world.* Sinners believe him, take him at his word, come and go at his bidding, are his entire vaſſals.

2. *THAT this ſubjection to Satan is a doleful miſery.* However he may pleaſe men with fair pretences, and large promiſes, and feed them up with hopes of happineſs in their ſerving of him; yet it is certain that it is every way miſerable, as will appear. For,

(1.) *THE Devil is a ſpiteful adverſary to mankind.* It is more than likely that his envy and malice at man made him a Devil, as was formerly obſerved. Hence that is a title put upon him, 1 Pet. 5. 8. *A roaring lion, walking about, ſeeking whom he may devour.* All his deſign is to ruin men for ever; and he can intend nothing elſe; and what a wretched caſe are they in, who are under the power of their deadly & irreconcileable enemies? and indeed he can as ſoon ceaſe to be a Devil, as lay aſide the malice which he bears againſt all Adam's poſterity. He was a murderer from the beginning, and ſo he will be to the end.

(2.) *THE bondage he holds men under, is a cruel bondage.* He is the Pharoah of hell, the ſervice he requires of them, is meer drudgery, it is ſordid, ignominious, ſlaviſh; it is to gratify his luſts, to fulfil his pleaſure; and he hurries them to it, with all rigour; he gives them no reſt, hath no pity for them; compels them to all the vile, ſhameful things, which may bring reproach and infamy upon them; and to ſuch things as may ſhorten their lives, and turn them out of the world before their time.

(3.) *HE always deceives them.* He is called a deceiver; and he makes it his buſineſs to cheat, and impoſe upon them: when he ſpeaks them faireſt, he is leaſt to be truſted; he makes nothing of lying, for he is the father of lies; and if men will but believe him, he rejoyceth in diſappointing them: he promiſes great things, and feeds men up with hopes of obtaining, but he means nothing leſs; and if he gratifies them in any thing, it is but to draw them the further into his ſnare, and get them the faſter in his net.

3. *THAT this ſlavery is a Soul miſery.* It is true, the body is employed in it, and all the members of it are engaged in this drudgery, but the bondage of it lies on the inward man. It is the Souls deſtruction the Devil mainly aims at: it is the precious Soul that he hunts for; he little regards the Body in compariſon of that. They are called *ſpiritual wickedneſſes*, Eph. 6. 12. Not only from their nature, but alſo from their deſign. It is true, the Devil would ruin *Job* in his eſtate, and torment him in his body, when he could do no more, but his great aim was at deſtroying of his Soul, provoking him to curſe God to his face: his dominion is in the hearts of natural men, and they are his voluntary vaſſals, and chuſe rather to have their ears bored to him, than come out of his ſervice, and what a fearful miſery is this?

3. *HE is fallen under the power of horror of conſcience.* And this is wholly and properly a Soul miſery. Here we may firſt conſider, what this horror is, and then obſerve how he is under the power of it.

1. FOR this horror of Conſcience, it may be thus deſcribed; *It is that killing fear, which poſſeſſeth a guilty Sinner, ariſing from the apprehenſion he hath of the wrath of God.*

Here obſerve,

1. *THE ſubject of this horror is a guilty Sinner.* What guilt is, we have before obſerved; this lying on the man affords to him the ground and reaſon of horror; if that were removed, the curſe would ceaſe, but whilſt it abides there is matter for it; the man being by it bound over to ſuffer eternal vengeance.

2. *THAT which cauſeth this horror is, the apprehenſion the man hath of the wrath of God.* And this is wrought in the conſcience of the ſinner, which looks upon his guilt, and paſſeth a ſentence upon him for it. And there are theſe things in it.

(1.) *HE reads the law, and conſiders the curſes of it*; what they are, and for what, and againſt whom they are denounced; he ſees that it is for ſin that theſe curſes fall on men, and he looks upon them as terrible things.

(2.) *HE finds himſelf to be under them by reaſon of ſin.* His conſcience tells him, thou art the man, the law hath hold of thee; his ſins ſtare him in the face, and he cannot deny them; conſcience chargeth them on him, and votes him guilty.

(3.) *HE apprehends the righteouſneſs of God, in puniſhing of ſin, according to the ſentence.* That is apply'd by his conſcience, Rom. 2. 6. *Who will render to every man according to his deeds.* and therefore that tells him what he muſt ſtand to.

(4.) *HE diſcovers the power of God.* That he is able to do as he hath ſaid; he ſees that he is to enter into the liſt with that God, who hath not an arm of fleſh. He reads that, Iſai. 40. 17. *All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him leſs than nothing and vanity.* There is therefore no eſcaping from him, but he muſt be ſeized by the wrath of an infinite God.

2. THE

3. *THE horror ariſing from hence, is a killing fear that ſurprizeth the ſoul.* And here,

1. *HE is in continual expectation of divine vengeance.* Heb. 10. 27. He goes up and down as a condemned malefactor, expecting every hour to be fetch'd forth to execution. He looks upon God ready to meet him in his anger, and purſue him to deſtruction. He thinks he hears him ſaying to him, as, *Iſai.* 47. 3. Hoſ. 13. 8. *I will meat them as a bear that is bereaved of her whelps, and will rent the caul of their heart, and there will I devour them like a lion.*

2. *THIS expectation terribly affrights him.* It makes him horribly afraid: he looks upon his puniſhment as intollerable. *Gen.* 4. 14. He cannot think of it without amazement. Iſai. 33.14. *The ſinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulneſs ſurprizeth the hypocrites: who among us ſhall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us ſhall dwell with everlaſting burnings?*

3. *THIS terrible fear, fills his ſoul with bitter pangs of ſorrow.* For ſuch a fear is a preſent miſery, and it over-burdens the man, and he cannot ſtand up under it, he falls under deep qualms of trouble; the Soul is intollerably wounded by it. Prov. 18. 14. *But a wounded ſpirit who can bear?*

4. *THIS makes his ſoul to ſink and dye within him.* It drinks up his ſpirits; it extinguiſheth all his comforts; he goes up and down a damned creature whiles he lives, and hath an hell in his own conſcience: and his terrors make him wiſh he could fly from God, and hide himſelf away. Hence that, Rev. 6.15,16. *And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free-man hid themſelves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains, And ſaid to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that ſitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.* And he would fly from himſelf; yea it makes him an univerſal terror. *Jer.* 20. 3, 4.

2. WE may conſider, *how far every guilty ſinner is under the power of this horror,* in theſe things,

1. *THERE have been not a few wicked ſinners that have in this world been under the efficacy of this horror.* Such an one was *Cain*, Gen. 4. 14. He could not bear it. And ſome think *Judas* his horror ſtrangled him; however it drew him to it. *Matth.* 27. 5. And what a terrible fit was *Belſhazzer* in? *Dan.* 5. 5.

2. *THERE are many that have terrible gripings of this horror, who diſcover not the wound, but keep it ſecret.* They feign a little mirth, to put a blind upon the world, but who knows what inward pangs they have, though they bite them in? They are in travailing pain, but are not willing to tell it. Prov. 14. 10,13. *The heart knoweth his own bitterneſs. Even in laughter the heart is ſorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heavineſs.* Job 15. 20, 21. *The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days, and the number of years is hidden to the oppreſſour. A dreadful ſound is in his ears; in his proſperity the deſtroyer ſhall come upon him.*

3. *THIS is the portion of all ſinners from the hand of God, and they are every moment liable to it.* For,

1. *THEY have no ſound bottom of peace with God.* He and they are not reconciled together, if they cry peace to themſelves, it is without all reaſon; their ſtate is terrible, whether they feel or believe it to be ſo. Iſai. 57. 20,21. *But the wicked are like the troubled ſea, when it cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt up mire and dirt. There is no peace ſaith my God, to the wicked.*

2. *IF they have any reſpite, it is but a time of truce.* We have obſerved, that God doth at preſent moderate the miſeries of men, but yet the controverſy abideth. Pſal. 50. 21,22. *Theſe things haſt thou done, and I kept ſilence: thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch an one as thy ſelf: but I will reprove thee, and ſet them in order before thine eyes. Now conſider this ye that forget God, leſt I tear you in pieces, & there be none to deliver.*

3. *THEY have the principles & reaſons of this horror in them.* And if God do but touch their Conſciences, they ſhall preſently fall into it: they are now aſleep in carnal ſecurity, but if God awaken them, they ſuddenly fall into this terror, and it is threatned in the word of God; it is included in the curſe, and they are laying in more matter for it every day.

USE. *LET this then awaken Young and Old to ſee and bewail this woful miſery of themſelves.* Think how it is with you, and be ſuitably affected with it. And here,

1. *THINK what a ſpiritual ſlavery you are held under.* Your luſts rule in you, and domineer over you, your Souls are fettered with your ſins, and you can do nothing elſe; tho' you are told of your evil ways, and know the judgment of God, and the miſerable ruine they are leading you to, yet you are under their tyranny, and cannot get from under it; but are every day carrying faggots to your own pile of vengeance: and the Devil is your maſter, you have no command of your ſelves, but do and will obey his commands; and Oh! remember, he is driving you to the chambers of death, and hurrying you down the ſteep precipice of everlaſting deſtruction: and how can you endure to live in ſuch a ſlavery.

2. *THINK what horrors your Conſciences are expoſed unto.* Have you no reflections now and then? Are there no inward gripings that terrify you? is all quiet? well, if there be none, there is matter for them, and they will come ſooner or later: be then warned in the midſt of all your jollity and mirth, to remember the hand-writing of terror that is out againſt you, and you muſt be made to read it. It may be it is now laughing time with you, but weeping time haſtens on apace. And now what doth all this beſpeak, but that you feel this unhappineſs, and give welcome entertainment to the glorious deliverance which Jeſus Chriſt hath wrought out, and hath revealed to you in the Goſpel. He hath purchaſed

chaſed a Goal-delivery from the Law, and by his Almighty Power is able and ready to pluck you out of the hand of your ſpiritual enemies, and beſtow a glor ous Liberty upon you; ſo that neither ſin, nor Satan, nor your own Conſciences, ſhall any more be able to harm you. If therefore you have any love for your Souls, make haſte, and fly with ſpeed into His Arms, and accept of His Redemption, ſo ſhall your Soul eſcape as a bird from the fowlers ſnare.

[OCTOBER 3. 1693.]

SERMON *LXVI.*

II. THEY are made liable *to Death it ſelf:* This is the Second Head unto which the Miſeries of fallen Men are referred. The word, *Death*, is uſed in Scripture to expreſs all thoſe evils, whether of ſin or ſorrow, unto which Man is expoſed, and in the curſe, Gen. 2. 17. *For in the day thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely dye.* It is to be underſtood as comprehending them all. But in our preſent Conſideration, we are to underſtand it in a more reſtrained and vulgar ſenſe, viz. of the Death of the Body; as it comes after, and conſummates the miſeries of this life. Hence we may conſider, 1. *Of the nature of this Death.* 2. *That it was introduced by man's Apoſtacy.* 3. *Wherein it appears to be a miſery?*

1. WE may take an account of the *nature* of it in this deſcription, *A bodily Death, is a diſſolution of the union between the Soul and Body, whereby a ſeparation is made, and ſo the Body becomes a carcaſs, being deprived of all vital actions.* It is called a bodily death, partly to difference it from the ſpiritual death, of the inchoations whereof we have already treated; partly, becauſe only the Body and not the Soul is capable of a proper natural death. Life and Death are contraries, life is the habit, death is the privation of it: ſo that by the conſideration of the one, we are led to ſee the other. Here then,

1. *LIFE is a principle or power of ſelf motion in a thing.* There are various actions about life, but this is the moſt general and comprehenſive, and is applicable to all the ſorts of life which any creatures do enjoy: whatſoever moveth, it is either by an external force applied to it, or by an inward principle; now this inward principle is either a natural quality (by which things out of their place are carried to their proper place, as heavy things move downward; and this doth not amount to life) or ſuch a natural power as by which they move themſelves in their place, and this is that we call life.

2. *MAN conſiſts of two eſſential conſtituting parts, viz. a Body, and a reaſonable Soul.* Neither of theſe alone is the man, but both in conjunction. The Soul indeed is often taken for the man, it being the nobler and more excellent part in him, but that is not a proper, but a tropical expreſſion: both go together to his ſpecification and perſonatity: we have therefore that account given of his making or conſtitution, *Gen.* 2. 7.

3. *MAN's life conſiſts in the union of theſe two.* Man ſtands in the rank or order of living creatures, and he comes to be ſo by vertue of this conjunction. The body is the Souls organ, fitted for it to act upon; but the organ without the Soul is a lifeleſs thing, it is enlivened by the putting of that into it, as *Gen.* 2. 7. and though it be uſually denominated rational, from the moſt excellent operations of it flowing from it's intellectual and moral powers or faculties by which it is ſpecified; yet it hath in it all the other powers of life, ſelf motion, and vegetation, and ſenſe, which derive from it to the body. Hence when that goes, all go with it.

4. *HENCE when this union is diſſolved, and a ſeperation made, the body dies.* The ſoul being a principle of life to it, it can live no longer than it enjoys this union: the Souls departing therefore, and dying are uſed ſynonymically, Gen. 35. 18. *As her ſoul was departing, for ſhe died.* How this ſeparation is made, is rather a philoſophical than theological enquiry; only let us obſerve, that as mans body was made of diſſoluble principles, being elementary; ſo the bond of union by which that, and the Soul were conjoyned was diſſoluble; this bond was the vital ſpirits, which were the Souls vehicle, and tied it to the body, and therefore by the extinction of thoſe ſpirits, the ſeparation comes to be made: when they faint and fail, the Soul quits its lodging. Pſal. 146. 4. *His breath goeth forth.* Hebr. *ſpirit.* See alſo, Iſai. 57. 16. and this is either by force, or diſeaſe.

5. *BY this ſeparation the body becomes a carcaſs, being deprived of all vital actions.* The ſeperation is not only the curſe of death, but death itſelf, it being a privation; and this is the proper effect in and by which it is diſcerned. The ſoul being a conſtant nature, remains entire and active, and no whit impaired in it's natural powers by being ſeperate; but the body is lifeleſs, ſenſeleſs, begins to putrify, rot, and reſolve into it's elementary principles. Eccl. 12. 7. *Then ſhall the duſt return to the earth as it was.* All the powers of ſelf-motion, vegetation, ſenſation, and reaſoning leave it at once; they are not only impeded, or ſuſpended; but altogether cut off; it ſtirs neither hand nor foot; the nutritive power is gone, and ſo it corrupts, ſight forſakes the eyes, and hearing the ears, and there is no more knowledge in it. Eccl. 9. 5. *But the dead know not any thing.* This is a bodily Death.

2. WE may now take notice how this was introduced by mans Apoſtacy. And here I ſhall endeavour, to eſtabliſh this Concluſion, viz. *That a bodily doth not befall man by a natural neceſſity, but as a puniſhment of ſin,*

and

and hence it muſt take its riſe from the beginning of ſins coming into the world, which was Adam's fall. To make this appear, let me offer theſe Concluſions, .

1. *THAT all men dye, and that according to a ſtatute.* That mankind are mortal, needs juſt as much proof, as that the Sun ſhines at noon in a fair day; the going of one and coming of another generation, are evident things; ſo that thoſe are branded for fools, who preſume of eſcaping it, *Pſal.* 49. 10. Now this is not a meer caſual or eventual thing, but there is a ſtatute for it, Heb. 9. 27. *It is appointed unto men once to die.* The word ſignifies to lay up, or reſerve a thing: now who ſhould appoint this; but he who is the law maker, and that is God; there muſt be a ground or reaſon of this ordination, and it is worth our enquiry after.

2. *THAT actual immortality, was a priviledge belonging to man in his integrity.* His body indeed had ſuch an origination from, and compoſition of the Elements, that it ſtood in need of being maintained by creature-ſuſtenance; and being generable, muſt needs be corruptible in its capacity: but that God was able to keep him from actual dying, or any tendency to it, is not to be queſtioned; and that if man had kept his firſt ſtate, he had never died, is certain. The firſt covenant had a promiſe as well as a threatning, and as that was death, ſo this is life. Rom. 10, 5. *The man that doth theſe things ſhall live by them.* It was therefore after man had ſinned, and upon it, that he fell under, and heard pronounced upon him the ſentence of death, Gen. 3. 19. *And unto duſt ſhalt thou return.*

3. *A bodily death was comprehended in the threatning annexed to the law.* See Gen. 2. 17. *Thou ſhalt ſurely die.* Active mortality could not be both a condition of nature, and a puniſhment of ſin too: if God had abſolutely appointed man to it whether he ſinned or no, it had been in vain to put him in fear of ſinning by the danger of it; for what need or reaſon had there been for it? or what force could there be in it, to tell him that if he tranſgreſſed the command he ſhould certainly die, or what awe could it lay upon him, if he knew before that whether he obeyed or no, he muſt dye, nor could he prevent it, by his moſt perfect obedience, being made for it? True, the death of the body is not all intended in that threatning which graſps in it, all the miſeries of Soul and Body, here and hereafter. But the Apoſtle applies it to the body, Rom. 8. 10. *And if Chriſt be in you, the body is dead becauſe of ſin.* He thereupon argues mans being under the law before *Moſes* by this very thing, Chap. 5. 14. *Nevertheleſs death reigned from Adam to Moſes, even over them that had not ſinned after the ſimilitude of Adams tranſgreſſion.* And *Gen.* 5. is an hiſtorical exemplification of the effect of the ſentence in this part of it.

4. *MAN had not died, if God had not withdrawn the bleſſing of immortality which at firſt be beſtowed upon him.* There indeed needed no new principles to be put into man to make him mortal; but if that bleſſing had abode upon him, nothing ſhould have impaired his health, nor ſhortened his life; no inward malady ſhould have ſeized him; no foreign violence had fallen upon him; no caſualty had cut him him off: to this the Pſalmiſt alludes, *Pſal.* 91. 10. But this being ſuſpended, he now lies expoſed to every thing that may bring him to his duſt. Now this bleſſing was conferred upon him by promiſe, not abſolute, for then it muſt have been perpetual; but conditional: it muſt then come in upon his violation of the condition, and that could be nothing elſe but his Apoſtacy.

5. *THE word of God every where makes ſin to be the procuring moral cauſe of death.* If we conſult the divine Oracle, and ask there how it comes to paſs that there are ſo many graves digged in the world; it will ever point us to ſin as the ſource of it. See *Rom.* 8. 10. And if man dies by a law, what law can that be, but that in which God threatned him with death in caſe of ſin? And we have that interpretation given of it, Ezek. 18. 4. *Behold all ſouls are mine, as the ſoul of the father, ſo alſo the ſoul of the ſon is mine: the ſoul that ſinned it ſhall die.* Hither the Pſalmiſt reduceth the great mortality which befell Iſrael in the wilderneſs, *Pſal.* 90. 7, 8, 9. And the Apoſtle tells us that the firſt ſin brought it in, and they came together, as cauſe and effect, Rom. 5. 12. *Wherefore as by one man ſin entred into the world, and death by ſin: and ſo death hath paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned.*

6. *THIS bodily death is in itſelf a great evil.* This is to be proſecuted in the next head; but here it is to be remarked; now all evil is Theologically reduced to theſe two heads, of ſin and puniſhment, and muſt be referred to one of them; ſin it is not, and therefore muſt be a fruit of ſin; for all puniſhment is inflicted by God, and that as a righteous Judge; and ſo it muſt be reduced to a rule of righteouſneſs, and preſuppoſeth a merit of it in the creature that is made to ſuffer it; and that can ariſe from nothing but ſin, which derives from man's apoſtacy.

3. *WHEREIN this bodily death appears to be a miſery?*

A. WE muſt here diſtinguiſh of the ſubjects, viz. Mankind in their natural ſtate abiding under the covenant of works, and thoſe that are priviledged by being brought under the covenant of grace. Death is indeed made a gain to theſe, Phil. 1. 21. *To die is gain.* And belongs to their inventory. 1 Cor. 3. 22. *Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things preſent, or things to come, all are yours.* The ſting is taken out; but it abides in it unto the other, it is to them a part of the curſe, and it hath a great curſe in it. We muſt alſo take care to put the preſent ſeeming advantages it brings with it, into the ballance againſt

againſt the real miſchiefs which attend it; it indeed puts a preſent end to many outward troubles and bodily miſeries, pains, and vexations which men here undergo. Job 3. 17, 18, 19. *There the wicked ceaſe from troubling: and there the weary be at reſt. There the priſoners reſt together, they hear not the voice of the oppreſſour. The ſmall and great are there, and the ſervant is free from his maſter.* And to a godly man there is comfort in this, but to the ſinner it affords no true relief; for if it carries him from bad to worſe; if by it he leaps out of the frying-pan into the fire, what is he profited? And there are theſe things which give demonſtration to it.

1. *IT makes a ſeparation between the ſoul and body.* This is the very nature of it, and that is in itſelf a miſery; and for that reaſon the godly themſelves have a natural reluctancy againſt it: they would not paſs through it if they could go to heaven without it. 2 Cor. 5. 4. *For we that are in this tabernacle do grone, being burdened: not for that we would be uncloathed, but cloathed upon, that mortality might be ſwallowed up of life.* Though the Soul be a ſubſtance capable of exiſting and acting in a ſtate of ſeparation, yet it is not a perfect ſubſiſtence, but being made for ſuch a body, hath a love to, and inclination to coninue in union with that body: and though ſickneſs, pain, and trouble render it a troubleſome lodging, yet had it rather abide in it, under great inconveniences, than be diſlodged. Death is the parting of two dear companions, which is very grievous.

2. *IT leaves the body an uſeleſs, ſhameful and putrifying thing.* Every member is hereby incapacitated for performing its functions, which during life it was ſerviceable for; the body loſeth all its honour, a dead carcaſe is a diſgraceful thing, and becomes burdenſome to the living, and though they take a great delight in it before, yet now they would have it buried out of their ſight. *Gen.* 23. 4. Its beauty is blaſted, its comelineſs is gone, and it becomes noiſome to the living and intollerable, and they hurry it under ground, that it may not infect the air, and make it peſtilential.

3. *IT removes the ſinner for ever from all good.* Though natural men are truly miſerable in this life, as was before obſerved, being under the influences of the wrath and curſe of God; yet through the preſent moderation of the curſe, they have a portion in this life, and ſometimes a large one too. Pſal. 17. 14. *Men of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whoſe belly thou filleſt with thy hid treaſure: they are full of children, and leave the reſt of their ſubſtance to their babes.* The rich man, (*Luk.* 16. 25.) had his good things here. The worldling ſometimes ſpreads and flouriſheth for a while. *Pſal.* 37. 25. They have wealth, and honour, and all ſorts of carnal delights; but death puts an end to all this, at one unhappy ſtroke: his ſoul is required, & theſe things are no more his; his houſes and lands which he called by his name, change their owners, his honour is laid in the duſt, and he is like the beaſts that periſh: he leaves his pleaſant company, rich furniture, all his mirth and jollity, never more to have any thing to do with them; he leaves his portion behind him, and hath never another to go to.

4. *IT concludes his day of grace.* This is a priviledge that God indulgeth many ſinners with, in this life, in which they have many fair offers of eternal life made to them; an advantage is given them to come in and make their peace with God, and flee from the wrath to come; but when once they are dead, there is no more of this. The Goſpel is not appointed to be preached over the graves of men; the joyful ſound of the glad tidings of peace, is no more to be heard by them, their hopes are now gone for ever. Iſai. 38. 18. *For the grave cannot praiſe thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down to the pit cannot hope for thy truth.* Eccl. 9. 10. *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might: for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wiſdom in the grave whither thou goeſt.* 2 Cor. 6. 2. *Behold now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of ſalvation.* The ſinner that dies in his natural ſtate, is gone beyond all recovery.

5. *IT is the paſſage to everlaſting miſeries in the other world.* Death is the portal to eternity, and carries men over to an unchangeable ſtate. If men were in every reſpect like the beaſts that periſh, and there were no more to be heard of them forever, after once they are put out of the way, and have ſuffered a diſſolution, it might be ſome abatement of the miſery which it brings: but as it gives to the people of God a writ of eaſe from the miſeries of this life, and a paſſage into endleſs joys; ſo it puts an utter end to all the delights of ſinners, and delivers them over from the beginning to the perfection of never-expiring infelicity: they go when they dye, to the *generation of their fathers, never to ſee light*, Pſal. 49. 19. they go *to their own place.* The rich man dies, and is buried, and it may be with pompous magnificence, and ſtately ceremonies; but the next news we have of him is in hell, where enduring and intollerable woes ſurprize him, and devour him. But what becomes of him there, belongs to an after conſideration: but this is the condition which Death brings him to, and leaves him in.

USE I. *LET this ſerve to alarm all Sinners to a trembling expectation of dying every moment.* And it concerns not only thoſe that are Old and crazy, and under ſenſible decays of nature: but the Youngeſt, healthieſt, and moſt likely to live. Remember then, that Death is not only a thing that your frail nature ſubjects you to, but that unto which you are ſentenced by a righteous God, as a juſt puniſhment of ſin; that it is a curſe of the law, which is fallen upon you, by reaſon of it; that you were no ſooner ſinners, then

children of death, and *that* you were as ſoon as you were born; for then you were ſinners and children of wrath: you are condemned already, the ſentence ſtands againſt you, and there is nothing but divine indulgence that ſuſpends the putting of it in execution, which is at his pleaſure, and you cannot promiſe your ſelves one hours patience longer to be uſed with you. Take heed of pleaſing your ſelves with ungrounded promiſes. How vain is it for a condemned melefactor to comfort himſelf with ſaying, I am as likely to live as any man; I am in youth, and health, &c. when the law hath made him a man of death, and he is going to execution? And remember, it is a curſed death you are going to; well may it be called a King of terrors. Read over the miſeries that accompany it, and ſay whether it be not to be trembled at.

USE II. *LET this thought make us all out of love with ſin.* There is a woful natural delight that unregenerate men take in it; it ſuits their carnal luſts, and gratifies their depraved minds; but one would think that this one conſideration, ſhould be ſufficient to embitter it to us, and make us treat it as an evil and bitter thing, with utmoſt deteſtation. When we begin to look upon ſin with a liking, now let us reflect and ſay, this it is that hath killed all mankind; it is the great murderer of mens lives: had it not been for this, Death had been a ſtranger, an unheard of thing, any further, than in the threatning which guarded the law; we had never heard the tolls of mortality, never been called to the bed-ſides of our friends, to be entertained with their dying groans: never been expoſed to a grievous diſſolution: look through this glaſs upon ſin, and let it teach us to hate it, abhor it, fly from it, and ſeek by all means to be delivered from the curſe and cruelty of it. Hence,

USE III. *LET this awaken ſinners to ſeek ſpeedily to get the ſting of death taken out, and themſelves ſecured againſt eternal death.* A bodily death is not to be avoided; but the quality of it may be altered, as it is to the godly. Chriſt hath born the curſe of it, and it is become a friend to them: And remember the laſt article of a ſinners death, that it wafts him over to one that is eternal. Now know it, that there is a remedy provided againſt this in the new Covenant: Jeſus Chriſt hath purchaſed a deliverance, and offers it on terms, to all that come within the call of the Goſpel; and bids them to accept of it: and Oh! what a difference will it make upon a bodily death? If you dye as you are, this will be but the beginning of ſorrows; but if you get this intereſt, it will put an end to all ſorrows, and they ſhall be no more. Remember then ſinners, the ſentence that you are under, and what reaſon you have to expect the execution of it every moment; Oh! ſue the pardon then before it be too: do not trifle, leſt you rue it for ever; bleſs God that you have the hopes of it ſet before you, and the way diſcovered in which you may obtain it, and let it be now your firſt buſineſs. Go home, and to night before to morrow, ſee that this matter be well adjuſted; think, if I lie down to ſleep, before I have made my peace with God, and gotten the ſentence of condemnation taken off, I may never wake more in this world, and then it will be too late. If thus you be awakened in good earneſt to betake your ſelves preſently to Chriſt, then may you bid death it ſelf welcome, and ſay, *Now Lord, letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace.*

[OCTOBER 31. 1693.]

SERMON *LXVII.*

III. THEY are made liable to the *pains of Hell for ever.* This is the laſt and moſt diſmal part of the Tradegy. After a miſerable life, and a curſed death, they paſs over to endleſs torments. This alſo is comprized in the threatning, *Gen.* 2. 17. and to this head belongs the whole puniſhment both of loſs and of ſenſe, which falls upon ſinners after a bodily death hath taken them away from the preſent life. The former were but ſteps to this, and the inchoations of the death to which man was doomed for ſin, here now we come to the perfection of it; and it is that which is called the *ſecond Death.*

THERE are three things here to be taken notice of, viz. 1. *The place where this miſery is to be ſuffered.* 2. *The miſeries that are to be undergone in this place.* 3. *The duration of them.* Of theſe in order.

1. *THE place where this miſery is to be ſuffered, is called Hell.* The Hebrews had many words to expreſs *Hell* by, uſed in the Old-Teſtament; the moſt whereof are indifferently uſed for both the grave and hell, or both for the ſtate of the dead and the damned: but there are two words which are metaphorically uſed for hell it ſelf; viz. *Topbet*, and, *The valley of Hinnom*: the reaſon of the metaphor was, becauſe there was a place, a little without the city of *Jeruſalem*, in which the idolatrous Jews had erected the image of *Molech*, where after a barbarous and moſt cruel manner they burnt their children in ſacrifice to the Idol: which place was called *Topbet*, becauſe of the ſounding of the trumpets which was uſed at theſe inhumane butcheries, to drown the noiſe of the dolorous cries of theſe poor innocents, under their intollerable tortures: And the valley of *Hinnom*, from the ancient land lords, Joſh. 15. 8. *And the border went up by the valley of the ſon of Hinnom, unto the ſouth ſide of the Jebuſite, the ſame is Jeruſalem.* And becauſe there could not be a more lively repreſentation of hell upon earth than this was, theſe words were made uſe of to expreſs it: for the former, ſee *Iſai.* 30. 33. the latter is once and

again

again made uſe of by our Saviour Chriſt, Mat. 5. 22, 29, 30. —*That thy whole body ſhould be caſt into hell.* and elſewhere; as the beſt criticks underſtand the word; which doubtleſs he did, becauſe it was more underſtood by the Jews to whom he ſpake. Whether the word, *Hell*, be uſed in the Scripture to ſignify a place, or only to intimate the after ſtate of man, is diſputed by ſome; but I think without reaſon. That it may be uſed metonymically, for the ſtate, needs no debate; but that it firſtly and moſt properly inrends a place may be made appear in the clearing up the deſcription of it; which may be this: *Hell is a place purpoſely prepared by God, for the advancement of the glory of his Juſtice in the everlaſting puniſhment of Devils, and wicked men.* When we have taken a ſcantling of this deſcription, we ſhall ſee what a fearful thing hell is. Here then,

1. *HELL is a place, or it is in a place.* Beſides thoſe Scripture expreſſions which infer this truth; when it is called a *lake burning, &c.* Rev. 21. 8. ſaid that the wicked ſhall be thrown or *caſt into it*, Pſal. 9. 17. Math. 5. 29. and there is a *diſtance* ſaid to be *between it and heaven*, Luk. 16. 26. all which expreſſions do intimate a place, nay and that it is in words called a place of torment, *ver.* 28. there are two Concluſions which may be eaſily made to appear. viz.

(1.) *THAT the puniſhment of the damned muſt needs be in ſome place.* If we ſuppoſe men and devils to be puniſhed, we muſt allow them ſomewhere to be puniſhed. I ſhall not criticiſe on the fond notions of men about place, and the nice diſtinction between *locus* and *ubi*. It is out of doubt that a finite being cannot be every where at once, or unlimited, for then it were not finite, and why we may not call its *ubi* its place, I know no reaſon. Devils indeed, and Souls, are ſpirits, but they are creatures; and if they be here, they cannot be there: it was only the rich mans ſoul that was in hell, *Luk.* 16. and yet he calls it a place: but beſides, the bodies of the wicked are alſo doomed to this puniſhment, *Math.* 10. 28. which all acknowledge muſt occupy a place. To talk of an hell, and deny it a place, is to feign an imaginary hell, and ſo to bring the article it ſelf into queſtion.

(2.) *THAT hell is a place fixed and determined.* It not only ſhall be in place, but it is aſſigned where it ſhall be. This is evident, in that it is ſaid both to be ordained, and prepared by God, *Iſai.* 30. 33. *Math.* 25. 41. The firſt Hebrew word ſignifies to diſpoſe or put a thing in order; the latter ſignifies to fit a thing for its uſe; the Greek word ſignifies both to appoint and make ready: now this could not be, unleſs the place it ſelf were pitched upon: beſides it is the ſame word that is uſed concerning the place of the bleſſed, *ver.* 34. and we know that that is heaven, a fixed, and determinate place: as therefore that is called a place, ſo is this a *priſon*, 1 Pet. 3. 19. becauſe the Souls of the wicked are there detained till the day of Judgment.

IF any ſhall enquire, *Where this place is?* I anſwer; The Scripture was not deſigned to gratify mens needleſs curioſity, but to profit them for eternal life; and becauſe it more concerns us to ſeek how to eſcape it, than to know where it is, it rather tells us what is the woful unhappineſs of the place, than points us where to find it.

BUT yet there may be ſome ſober conjectures made about it. There are many wild gueſſes made on this account, which I over paſs; only give me leave briefly to ſay thus much; That when a number of the glorious Angels by their apoſtacy made themſelves Devils, Heaven was ſhut againſt them, that they could no more return thither, and they were thruſt down into the lower world, as into a priſon houſe; hence are ſaid to be *reſerved, &c.* Jude 6. Here then is their hell at preſent: That the Souls of the wicked, when they depart from their bodies, fall into the hands of Devils, with whom they are to be for ever, is very likely, as the Souls of the righteous do into the hands of the bleſſed Angels; as theſe therefore carry their precious Souls to heaven, ſo do the other their curſed Souls to hell, and that is to be with them, and it is called *their own place*, Act. 1. 25. and that is in this lower world. And indeed, the ſin that was committed here below, might well turn the earth into an hell. That for the preſent there is ſome place aſſigned for the damned Souls to be kept and reſerved and tormented in, is not to be doubted; whether it be in ſome ſubterranean receptacle, provided for that purpoſe, is not to us certain, but ſeems to be intimated from ſuch Scriptures as, Pſal. 49. 19. *He ſhall go to the generation of his fathers, they ſhall never ſee light.* Prov. 21. 16. *The man that wandereth out of the way of underſtanding, ſhall remain in the congregation of the dead.* The word *dead*, is ſometimes tranſlated Giants, ſometimes Devils; and is here interpreted of the Devils and the damned. Prov. 9. 18. *But he knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her gueſts are in the depths of hell.* Iſai. 14. 9. *Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it ſtirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raiſed up from their thrones all the kings of the nations.* That after the day of Judgment, this lower elementary world ſhall be the hell of the Devils and damned, is to me more than probable: how far it will be fitted for it from the great conflagration, of which, 2 *Pet.* 3. 10. we may conjecture; when it will be a place of confuſion, and burning: and what other uſe will be made of it, we have no fair proſpect of it. To think, as ſome do, that it ſhall be renewed with all the creatures which once were on it, is not only without Scripture, but againſt reaſon; as if thoſe temporary things, were to be turned into eternal things. As for the Saints they have another home, and ſo it

will not be for them to converſe in, ſo that only Devils and wicked men are left behind, when the Judgment is over. Let us further conſider, that here they ſinned, here they are impriſoned, and here they ſhall be judged, and here ſhall the ſentence be put in execution; and we know that the place of execution is meet to be near the place of judgment. Beſides in the hiſtory of the creation, that work is confined to the making of but two places, viz. *Heaven & Earth*, Gen. 1. 1. So that in one of theſe hell muſt be; but it cannot be in the former, and therefore we muſt aſſign it to the latter. Finally, the ſtate of hell is expreſſed by a *ſeparation from the comfortable preſence of God*, 2 Theſ. 1. 9. and by a *departing from him*, Mat. 25. 41. Now the place of his glorious manifeſting himſelf is the third Heaven; and this lower world is at the moſt remote diſtance from it. But this may ſuffice.

2. *THE ſubjects for whom this place is appointed, are Devils, and wicked men.* Our Saviour indeed ſeems to intimate as if it were principally deſigned for the Devils, *Math.* 25. 41. but however, the ſentence then paſſed ſignifies that it was for the wicked too: and other Scriptures do plainly allot it to them, *Act.* 1. 25. *Iſai.* 30. 33. *Pſal.* 9. 16. *Jude* 4. They are the enemies of God, and ſuch as are abhorred of him, who muſt have their abode here: he hath provided another place for his friends, and beloved: and by the company that is to be there, we may make a gueſs at the wretchedneſs of the place. There were indeed at the firſt, no Devils nor ungodly men, they all came out of God's hands in creation very good; but he, by his infinite fore-knowledge, ſaw that there would be thoſe who would make themſelves ſuch, and he accordingly allotted this place for them, as being moſt fit for ſuch vile creatures, as had made themſelves wholly unfit for communion with him in the holy place. We have ſuch a character given us of ſuch as are for the place, in that catalogue, Rev. 21. 8. *But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and ſorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, ſhall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone: which is the ſecond death.* Chap. 22. 15. *For without are dogs, and ſorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whoſoever loveth and maketh a lie.*

3. *THE end or deſign of their being in this place, is to undergo everlaſting puniſhment.* So our Saviour Chriſt expreſſeth it, *Mat.* 25. *ult.* Hence we read of the *ſorrows of hell*, Pſal. 18. 5. the *damnation of hell*, Mat. 23. 33. being *tormented in hell*, Luk. 16. 23. and of *hell fire*, or the *fire of hell*, Mat. 5. 22. Touching the eternity of theſe puniſhments, it belongs to an after-conſideration; but that it is a place of puniſhments, yet further beſpeaks the terribleneſs of it: eſpecially if we conſider that here they are to be compleated. All puniſhment is a miſery, elſe it could not bear that name: thoſe that are undergone in this life are experienced to be ſo; but alas! they are but the *beginnings of ſorrows*; and here they are to receive their perfection. There is nothing elſe but puniſhment to be heard of in hell; it is the place where God will inflict all his wrath upon his enemies. Here ſinners had a great deal of mercy mixt with their miſery, but there ſhall be none at all. Iſai. 27. 11. *He that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will ſhew them no favour.* There is nothing to be heard of in this place but endleſs torments. It is an eternal rack on which the creature is kept without any intermiſſion or breathing while. If there had been no ſin, there had been no puniſhment, and conſequently no hell.

4. *THE higheſt end of this puniſhment, and of God's allotting of this place for it, is the advancement of the glory of his Juſtice.* There is a twofold Juſtice which we attribute to God; *Sovereign Juſtice*, which is nothing elſe but his abſolute liberty and authority over the works of his hands; of this, Rom. 9. 20. *Nay but O man, who art thou that replieſt againſt God, ſhall the thing formed ſay to him that formed it, Why haſt thou made me thus.* And this eminently appears in his eternal purpoſes. And his *Relative Juſtice*, which is exerted in his proceeding according to the rule conſtituted between him and the reaſonable creature; of this, Rom. 9. 22. *What if God, willing to ſhew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-ſuffering the veſſels of wrath fitted to deſtruction. Relative Juſtice*, among men is diſtributed into, *commutative*, and *diſtributive: Commutative juſtice* conſiſts in righteouſneſs obſerved in the dealings or traffick which men have one with another; and in the proper notion of it, there is no room for it between God and the creature, becauſe we can give nothing worth what we have of him, but receive it all of his bounty: hence that, Rom. 11. 35. *Or who hath firſt given unto him, and it ſhall be recompenſed unto him again? Diſtributive Juſtice* conſiſts in the rewarding or puniſhing perſons according to law and equity: and this God aſſumes to himſelf, and it belongs to our preſent conſideration. The foundation of this is in the covenant which God tranſacted with mankind at firſt; in which he gave them a law, and ratified it with a promiſe and a threatning; which were to take place according as he either kept or violated that law. Hence *relative* and *diſtributive juſtice* is ſaid to be either *rewarding* or *revenging*; and we have both of them expounded in, Rom. 2. 6, 7, 8. *Who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteouſneſs; indignation, and wrath.* It is the latter of theſe which the conſideration of hell belongs to. Here obſerve,

(1.) *THAT*

(1.) *THAT God intended from eternity the declarative glory of his revenging juſtice.* Rom. 9.22. This was one of thoſe Attributes which he purpoſed the manifeſtation of in his works of efficiency; and accordingly he made creatures capable of being tranſacted withal in order hereunto. It is a rule without exception, that whatſoever comes to paſs in time, was ordained before time; but we are aſſured that there is ſuch a thing in the event, and we are told, Prov. 16. 4. *The Lord hath made all things for himſelf: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.* And, Jude 4. *For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into laſciviouſneſs, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

(2.) *THAT be accordingly conſtituted a law of juſtice, between him and the reaſonable creature.* That there was ſuch a conſtitution, between Him and the Angels is to be ſuppoſed, becauſe they are to be judged at the laſt day. 1 Cor. 6. 3. *Know ye not that we ſhall judge Angels.* 2 Pet. 2. 4. *For if God ſpared not the Angels that ſinned, but caſt them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkneſs, to be reſerved unto judgment.* That he did ſo with men, appears from, Gen. 2. 17. *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou ſhalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely dye.* And elſewhere frequently in Scripture. Now in the conſtitution of this law, there was a preſumption of their breaking it, and a puniſhment threatned in caſe of ſuch a breach, which is called Death, and what a death it was, the whole word of God ſerves to inform us.

(3.) *THAT God voluntarily permitted ſome Angels, and all Mankind to bring themſelves under the threatning by their tranſgreſſion.* He left them to fall: there was his permiſſive providence in it, he could elſe have kept them from falling, as well as he made them upright; and by their ſo falling, they, *ipſo facto*, came under the ſentence of condemnation; they were made guilty. But of theſe things I have before ſpoken diſtinctly.

(4.) *THAT God leaves all Devils, and ſome of mankind to abide under this ſentence.* There is a way of recovery found out for man, according to the new Covenant; but there is none at all for the Devils, and therefore they are altogether deſperate: but all men are not recovered in that way, but multitudes are left under the condemnation, in which they were born, and that is, to be *children of wrath*, Eph. 2. 3. and ſo *the wrath of God* doth ſtill *abide on them*, Joh. 3. 36. And ſo *revenging juſtice* muſt take place upon them perſonally; for God will be as good as his word, and will give a full accompliſhment unto it. 1 Sam. 15. 29. *And alſo the ſtrength of Iſrael will not lie, nor repent: for he is not a man that he ſhould repent.*

(5.) *THE puniſhments appointed for them by this ſentence are righteous*; Elſe it could not be juſtice to execute them. The puniſhing a perſon according to law cannot be a righteous thing, unleſs the law appointing it be a righteous law, nor can that be ſo, except the offence be ſo great as to merit a puniſhment as high as is denounced; but ſo it is here. Rom. 6. 23. *For the wages of ſin is death.* And ſo it is declared concerning this very thing in, 2 Theſ. 1. 6. *Seeing it is a righteous thing with God, to recompence tribulation to them which trouble you.* The truth is, the creation is not capable of ſuffering a penalty greater than ſin muſt needs deſerve, nor ſo great in quantity or meaſure, and therefore it muſt ſupply it in its duration.

(6.) *GOD will have theſe to be everlaſting monuments of this Attribute.* The creatures that are concerned with *this juſtice* are immortal creatures; at leaſt as to their ſpiritual part: and God would have this righteouſneſs of his to ſhine forth for ever in the ſubjects of it. As therefore he will have them to abide through eternity, ſo he will continue this puniſhment of theirs through the ſame duration. Hence that, 2 Theſ. 1.9. *Who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.* But more of this afterwards.

(7.) *HENCE God appointed hell for the exaltation of this juſtice in.* As the creature is deſigned for an eternity, ſo it muſt be ſomewhere diſpoſed for it; this place therefore God contrived for the endleſs abode of his enemies; and for that reaſon it is called their *own place*, becauſe as they have deſerved it, ſo God hath decreed it for them. As therefore heaven is a place where mercy and grace are to be illuſtrated in their glory, ſo hell is a place where juſtice muſt ſit in ſtate and triumph, where God will ſhew his infinite hatred of ſin, and make it to appear that he is juſt in his diſtribution to the children of wrath. Pſal. 9. 16. *The Lord is known by the judgments which he executeth; the wicked is ſnared in the works of his own hands.*

5. *GOD therefore prepared hell purpoſely for this deſign.* The infinite wiſdom of God is to be ſeen and adored in all his works: now there are two things in which this wiſdom is principally to be obſerved, viz. in *appointing* every thing for a ſuitable end, ſo as that he may have his honour by it; and in *contriving* it ſo as that it may beſt attain that end for which it was appointed; and this is called his *preparing* it, in Scripture; when therefore hell is ſaid to be prepared by him, it tells us, that he hath accommodated it to this purpoſe, that it may be a place moſt fitted for the ſhewing his wrath in the puniſhment of thoſe who muſt be the monuments of his indignation: and thereupon it ſhall be every way furniſhed for that deſign; it muſt therefore needs be a moſt diſmal and dreadful place. The invention of men hath been fearfully fertile in deviſing of tortures to afflict

their

their fellows withal, and places for that end: what then muſt the infinite God do, when he hath a mind to make his wrath known, in a place that had never been, if it had not been for that purpoſe? How miſerable then muſt their lot be, whoſe portion it is to handſell that place? it muſt needs be terrible beyond our preſent capacity of conceiving; though there is enough diſcovered to make the ſinners in Zion afraid. But this will come under the next conſideration.

USE I. *LET this conſideration awaken ſinners Young and Old to ſee the forlorn condition they are in.* You ſee here what an unhappy legacy your firſt father left you, what a fearful inheritance you are born the heirs of. If the miſeries of this life, and a bodily death were all, though they alſo are terrible, it would not be ſo amazing: but know it, your perdition from the hands of God is, to be diſpatcht from a miſerable world, to a more miſerable hell; and if once the thread of your life be cut, in this condition, you are then for ever without recovery; and let me aſſure you this is not to be dallied withal: believe that there is ſuch a place, becauſe God hath aſſured you of it in his word; believe that it is *your own place* by the curſe under which you are born; think what a dreadful place it is, and how intollerable it muſt needs be, by reflecting on the *author of it*, God, who doth all things like himſelf; the *uſe of it*, to be a place of puniſhment, and that for ſin the greateſt evil; and by the *end of it*, to make the wrath of God known, and illuſtrate the triumphs of *revenging juſtice*: think how you ſtand every moment on the brink of this pit, ready to be thurſt over the precipice, and turn'd into that land of darkneſs and confuſion; and now laugh at deſtruction if you can; ſay, is this a place to be dwelt in for ever? is there no hope to eſcape?

USE II. *LET this now make a Saviour precious, and his Salvation acceptable to you.* One would think that ſhould be enough to raiſe the eſteem of Chriſt among a company of periſhing ſinners, to read that title of his, 1 Theſ. 1. 10. *Even Jeſus which delivered us from the wrath to come.* That he is the great and only deliverer, that he hath the keys of death and hell, and is able to quench thoſe everlaſting burnings for us, and free us from going down to the pit. Oh then, if you would not have your everlaſting abode in that burning lake, look unto him now, that you may be ſaved. If once you come there, the gulf will then be fixed, and there will be no coming thence again; and you are going apace to that congregation: now then, whiles a Saviour calls, and warns, and invites you, make haſte, give no reſt to your eyes, nor give him any reſt, until you are gotten under the ſhadow of his wings, and ſet free from the condemnation of hell. Oh that you were now perſwaded to fly as for your lives, that ſo you may never be made to know what it is to dwell with theſe everlaſting burnings, by your own doleful experience.

[NOVEMBER 29. 1693.]

SERMON *LXVIII.*

2. *THE miſeries that are to be undergone in this place.* Theſe are called *the pains of Hell.* The Engliſh word, *pain*, ſeemeth to come from the Latin, *pœna*, which ſignifies puniſhment: and though in our vulgar account it is reſtrained to the *puniſhment of ſenſe*, yet here we are to extend it to *that of loſs* too. Under which two heads may be comprized all that the Scripture gives us light in about this ſubject.

THE ſinner conſiſts of a Soul and a Body; Death makes a ſeparation between theſe, and now the body is left without any more apprehenſion of miſery, being reſolved into its principles, but yet it ſhall be raiſed again, and re-united to the ſoul, and be judged and puniſhed together with it, at the laſt day. Here then the Doctrines of the Reſurrection, and laſt Judgment might come in to be handled; but becauſe they are ſuitably taken notice of in another place in the *Catechiſm*, I ſhall refer it thither: only remembring that there will ſuch a time come; and in the mean while, no ſooner doth the ſinners breath leave his body, but his Soul enters immediately into theſe miſeries. As ſoon as we read of the rich man's death, the next news is of his Souls being in hell in torments, Luk. 16. 22, 23. *The rich man alſo died, and was buried. And in hell he liſt up his eyes.* And I ſhall here only take notice of the miſeries themſelves which are to be ſuffered in that unhappy place, whether by ſoul or body, whether before or after the day of Judgment. And theſe are,

1. *PRIVATIVE; referring to the puniſhment of loſs.* And this conſiſts in a *total* privation of all the happineſs he was made capable of. The word of God expreſſeth it by a ſeparation from the preſence of God. Hence ſuch phraſes, *Math.* 7. 23, 25, 41. 2 *Theſ.* 1. 9. This cannot be meant of his eſſential preſence, which is every where, and hell it ſelf ſhall be full of it. *Pſal.* 139. 8. but of his favourable preſence; and conſequently of all thoſe effects flowing from it, which derived any comfort to him in this life. He lay under the forfeiture of this when he was here, and felt many awful effects of it in this life, as hath been obſerved; but now all theſe ſhall be compleated; I therefore call it a *total* loſs: ſo that by it this miſery ſhall be conſummated: it ſhall be an utterly undoing loſs. And there are theſe miſeries comprehended in it.

1. *HE ſhall loſe all the mercy of God.* There is, beſides the ſpecial favour of God, which hath

hath pity upon his own people, and relieves them with everlaſting mercies; a common benignity which he hath for others in this life; which moves him to pity them, and be patient with them, and holds back his hand of revenge from falling in its full weight upon them, and opens an hand of bounty to them: and this mercy makes their preſent miſery to be moderate in compariſon. But then it will be wholly at an end, God will then ſhut up all his bowels of pity from the creature. That is therefore threatned, Iſai. 27. 11. *Therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will ſhew them no favour.* (*Jam.* 2. 13.) And when all God's mercy is gone, there is nothing but wrath left. As for thoſe who think it is mercy not to be annihilated, and ſo the preſervation of the creatures being in hell, and ſupplying it with ſtrength not to ceaſe, notwithſtanding its miſeries, is mercy; ſure they are miſtaken, for all this is not in love but anger, and the deſign is not favour to them, but to make them veſſels *fit* to hold *deſtruction*, Rom. 9. 22.

2. *HENCE, they ſhall loſe all the mercies and comfort of them, that they had here in this life.* Sinners, in the day of God's patience had their delights here, which though corporeal and beneath the ſatisfaction of a rational ſoul, yet theirs, that were drowned in ſenſuality, took pleaſure in them, as Luk. 12. 19. *And I will ſay to my ſoul, Soul, thou haſt much goods laid up for many years, take thine eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry.* Theſe fools here did laugh and were jocund; and their outward man was ſupported and cheered with theſe things. They had their good things, *Luk.* 16. 25. they lived delicately, fared ſumptuouſly, had the world at will, had their houſes and lands, and furniture, and health, and honour, and pleaſure, and they thought all was well: but now all theſe things are done withal, he loſeth the things themſelves, and all the light and comfort of them. *Pſal.* 49. 17, 18, 19. He muſt have no more feaſts, no more merry bouts, at ſinging and dancing, and carouſing; all that he valued himſelf upon in this life will forſake him at once and for ever.

3. *AND they ſhall loſe heaven too.* It is true, the children of God muſt leave all they had upon earth, as well as the ungodly, though it be not loſt, becauſe they improved it for the glory of God, and they ſhall then have the comfort of it; but beſides there are two things more, that make it not a real miſery to them to loſe all, *viz.* both becauſe they did not place their happineſs on theſe things, as the other did; their hearts were ſomewhere elſe, they were but pilgrims, and had ſufficient for their pilgrimage: and alſo becauſe when they leave a ſorry and ſorrowful world, they have an heaven to give them entertainment, which is their own home. 2 Cor. 5. 1. *For we know, that if our earthly houſe of this tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* Whereas wicked men when they dye, and may be here no more, have no lot in that place, nor ſhall they be ever entertained in it; it will give them no admiſſion; the holineſs of the place is ſuch, that it cannot receive them. Rev. 21. 27. *And there ſhall in no wiſe enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatſoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they that are written in the Lambs book of life.* It might have been theirs, but they would not comply with the terms, and ſo they loſe it, and together with it, all the joys and delights which that place is furniſhed withal; they muſt be for ever ſtrangers unto them, for hell is their place: and who can tell what a loſs this is, unleſs he had been with *Paul*, rapt into the third Heaven, and ſeen the unutterable glories thereof?

4. *THEY ſhall loſe all the Prayers of God's children.* God hath made it the duty of his people, not only to pray one for another, but for ſinners too, that they may be converted and ſaved; and there is a great bleſſing in having the benefit of ſuch prayers; however they may ſcorn and mock at them: now they are favoured with them, but then they ſhall have no more of them. God hath indeed ſometimes forbidden his ſervants to pray for obſtinate ſinners here; but that is not uſual, but there is no liberty for their praying for ſinners in hell: praying for the dead is antiſcriptural; and if any good men have in their ignorant zeal, *built ſuch ſtubble on the foundation*, yet hath it nothing availed, the gulf being then fixed, and hell being a place which never releaſeth any of its priſoners: and what can prayers obtain, where God hath reſolved unchangeably that he will have no mercy?

5. *THEY ſhall loſe all their moral goodneſs.* Though ſin hath depraved man's whole nature, ſo that there remains no theological goodneſs in him naturally; yet there are few ſinners, if any in this world, that are ſo utterly debauched, but that they have ſome principles of morality abiding and active in them; which are a civil ornament to them, and ſo far commend them to the liking of men: yea our Saviour Chriſt looked upon the moral young man, who came to him, and loved him. *Mar.* 10. 21. and this is a common gift of God, for the preſent benefit of mankind, and upholding of the world; but there will be none of this in hell, there being no uſe for it, where there is to be nothing but miſery and confuſion: Children will there have no reſpect for their Parents; nor Parents any love or pity for their Children; nor one neighbour ſhew any civility to another: and though poſſibly theſe principles will not be rooted out of their conſciences, being left there, for their greater torment, yet the practice of them will utterly ceaſe. As the perfection of holineſs is not arrived at by the children of God in this life, but is at once

perfected

perfected when they dye; ſo though ſinners grow worſe and worſe here, yet they are not at the top, all morality is not gone till they dye, and then it leaves them for ever; and this is intimated by that of Chriſt, Mat.25.29. *For unto every one that hath ſhall be given: and he ſhall have abundance: but from him that hath not ſhall be taken away, even that which he hath.*

6. *THEY ſhall there loſe all their Hope.* I confeſs, the hope which ungodly men in this life do build upon, is a poor, ſorry, cheating thing, it is no better than a ſpiders web: however it gives them a great deal of preſent eaſe, and ſeeming refreſhment, they lean upon it, and ſeem to be gainers by it; and when they loſe it they will then know themſelves to be miſerable to purpoſe: but beſides this, there is a real hope that is ſet before them, and offers of it are made to them, which if they did accept of would certainly make them happy. Sinners here, have not only a day of patience, but a day of grace, in which they are called to repentance, and there is a door of ſalvation ſtands open, and they pleaſe themſelves with it, though they put off and neglect the improvement of it: but when once the ſinner comes to hell, all this hope is loſt, and ſwallowed up at once: their falſe hopes are all gone, and found to be a very cheat; the broken reed they leaned upon, runs into them, and wounds them, and breaks under them, and lets them fall: and the good hope that was offered to them is taken away, and all the grounds of it totally removed. Job 27. 9. *Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him?* For there ſhall never be an offer of grace made them any more.

2. *POSITIVE: referring to the puniſhment of ſenſe.* And this conſiſts in their ſuffering the perfection of all theſe actual miſeries, to which they were ſubjected by the curſe. This is called a being *turned into hell*, Pſal.9.16. becauſe that is the place in which all theſe ſufferings are to be undergone. But what theſe ſufferings are, is beyond our preſent diſcovery: the joys of heaven, and the torments of hell, will never be throughly underſtood, till experienced: only the Scripture ſets them forth ſo as is beſt ſuited to our preſent capacity, for the ſtirring of our affections, to engage us to be earneſt in ſeeking to obtain the one, and eſcape the other. Theſe puniſhments are therefore called *everlaſting fire*, Mat. 25.41. Than which ſort of torture, there is nothing more formidable to mankind. Hence the place is called *a lake*, &c. Rev. 21. 8. and we have ſuch an expreſſion, Iſai. 33. 14. *The ſinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulneſs hath ſurprized the hypocrites: who among us ſhall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us ſhall dwell with everlaſting burnings?* which, whether it be interpreted of God, as an attribute referring to his revenging juſtice, or to the miſeries themſelves, to ſet forth the nature of them, ſignifies the dreadfulneſs of theſe miſeries. In ſum,

1. *THEY go to hell, there to be tormented.* That is the very deſign of the place, and the one ſuppoſeth the other. See Luk. 16.23. *And in hell he lift up his eyes being in torments.* And the lamentable cry of the forlorn wretch, ver. 24. *For I am tormented in this flame.* The word *torments* is a metaphor from a rack on which perſons were put to force a confeſſion out of them, and is uſed in the New Teſtament for the moſt exquiſitely painful diſeaſes, and the travailing pains of women: and the other word, *tormented*, is of the ſame import. Here it is that the execution of the ſentence of God's wrath upon ſinners is made: here they are to feel the effects of the doom which was paſt upon them in the law, and by the great Judge. And torments muſt needs be very great miſeries: eſpecially if we conſider, what they are, and after what manner they be inflicted. Hence,

2. *THESE torments ſhall be univerſal.* It may be miſery enough to be pained in one limb, though it is but a finger, what is it then to have it diffuſed through the whole body, not barely by ſympathy, but real immediate torture? But add to this all ſpiritual plagues and torments of ſoul, and that is a miſery inexpreſſible; and thus it is here. Mat. 10. 28. *But rather fear him which is able to deſtroy both ſoul and body in hell.* It is not ſafe here to be over particular; there are two things in general which Chriſt hath told us of, in which theſe torments do conſiſt; viz. the *worm*, and the *fire*; the former whereof refers to the ſoul, the latter to the body. Of theſe we read, Mar. 9. 44, 46, 48. *Where there worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.* And theſe refer to the ſtate of the damned in hell, where they are to be undergone.

(1.) *THE Soul ſhall be tormented with a never dying worm.* And this contains in it all the ſpiritual plagues which ſhall then ſeize upon it; and is mainly contained in thoſe terrible agonies, and horrors of conſcience which will then fill the ſoul. Some ſinners, and at ſome times, have terrible gripings of this in this world: though for the moſt part ſinners now rock their conſciences aſleep, or get them benummed or ſeared: and yet this worm is all the while inſenſibly, though continually growing out of the filth and corruption which they lie wallowing in: but then it ſhall be quick and active, and fearfully torment them; when it ſhall look back, and put them in remembrance of all the ſins that ever they committed, with all the awful aggravations of them: ſhall remind them of all the mercy and goodneſs of God which they abuſed; of a day of grace they once enjoyed; of all the calls, and counſels, and warnings that God had been giving them; of all the patience of God, and ſtrivings of his Holy Spirit, and fair probabilities they were in of Salvation; of all the offers of grace which they deſpiſed, and inward motions which they quenched;

quenched; and ſo of the righteouſneſs of their condemnation: and then look forward, and ſee nothing before it, but thoſe fearful miſeries which it ſuffers, and from whence it muſt never expect a releaſe: what horrors, what deſpair, muſt needs be hereby produced? The girds, and ſtings, and reverberations of ſuch a conſcience muſt needs be a torment inexpreſſible.

(2.) *THE Body ſhall be plagued with an unquenchable fire.* This contains under it all the corporal miſeries that ſhall there be ſuffered: of which it is not for us to give a diſtinct account; only let us obſerve, that all the miſeries that men have ſuſtained in their bodies in this life, are but the beginning of ſorrows; thoſe that follow are far more dreadful. That tender and delicate body, that can now ſcarcely endure the prick of a pin, which is prinked up in pride, and look'd after with delicacy, ſhall become a prey to thoſe devouring flames, which will have no regard to its comelineſs, nor pity it in the leaſt; when the miſery of one member ſhall be intollerable, and that miſery ſpread it ſelf through the whole man: when eyes, ears, hands, feet, heart, and all ſhall be tormented in that flame.

3. *THESE torments ſhall be exquiſite.* Sufferings of the ſame kind may be greatly varied by the degree of them, as they are more remiſs, or more intenſe: now in hell, the miſeries of the damned are arrived at their perfection; needs therefore muſt they be intollerable. Thoſe pains of travailing women, of men under the torture of the ſtone, or the greateſt cruelties which humane wit hath invented, are but flea-bitings in compariſon with theſe. The exquiſiteneſs of them is to be gathered from the very *deſign of the place*, i. e. to be a place of torment; where the wrath of God is to be made known: The *principal efficient of it*, God himſelf, who is *a conſuming fire*, Heb. 12. 28. The *main inſtruments of it*, the devils, who are therefore called *the tormenters*, Mat. 18. 34. and by the fitting of ſinners to be *veſſels to hold it*, Rom. 9. 22. They are to be puniſhed to the utmoſt of their capacity to bear, and God will make them capable of bearing, that ſo they may be the amazing monuments of his righteous ſeverity.

4. *THESE torments ſhall be without intermiſſion.* There ſhall not be the leaſt moments reſt or breathing while, wherein they may enjoy any mitigation of their miſeries. It is ſome comfort in this life, that there are lucid intervals, between exquiſite pains; they abate, and there is ſome eaſe, and liberty to take breath between one and another: but there will be no ſuch thing in hell; the fire is continually blown up, and kept in its heat by the breath of an angry God. Iſai. 30. ult. *The breath of the Lord, like a ſtream of brimſtone doth kindle it.* There is no abatement, no moderation, no diverſion, no relief at all; not ſo much as one member refreſhed, not the leaſt drop of water afforded to cool the tip of the tongue: all is there continued unchangeably. Hence thoſe expreſſions, Rev. 14. 11. *And the ſmoke of their torment aſcendeth up for ever and ever; And they have no reſt night nor day.* Chap. 20. 10. *And they ſhall be tormented day and night, for ever and ever.* And what a torment muſt that be, to endure that to perpetuity, and without any relaxation, which to bear for a moment, is intollerable: where neither are the flames waſted, nor the miſerable creature conſumed by them.

5. *THESE torments ſhall fill them with bittereſt wailings and lamentations.* The extremity of them ſhall produce continual endleſs roarings and ſcreamings of the tortured creature. Oh the fearful noiſe that hell will be filled withal by the piercing groans of creatures lying upon a terrible rack, and ſcorched with the flames of a ſeven times heated furnace! This our Saviour acquaints us will be the employment of the place, Luk. 13. 28. *There ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth.* When Heaven ſhall for ever ring with the joyful acclamations of the glorified Saints and Angels, then ſhall hell ſound and eccho with the doleful ejulations, and howlings, with the terrible ſhrieks and roarings, with the horrid outcries, and blaſphemings of the damned, whoſe horrible torments will be conſtantly drawing of them from them; which is at leaſt allegorically aimed at in, Rev. 16. 9. *And men were ſcorched with great heat, and blaſphemed the name of God, which hath power over theſe plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.* And all this ſhall not draw the leaſt pity or remorſe from God for them, but he will laugh at their calamity; but alas! all that can be here ſaid is not the leaſt part, of what theſe forlorn creatures muſt there feel.

USE. LET this be for a loud and awakening call to all that are in their ſins. Sinners, theſe are heavy tidings which I have been reporting in your ears, and yet they are the true ſayings of God; and do they not make thine ears tingle, thy lips quiver, thy joynts ſhake, yea fearfulneſs and horror to ſurprize thee? Can you hear all this, and yet live one hour longer in your ſins? Is there none that upon this report, cries out trembling, what ſhall I do to be ſaved from this terrible doom? There is a way to eſcape, but if you will not attend it, it will not profit you. If you love your Souls then, be entreated to fly to the rock, to the mountains, before this fire from heaven falls upon you. Uſe no delays leſt it be too late. There is hope for the oldeſt ſinner, if yet he will hear the voice of Chriſt; and there is danger of the youngeſt ſinner, who will put off, and not preſently come in. The arms of a Saviour are now open to receive you if you will come to him; but if you are reſolved in your way, let me entreat you to take this along with you,—know and be aſſured that

you are going to the bottomleſs pit, a place prepared by God himſelf for juſtice to triumph over you in; you will there fall into the hands of the living God, who will not meet you as a man; you are going to dwell with devils and damned ſpirits, and to be tormented with the flames of the bottomleſs pit, where you ſhall be filled brim full in ſoul and body with the wrath of God, where you ſhall be in the hands of your cruel tormentors, be filled with the ſtings of an immortal worm, and ſuffer the moſt acute, and uninterrupted tortures in the whole man, and be for ever unpitied by God, Angels, Men, and Devils. And Oh! think of it; the time haſtens, the day draws near; ſin away a few more days, and trifle away a few more nights, and you are gone beyond recovery: nay it may be, the doom is, that this night your ſoul ſhall be required, and where are you then? Oh be wiſe then in time! Wonder that it is ſaid *to day* to the youngeſt of you; and let me charge you in the name of God, now to go home, and get alone, and meditate ſolemnly on theſe things; and if you dare, lie down to ſleep on your beds before you have made your peace with God, unleſs you expect to awake before morning in the flames of hell fire. If you will take this awful warning, it may be well with you; but if you deſpiſe it, and throw it behind your backs, it will add to your guilt, and riſe up as a witneſs againſt you in the great day; and you ſhall mourn at laſt, when it is too late.

[DECEMBER 26. 1693.]

SERMON *LXIX.*

3. THE duration of theſe miſeries, and that is *for ever*. And this is that which puts great emphaſis upon all that we have been before conſidering. To dwell in ſuch a place, and to undergo ſuch miſeries there as we have heard of, is in it ſelf terrible; but to do ſo *for ever*, that makes it dreadful beyond conception. That it muſt be ſo with all thoſe whoſe unhappy lot it is to come into that horrid place, is an article of faith, which we have confirmed to us by Scripture teſtimony. See Pſal. 92. 7. *They ſhall be deſtroyed for ever.* Iſai. 33. 14. *Dwell with everlaſting burnings.* Though the Hebrew and Greek words, tranſlated, for ever, and everlaſting, do ſometimes intend, though a long, yet a limitted time, yet not always ſo, but frequently a perpetual duration: but this alſo is expreſs'd in the Scripture by the negative, never, which plainly points us to an eternity. *Iſai.* 66. 24. *Their worm ſhall not die,* Mar. 9. 44. It is therefore put into the ſentence of condemnation pronounced in the great Day, Math. 25. 41. *Depart from me ye curſed, into everlaſting fire.* And is accordingly executed on them, ver. 46. *And theſe ſhall go away into everlaſting puniſhment.*

IN the clearing of this Truth, we may enquire, 1. *What is this eternity of their miſeries?* 2. *What reaſon, juſtice, or equity there is for their ſo ſuffering?* 3. *How the creature ſhall be made capable of ſuffering eternal miſeries?* Of each of theſe briefly.

1. *WHAT is this eternity of their miſeries?*

A. ETERNITY may be conſidered as it is in Scripture attributed either to God or the creature. In what ſenſe it is attributed to God, we have already conſidered, in the Doctrine of that Attribute, in which we obſerved him to be without beginning, ſucceſſion, or ending of time: in which reſpect, it is an incommunicable perfection of his, and no ſecond being can lay any claim unto it. When it is aſcribed unto the creature, it is an improper kind of term, which only bears a reſemblance to one of the properties of God's Eternity. The creatures Eternity; or, as ſome for diſtinction ſake, call it, Eviternity, hath, 1. *A beginning*; for all ſecond beings are the offspring of time: once they were not. 2. *A ſucceſſion*; their duration is meaſured, becauſe they are finite beings. But, 3. *It hath no ending*; I know ſome deny ſucceſſion alſo to ſpiritual ſubſtances; but, how a finite being, ſhould not have its finitude inſeperably attended with ſucceſſion, or how a ſpiritual being, ſhould not be ſaid to be older now, than it was in the firſt hour of its creation, I cannot conjecture. Some define the creatures eternity, to be a *ſucceeding now*, as they call it, becauſe of its endleſs duration: in which reſpect it is differenced from time, which hath an end; in regard of which endleſs duration, in an improper ſenſe, a thouſand years may be ſaid to be as a day; becauſe the ſinners torments ſhall be no nearer an end, after a thouſand years, than they were the firſt day they began, becauſe they have no end: a *ſucceeding now* they call it, becauſe, as it began, ſo it hath a ſucceſſion: it hath ſo far a reference to, or repreſentation of time, that the ſinner ſhall be making progreſs in his miſeries, which is a ſore aggravation of them, and will make his torments appear long and tireſome. So that it is, as it were, a middle ſtate between time and eternity: it hath a relation to time by ſucceſſion, which will weary the ſinner out, under his torments; a relation alſo to eternity in its perpetuity, which ſhall fill the ſinner with endleſs deſpair.

2. *WHAT reaſon, juſtice, or equity there is for their ſo ſuffering theſe miſeries?*

A. AS for the ſufferings themſelves, it hath already been evidenced, that they are no more than ſins demerit; but *why they muſt be perpetual and without end*, is the preſent enquiry? Now there is a two-fold juſtice that we conceive to be in God, and they are both here concerned, viz. *Sovereign*, and *Relative*. God's *Sovereign juſtice* is his arbitrary liberty to diſpoſe of his creatures according to his holy pleaſure; and this was moſt eminently exerted in his Decree; in which it was his good will to have ſome everlaſting monuments of

of his righteous diſpleaſure at ſin, and accordingly appointed the ſubjects of it : and therefore, to any who cavil againſt this, that anſwer is ſufficient, Rom. 9. 22. *What if God, willing to ſhew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long ſuffering the veſſels of wrath fitted to deſtruction.* Of which will we are further aſſured, Prov. 16. 4. *The Lord hath made all things for himſelf : yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.* But for a clearer diſplay of the equity of this, there is the *Relative juſtice* of God, comes in, in the fulfilment of this purpoſe ; which conſiſts in his rendering to every one according to his deeds ; as they ſtand related to the law, which was given and ratified in the covenant between God and man : ſo that though God is arbitrary in decreeing this puniſhment, yet he proceeds according to a known and revealed rule in the execution of it ; and this is our preſent enquiry. The equity then of this proceeding, will appear evidently, if we conder,

1. *THAT there is in ſin a proper demerit of everlaſting puniſhment* ; or, *that the penalties of it ſhould abide upon the ſinner for ever.* Nor indeed is there any other way, for the ſinning creature to be puniſhed up to his demerit : and there is a double merit here to be conſidered,

1. *THERE is a covenant merit* : It is the wages for ſin according to the indentures which were made between God and man. Rom. 6. 23. *The wages of ſin is death.* The word ſignifies a ſtipend, or ſomething that is agreed for. God indented and bargained with man at firſt, that if he ſhould break his laws, he ſhould ſuffer the penalty of eternal death. Gen. 2. 17. *In the day that thou eateſt thereof thou ſhalt ſurely die.* Now, not only hath the ſinner no cauſe to complain, becauſe he knew what he had to ſtand to ; but becauſe God did affix ſuch a penalty to the law of the firſt covenant, it muſt needs be righteous, elſe he would not have made it, ſince it would be unrighteous for him to execute it ; and this ſhould ſatisfy us. But,

2. *THERE is alſo a merit in the nature of the thing.* It is true, there cannot be guilt but where there is a law, but for all that the foundation of the equity of laws is, when there is a proportion between the offence and the penalty, and this is antecedent to guilt : a man may be worthy of death, and yet not guilty of it, if there be not a law for it ; now the valuation of the equity is in this worthineſs. Now ſin is ſuch a thing as in it ſelf truly deſerves not only all theſe puniſhments, but the everlaſting continuance of them ; and the juſtice of the law cannot in any other way be anſwered in the perſon of the ſinner. For,

(1.) *THE end of puniſhment is that the law may be ſatisfied.* And if the law be juſt, juſtice doth thus recover its own. Satisfaction to the law, conſiſts in a full compenſation for the injury done to it ; and till this be made, the law is not fulfilled ; and for this reaſon no ſinner can be acquitted upon his own ſcore, or for any righteouſneſs of his, becauſe he cannot anſwer theſe demands.

(2.) *HENCE when the law hath once ſeized, the ſinner, and laid him in the priſon of hell, it cannot diſcharge him till it be thus ſatisfied.* If it ſhould, it would not be all fulfilled, but there would be ſome points or tittles of it ſuperſeded, which may not be. Math. 5. 18. *One jote or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled.* He muſt therefore remain under the impreſſions of it, until this be done. So our Saviour Chriſt gives us to underſtand, Math. 5. 25, 26. *Verily, I ſay unto thee thou ſhalt by no means come out thence till thou haſt paid the utmoſt farthing.*

(3.) *THIS cannot be done in meaſure, and therefore muſt be compenſated in duration, and that can be nothing ſhort of eternity.* The reaſon of this is, from the creatures incapacity : when its veſſel is never ſo much widened, and its puniſhments encreaſed to the height, it cannot contain ſo much wrath as it hath deſerved by ſin ; and for this cauſe it muſt ſuffer eternally. Jeſus Chriſt could and did at once bear all, and therefore he was releaſed and diſcharged. Here then the great cavil of vain men is to be encountred, viz. *How can a finite act deſerve an infinite puniſhment?* or *a temporary tranſient fault bring the creature juſtly under the impreſſions of God's everlaſting wrath?* But the anſwer is very ready, for, though the creature be finite, and the act temporary and tranſient, yet the object againſt whom it is committed, is infinite and eternal : the creature gives the provocation, but it is God who is provoked by him, and he doth it up to the utmoſt of his ability, according to his manner and meaſure ; a finite creature affronts an infinite majeſty ; hence, though the act is finite, the injury is objectively infinite, in that it falls upon him who is infinite ; and ſuch as is the injury, ſuch muſt the demerit be. In ſum, the creature by ſinning offers the greateſt affront that it can to God ; and therefore it deſerves to ſuffer all the miſeries that it can ; and though it cannot undergo an infinite weight of wrath at once, becauſe that would annihilate it, yet it can ſuffer it in a ſort of infinite duration, which is the only way to make it proportionable.

2. *THAT there is a permanency of ſin in hell.* It is true, the puniſhment of ſinners in hell proceeds according to the guilt they have contracted to themſelves in this life. 2 Cor. 5. 10. *That every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* It is therefore a diſpute whether they contract any new guilt there, and there is much pleaded on both ſides ; but I ſhall leave it *in medio :* but theſe two things are, as I think, very evident.

(1.) *THAT hell's torments do not alter the ſinners nature, or change his ſinful inclinations.* Whatſoever convictions of conſcience he hath on him, or how much ſoever he is ſtung with

remorſe, for the ſins he committed in this world; yet he remains under the power and dominion of his corrupt nature; and ſo, as he hath an abiding being, ſo he continues eternally an odious object unto God, and an abhorrence to his holineſs: as he remains for ever, ſo God abhors him for ever, becauſe he is for ever hateful: the image abides on him which God deſpiſeth.

(2.) *THAT as his nature remains ſinful, ſo he continues actually to ſin.* We before obſerved, that there he hath loſt all his morality, ſo that ſinfulneſs is compleated in him; and he is ſtill an active being, and muſt act his own nature. The ſinner there hath not only in him the poyſon of ſin habitually, which he would quickly diſcover if he might be turned again into the world, and left at his liberty; but he doth nothing there but ſin, and his ſufferings occaſion his ſinning. Whereas there are ſome who think, that hell's ſins are not properly ſins, it is a great miſtake; for the creature is not diſcharged from the obligation of an eternal law, he is therefore giving God continual provocation to perpetuate his torments; he continues to hate God eternally, and therefore well may God hate him for ever.

3. *THAT the ſinner hath deſpiſed a day of grace, and now it is over with him for ever.* This indeed only concerns ſuch as have lived under the Goſpel: and it farther clears up the equity of this in regard of ſuch: as God hath found out a way to ſave ſinners from hell's miſeries, ſo he hath made a diſcovery of this way unto ſome, in which he hath offered ſalvation to them, and invited them to accept of it. The time of this treaty is truly called a day of grace: but this determines with the life of the ſinner, and when he dies his hope is put to an end. If a Saviour were proclaimed to ſinners in hell, and if the ſpirit of God would work faith and repentance in thoſe ſouls that are in priſon, there might be hope of a releaſe for them, but there is no ſuch good news as this, there to be heard of. We are told, 2 Cor. 6. 2. *Now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of ſalvation.* When they come there the gulf is fixed. *Luk.* 16. 26. and there is no other poſſible way for their eſcape but this; and there is all reaſon, that they who might have eſcaped the eternal perdition, they had procured for themſelves, and would not, be made to ſuffer it, at the hands of that God, whom they have thus dared to deſpiſe and provoke: we have therefore a particular aſſurance given us, that all ſuch ſhall certainly be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction, 2 Theſ. 1. 8, 9. *Who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*

3. *HOW the creature ſhall be made capable of ſuffering theſe miſeries eternally?*

A. GOD ſhall by his almighty power fit & prepare the ſinner for ſuch a condition as this. That he is able to do it, there is no ground for us to queſtion, if we believe his Omnipotency; that he will exert this power of his in this affair, we are aſſured, *Rom.* 9. 22. There needs only three things to be here ſaid for the illuſtration of this.

1. *THAT the ſoul of man is by its natural conſtitution, immortal.* It, being of a ſpiritual nature, dies not: it needs not elements, nor elementary ſubſtances to give it ſuſtenance, or preſerve its being to it: it lives without food or raiment, or any other ſupplies as are requiſite for the ſhoring up of the body; and hence the death of the ſoul, is not a death of annihilation, but of miſery; and the ſoul cannot ceaſe to be what it is for its ſubſtance, by any other power, but that of God who made it; ſo that it naturally abides for ever.

2. *GOD will, when he ſhall by his mighty power, raiſe the bodies of ſinners, put into them a ſpiritual nature in many reſpects.* 1 Cor. 15. 44. *It is ſown a natural body, it is raiſed a ſpiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a ſpiritual body.* It is true, they ſhall not be turned into ſpirits, but retain the ſubſtance of bodies ſtill. Now there are two things in which they ſhall ſpecially be made ſpiritual, *viz.* in the perpetuity of their life, and the ſuſtentation of them without food: this God can do, and hath given ſome *preludia* of it in this world: and he will do it, he doth ſo by the bodies of his ſaints, that ſo they may be everlaſting monuments of his grace; and he will do ſo by the bodies of his enemies, becauſe he will have them equally to be eternal inſtances of his *revenging juſtice.*

3. *GOD will with his own hand and power keep together the principles of their nature, that they ſhall not ſuffer diſſolution.* God will, as it were, put one hand under the ſinner to uphold him in his being, whiles with the other hand he will ſtrike him, and ſink him down under his miſery. It were impoſſible for the creature to hold out of himſelf, or by his own ſtrength, but God ſhall make him to endure: He ſhall enlarge his veſſel, and make him able to hold ſo much of wrath, as he ſhall ſee meet to pour into him; this is the *fitting* him *for deſtruction.*

USE. THERE are Five Leſſons I would urge from the preſent conſideration; Three for Sinners, and Two for Saints.

I. TO *Sinners*, that are yet in their ſins.

1. *SEE what a deſperate folly and madneſs it is to live in ſin, and count it your delight.* One would think, that if ſinners ſhould only compare the pleaſures of ſin, with the pains of hell that follow after, and are the recompences of it, this might be enough to convince them: But if beſides this you compare the duration of your carnal delights, with the eternity of theſe ſufferings which follow, what an addition will this make to the reckoning? How precious is that advice, *Eccl.* 11. 8. Poor wretch! what doſt thou mean? for a few naſty pleaſures, to bring thy ſelf into everlaſting burnings? The delight of

ſin,

ſin, is but a crackling blaze, and ſo expires. Eccl. 7.6. *For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, ſo is the laughter of the fool, this alſo is vanity.* But the pain of it is perpetual: the act will quickly be over, but the ſorrow will abide for infinite ages. Oh! that ſinners would think of this, when they are going about the gratifying of their own lufts; you little know how much profit it would afford you in an hour of tempration.

2. *LET this ſhow you the infinite value of a Saviour, and put you upon making it your buſineſs to get a part in him.* Were there any hopes of an end of theſe miſeries, the creature might in ſome meaſure comfort it ſelf, without a Saviour: but to think that they are eternal torments, which He comes to deliver us from, they are everlaſting burnings, that He comes to extinguiſh, this inhaunceth His worth. How ſweet is that expreſſion, 1 Theſ. 1. 10. *Jeſus which delivereth us from the wrath to come.* Think then how intollerable theſe miſeries are in themſelves, and then how tedious muſt it be to endure them for ever. Ezek. 22. 14. *Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be ſtrong in the day that I ſhall deal with thee?* Remember, that there is none but He can ſave you from theſe pains. Act. 4. 12. *Neither is there ſalvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we muſt be ſaved.* Redemption-work is too weighty for any to undergo but him. *Pſal.* 49. 7, &c. Conſider what he hath done on the account, that he may be an able Saviour, Gal. 3. 13. *Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us.* And behold Him now coming to you in the offers of the Goſpel, inviting you to come to Him, and promiſing you life if you do, Math. 11. 29. *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye ſhall find reſt unto your ſouls.* Oh! do not withſtand him, put him not upon ſaying to you another day, as Math. 23. 37. *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, thou that killeſt the Prophets, and ſtoneſt them which are ſent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not.*

3. LEARN *from hence the incomparable worth of the preſent time:* What a price is in your hands, by this ſeaſon allowed you; before you enter upon your unchangeable ſtate; and be awakened by this thought to make ſpeedy uſe of it; think how far better your condition is, than their's who are now in hell; they are gone to eternal miſery, and have no hope to eſcape: they have no more Sermons, &c. but you have a call ſtill; think alſo how near you are to this eternity, and how uncertain your time is; you ſtand every moment upon the brink, and the leaſt touch of God's angry hand, will turn you over: health, ſtrength and youth are no ſecurity againſt it; the youngeſt and healthieſt ſinner of you all, may be in hell before morning: and ſolemnly think what will become of you if time be gone, before you are gotten into peace with God: after time there follows nothing but an unchangeable eternity; if you dye this night in your preſent condition, you go to the place where the worm dies not, &c. to dwell with everlaſting burnings.

II. TO *Saints* that are gotten into Chriſt.

1. *LET this make you earneſt for and with poor Sinners, that they may be converted and ſaved.* Had not *Paul* this on his heart, when he uttered that pathetical wiſh? Rom. 9. 1, 2. *I ſay the truth in Chriſt, I lie not, my conſcience alſo bearing me witneſs in the holy Ghoſt, That I have great heavineſs and continual ſorrow in my heart.* When you pray for them, remember it is for eternity. When you exhort and perſwade them, bear it on your hearts, that it is for everlaſting. Though they ſhould be angry with you, yet let pity to ever enduring creatures, move you, to bear it and not leave off: and Oh! uſe ſpeed in what you do with them, begin betimes with them, leſt whiles you delay, they be gone over to eternity, and then they are paſt your help.

2. *LET this engage you in the purſuit of Holineſs.* If duty at any time ſeems hard, think how hard it would have been to be everlaſtingly ſeparated from the preſence of God. Are the ſufferings of this life heavy and tedious? lay them in the ballance againſt eternity, think of the millions of ages, wherein damned ſinners muſt ſuffer the wrath of God, and then be but at the beginning of their woes. Think nothing too hard to do or ſuffer for Chriſt, who ſuffered for you the eternal weight of wrath.

IN a word, Let us all ſeek of God the grace, to entertain ourſelves with ſuch meditations of that eternity, whither we are making haſte, that we may have skill *to number our days*, and *apply our hearts to wiſdom.* And when our mome tany time ſhall run down into, and be ſwallowed up of eternity, we may be delivered from everlaſting torments and poſſeſſed of eternal Glory.

[JANUARY 23. 1693.]

SERMON

SERMON *LXX.*

QUESTION XX.

DID GOD leave all Mankind to periſh in the eſtate of Sin and Miſery?

ANSWER.

GOD having out of his meer good Pleaſure from all Eternity, elected ſome to Everlaſting Life, did enter into a Covenant of Grace to deliver them out of the ſtate of Sin and Miſery, and to bring them into an eſtate of Salvation by a Redeemer.

IN the conſideration of God's ſpecial Government, we have taken notice of the firſt Covenant, which he indented with Man, and Man's woful apoſtacy enſuing thereupon; together with the miſerable effects of it; in all of which we have been entertained with a fearful roll written within, and without, with nothing but lamentation, mourning and wo; and if this were all the news that were to be heard, what but horror and deſpair would abide us? But the Holy God, whoſe ſpotleſs providence was not idle, in the permiſſion of man's fall, had glorious ends in his ſo permitting it; intending it to be a foil on which he would draw in moſt lively colours the portraiture of his rich grace. We are therefore here led by the hand, from the ſorrowful and heart-breaking conſideration of man's inexpreſſible infelicity by his apoſtacy, to the pleaſant and ſoul-refreſhing contemplation of his Anaſtaſy, or reſtitution, which is the other thing obſervable in this ſpecial Government. In this Anſwer then we have, 1. This Doctrine of man's reſtitution aſſerted. 2. A full deſcription of it laid down. In which we have, 1. The ſubjects of it, *ſome*. 2. The firſt original or leading cauſe of it, *His meer good pleaſure*. 3. The foundation of it, His *electing of them from all eternity to everlaſting life*. 4. The ratification or eſtabliſhment of it, *He entred into a Covenant of grace*. 5. The reſtitution itſelf with the terms of it, *to deliver them from a ſtate of ſin and miſery*. 6. The way in which it is brought about, *by a Redeemer*. We may take theſe ſeverally and briefly into conſideration;

1. *THAT there is a reſtitution provided by God for fallen Man.* It is vain for us to enquire what it is, till we are aſſured that it is. Now the evidence of this is a matter of meer revelation. The light of nature cannot diſcover the leaſt tracts or prints of it, in all its reaſonings. It hath indeed ſome footſteps by which to diſcover that man is miſerable; reaſon will ſay that he could not be made ſuch as he is now become, conſiſtent with the wiſdom and goodneſs of his maker. But on the ſuppoſition of his fall, and preſent ſtate, by vertue of the ſanctions of the firſt covenant; it could neither tell that ſuch a thing ſhould be (it having it's abſolute dependance on the free will of the lawgiver, into whoſe hands the ſinner was fallen, and againſt whom juſtice was armed with revenge) nor could any of his attributes of goodneſs, mercy, or the like, infer it; the works of creation and common providence had not any Goſpel written on them, holineſs and juſtice ſtood in the way; nor yet if it had been aſſured that ſuch a thing ſhould be, could it tell how it could poſſibly be brought about, ſo as that *mercy and truth, righteouſneſs and peace, might entirely meet* in one; that God might be both juſt and yet juſtify a ſinner, an ungodly man. This therefore is purely a matter of faith: but is ſo fully and clearly laid down in the word of God, that there is no doubt left to be made about it. And truly, the main drift or deſign of the whole book of God, in the old and new Teſtament, is to give us an account of this affair. The hiſtory of man's fall is ſet down for an introduction unto this, and immediately upon it, this happy news is publiſhed, Gen. 3. 15. *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy ſeed and her ſeed: it ſhall bruiſe thy head; and thou ſhalt bruiſe his heel.* And God is throughout ſhewing us the way how to obtain it; there is in it the hope of eternal life, and that not a vain one, but that which is built on a promiſe of it. Tit. 1. 2. *In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promiſed before the world began.* Likewiſe that, 2 Tim. 1. 10. *But is now made manifeſt by the appearing of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who hath aboliſhed death, and hath brought life and immortality to light, through the Goſpel.* This was the deſign of the incarnation of the Son of God, and of the whole work of Redemption which he accompliſhed, of which we may have an account afterwards. Had it not been to recover ſinful men from miſery to felicity he had never engaged in it. Gal. 4. 4,5. *But when the fulneſs of time was come, God ſent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons.* This is the end of the giving the Goſpel, and all the adminiſtrations of it, that men may be therein invited, and by the Spirit of God perſwaded to accept of a Saviour, and to eſcape from the wrath and curſe that is out againſt them. Hence that, Rom. 1. 16. *For it is the power of God unto ſalvation, to every one that believeth, to the Jew firſt, and alſo to the Greek.* We have therefore the ſum and ſubſtance of the Goſpel, in Joh. 3. 16. *For God*

ſo

ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life. Mar.16.16. *He that believeth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not, ſhall be damned.* As then there was an *Adam* who undid us, ſo is there one to reſtore us. 1 Cor. 15. 22. *For as in Adam all die, ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.* In a word, God hath laid in and provided fully, whatſoever is requiſite for our recovery out of miſery, and being reſtored to bleſſedneſs, as will be made evident in the ſequel. And he would certainly never have done it, if he had not purpoſed this Salvation to be effectually apply'd to ſome, otherwiſe that proviſion had been loſt.

2. *THE ſubjects of this reſtitution are, ſome. Adam's* ſin and apoſtacy indeed reached unto all; but not ſo the reſtitution: the pararel therefore between the firſt and ſecond *Adam* doth not lie in the extent of the ſubjects, but in the efficacy of the influence to the ſubject; ſo that, as the firſt *Adam* was the procuring cauſe of all miſery to his children, ſo the ſecond *Adam* is of all bleſſedneſs to his: but, though the former extended to all mankind, the latter doth not do ſo, but only to a reſidue or remnant. This difference is clearly intimated or pointed to in, Rom.5.12,19. *Wherefore as by one man ſin entred into the world, and death by ſin: and ſo death paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned. For as by one mans diſobedience, many were made ſinners: ſo by the obedience of one, ſhall many be made righteous.* For the making of this diſtinctly clear, let theſe Concluſions be obſerved,

1. *THAT all mankind do not actually participate in this reſtitution.* This is a clear caſe, and generally acknowledged by ſuch as profeſs themſelves Chriſtians: and it is very evident from Scripture; where we are aſſured,

(1.) *THAT there are many of Adam's poſterity that die, and are damned for ever.* We read of thoſe who are *puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction*, 2 Theſ. 1. 9. Chap. 2. 11. Now damnation is directly contrary to this reſtitution; it being the execution of the wrath and curſe, under which they were fallen, upon them: either therefore they were never recovered, or they are again fallen into it, but that this latter cannot be, will afterwards be conſidered.

(2.) *THAT there will be two ſorts of men found in the laſt day.* There will be *ſheep* and *goats*, the one ſtanding at the right, the other at the left hand of Chriſt; the one will be doomed to eternal life, the other to everlaſting burnings, as in *Mat.* 25. Surely then, if they then receive ſuch a fearful doom, they were never delivered from the curſe which fettered them.

(3.) *THAT there are a great many to whom this favour is offered, but they reject it finally, and ſo are left to periſh in their ſins.* None are actually reſtored till they do cloſe in with the terms of the new covenant: for we are poſitively told, Joh. 3. 36. *He that believeth on the Son hath everlaſting life: and he that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee life: but the wrath of God abideth on him.* But ſome there are of whom Chriſt ſaith, Joh. 5. 40. *And ye will not come to me that ye might have life.* And on whom, for their rejecting him, he hath paſt that ſentence, Joh. 8. 24. *I ſaid therefore unto you, that ye ſhall die in your ſins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye ſhall die in your ſins.* And for ſuch ſinners, they are already condemned. Joh. 3. 18. *But he that believeth not is condemned already*: i.e. the law-ſentence remains in force againſt them, and muſt take place; if then they never repent and believe, they were never recovered.

2. *THAT God never intended or laid in proviſion for the reſtitution of all.* It is true,

(1.) *THAT there is a ſufficiency of value and vertue in the proviſion that God hath made, for the compleat recovery of all mankind.* And indeed, ſuch was the caſe with, and ſtate of fallen man, that nothing elſe would ſuffice for the reſtoring of one, than what was enough in its intrinſick worth for all. Juſtice could not to be ſatisfied, or the condemnation removed without a price of an infinite value, for the acquittance of any one of its priſoners: and ſuch a price can never be out-ſet. Hence that, Heb. 7. 25. *Wherefore he is able alſo to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto God by him.*

(2.) *THAT offers of this reſtitution are made to a great many more than accept of, or ever partake in it.* There are a great many whom Chriſt comes to, but they do not receive him, and ſo they go without him. *Joh.* 1. 12. He invites them, but they reject his invitation, and thereby *judge themſelves unworthy of everlaſting life*, Act.13 46. they refuſe him, and he doth relinguiſh them. Pſal. 81. 11,12. *But my people would not hearken to my voice: and Iſrael would none of me. So I gave them up to their own hearts luſt: and they walked in their own counſels.* Hence that expoſtulation and threatning, *Mat.* 23.37,38. and Luk. 19.41,42. *And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadſt known, even thou, at leaſt in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.* But that he either intended or provided for the ſalvation of all, is not true; and this will be manifeſt if we conſider,

[1.] *THAT all are not actually ſaved.* It is not rational to think, that God ſhould deſign their ſalvation, and make proviſion for it, and yet they eventually fall ſhort of it: for ſo, not only muſt the divine purpoſe be fruſtrated, which would be a great reflection upon his wiſdom, power and unchangeableneſs; but alſo muſt the proviſion it ſelf ſo far be loſt, for that is a medium for an end, and it is certain that the means are loſt, as to the deſign of him that uſeth them, where the end is not attained; it is therefore a full diſjunction, *viz.* either that all are ſaved, or that God never intended nor provided for their ſalvation, or elſe that he is put by either

either for want of power, or by altering his mind.

[2.] *THAT Jeſus Chriſt did not come to ſave all.* It is true, there are ſome general words uſed in the Goſpel, mentioning the word *all*, which ſome would interpret that way, as 1 Tim. 2. 6. *Who gave himſelf a ranſom for all*; and elſewhere. But this cannot intend all univerſally, but only all that were given him, elſe it would contradict the limitations given in the Goſpel: what ſaith he of himſelf, *Luk.* 5. 32. and that paſſage is of weight, (however ſome ſeek to evade it,) Joh. 17. 9. *I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them which thou haſt given me, for they are thine.* Surely he would not ſhut them out of his prayers for whom he ſhed his blood: or how comes he to make a diſtinction between the world, and thoſe whom his father had given to him out of it?

[3.] *THAT all have not the means of this reſtitution afforded to them.* We ſhall afterwards have occaſion to obſerve, that to the compleating of this recovery, there is requiſite, not only that a purchaſe be made, but that it be alſo applied; in order to which application, there are the means appointed, and made neceſſary by God's inſtitution; where therefore God intends this end, he will afford theſe means. The Apoſtle could infer mens perdition, from their not having the Goſpel, 2 Cor. 4. 3. *But if our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt.* And makes ſuch a demand, which carries a negative in it, Rom. 10. 14. *How then ſhall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how ſhall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how ſhall they hear without a preacher?* But nothing is more certain than that the far greater part of mankind have hitherto been ſtrangers to the means of grace, and ſo out of the way in which the Spirit of God, is won't to apply Chriſt's redemption to men: and the condition of ſuch is clearly expreſt, Eph. 2. 12. *That at that time ye were without Chriſt, being aliens from the common-wealth of Iſrael, and ſtrangers from the covenants of promiſe, having no hope, and without God in the world.*

[4.] *THAT God hath prepared a place to exalt his juſtice in, by the everlaſting puniſhment of many.* We read in, *Iſai.* 30. ult. *For Tophet is ordained of old, yea, for the king it is prepared, he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood, the breath of the Lord like a ſtream of brimſtone doth kindle it.* And Mat. 25. 41. *Depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.* Now to prepare ſuch a place for ſuch an end, together with a deſign to deliver all mankind from it, is to provide it for no uſe at all; except we ſhould ſuppoſe, that when he hath done all that lies in him for their recovery, they may damn and deſtroy themſelves, whether he will or no; which is directly contrary to what the Scripture aſſerts concerning him, and to the properties of the divine nature. We are therefore aſſured that they were ordained to this, Jude 4. *Who were before ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men.* And there is an efficacious judicial influence of God's in bringing them to it, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 9, 10.

3. *THAT hence there are but ſome for whom this reſtitution is provided; and the reſt are left out, and not thus cared for.* Who they are, and how they come to be thus ſet apart for this benefit, when others are left out and not thought of for mercy, will be after conſidered in the things that follow. Here only to make a few general remarks upon this, let us obſerve,

(1.) *THAT they are but a few compared with the reſt of mankind.* If we compare thoſe that are reſtored with thoſe that are left, they are but a ſmall number. The Scripture compares them to a reſidue, or remnant, a ſmall piece that is left, when the garment is taken out of it; to a gleaning, or a few ſcattered grapes upon the vine, when the vintage is gathered. Chriſt, ſpeaking of that life which is the thing to which they are reſtored, tells us that but *few find it*, Math. 7. 14. *Little*, is the epithet which he puts upon his own flock, *Luk.* 12. 32. Theſe are ſome that are taken out of the world, when the whole world lies in wickedneſs: in this regard they are not many.

(2.) *THEY are but few, if reckoned with thoſe who enjoy the means of grace, and are not ſaved thereby.* If we go no farther than where the Goſpel hath come, and men have been treated with the things that concern their peace, yet there it will be found a truth that thoſe that miſs of this recovery, and go to perdition after all, are vaſtly the bigger number. It is our Saviour's obſervation, Math. 20. 16. *For many are called, but few choſen.* And the Apoſtle ſpeaking of *Iſrael*, or God's viſible covenanted people, hath that concluſion, Rom. 9. 27. *A remnant ſhall be ſaved.* There are multitudes that openly deſpiſe the offers of Salvation, and live in a manifeſt contempt of the things of their peace: there are many that make a ſhew, and but a ſhew, pretend to a profeſſion, but deceive their own hearts, and no more than pretend. Where Chriſt is exhibited, He is a foundation, and corner ſtone but to a few; to the multitude, he is a *ſtumbling ſtone* and a *rock of offence*; the Goſpel is a *ſavour of life* to but a little number, in regard of thoſe to whom it is a *ſavour of death.*

(3.) *THAT yet, conſidered in & by themſelves, they are a very great many.* Had God ſaved but one of *Adam's* poſterity, his grace had therein wonderfully appeared; but he hath ſeen meet to extend this reſtitution to a multitude: though we cannot tell how many they be, who ſhall partake in this bleſſed priviledge, it being a ſecret reſerved in his own boſom, not to be known to us, till the great Day of accounts; yet we are given to underſtand that there will then be a very great congregation of them. As to the opinion of thoſe, who think there ſhall be ſo many as

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to make up the number, and supply the place of the fallen Angels, it is without any Scripture foundation, and therefore not to be concluded upon: but we have sufficient warrant to believe that they are very many: there have been of them in all ages of the Church, though in some more than other. We find that in a very scanty time, God had, in the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, notwithstanding the apostacy and persecutions, seven Thousand, *Rom.* 11. 3, 4. And we read, Jud. 14. *Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints.* The word signifies, many ten Thousands. And besides all that have been hitherto saved; we are assured, that there is still a time to be looked for, of the plentiful pouring out of the Spirit, and of the bringing in of the fulness of the nations: and therefore the Gospel-state is called a kingdom, which supposeth a great number of subjects.

USE I. IS there a restitution provided for miserable men? Let it then be thought of and improved,

1. *TO prevent sinking despair, and put hope into us all.* When you look upon, and are terrified with all those amazing miseries which are lying upon all mankind in the curse, and see how wofully you your selves are involved in it, and are thereupon beginning to sink into despondency, and be filled with a fearful expectation of this vengeance falling upon you; and begin to say: if the case be so, our hope is gone, and we are cut off for our part; now look forward, and see what good news the Gospel hath brought to a company of forlorn perishing sinners: See here, that there is a possibility of your escaping the damnation of hell; nay that there is a fair probability of it, since there is a new and living way opened, and discovered to you: say, that for all that hath befallen me, I may yet be saved; this is the hope that is set before you, labour to run into it.

2. *TO improve this hope in seeking to obtain it.* Hope is the very life of endeavour; what men despair of they will never attempt to compass; but where there are any sparklings of hope, they will push men on to seek their help: and hope can gather spirits from the appearance of a meer possibility, a *Who knows?* Say then to your own Souls, is there a way found out by the merciful God, in which sinners may be delivered from the wrath to come? I will enquire after it, and seek to be found in it: may an undone sinner be saved? hath God told and assured me of it in his word? and shall I sit still, and perish through my own neglect? shall I die when life is set before me, and offered to me, and, as it were thrust upon me? One would think the proclamation of *liberty to captives, and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound,* should be a *faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation,* to every one, who knows himself to be a prisoner of divine justice, and lying open to the *miseries of this life, to death it self, and to the pains of hell for ever.*

USE II. ARE there but *some* for whom this restitution is appointed, and those but a few in comparison, though a great many in themselves? Learn hence,

1. *WHAT reason there is for every one of us to give the more diligent heed to make sure that we be found among this number.* It is a duty that we are called upon to attend, 2 Pet. 1. 10. *Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things ye shall never fall.* And what more potent argument to move us to be very solemn and serious in it, than the consideration of the paucity of those who are sharers in this benefit? When one had ask'd our Saviour that question, *Are there few saved?* He, instead of answering, falls to advising; and what was his advice? See, Luk. 13. 23, 24. *And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.* Certainly, the thing it self is a matter of the highest importance that can be: who, that believes that there is an everlasting state of weal or wo, to which all mankind are posting, and in which they shall be fixed, as soon as this life ends; would not be anxious to know, when, and after what manner he shall spend that eternity? how much more then, when he is acquainted that the greater number by far, are like to take up their dwelling with everlasting burnings? Let this thought then put us all, Young and Old, from our carnal security, and make us importunately inquisitive in this affair.

2. *NOT to despond or sink in your spirits, because they are but few.* If among a thousand capital offenders, it were published that one of them should have a pardon, would not every one hope to be the man? but I can assure you that there shall be many millions of miserable men delivered from the curse, and made heirs of eternal life. What saith Christ? Luk. 13. 29. *And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.* And among these there shall be those who have been chiefest sinners, and have contaminated themselves with the vilest abominations. What saith the Apostle? 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10, 11. *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor theives, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* There is a *Manasseh* of that number, who was an idolater, and a conjurer, and a murderer: there is a Thief there, that had also shed innocent blood. If then, you find your hearts moved with the apprehension of your great misery, and wrought to a willingness to com-

ply with the only remedy, in the Goſpel way; be not diſcouraged, you are in a fair way to be one of that little flock; Chriſt hath ſaid, if you come to him, he will not caſt you off.

[FEBRUARY 20. 1693.]

SERMON *LXXI.*

3. THE firſt original, or leading cauſe of this Reſtitution, is *his meer good pleaſure*. We are here pointed to the Divine Sovereignty, which in nothing appears more eminently than in this affair. It is of the higheſt concernment for man to know the order of the cauſes of his Salvation: nor can the Goſpel be truly underſtood without it; and here we are not to reſt till we come to the higheſt cauſe of all; ſince all the reſt owe a ſubordination to, and dependance upon it. That man's recovery from miſery to felicity derives from God originally, I know none that do in words deny: that, if ever the undone creature be again reſtored, and made happy, He muſt be the author of it, muſt needs be confeſſed by all thoſe that underſtand and believe how fearfully he is entangled in guilt, and fallen under the wrath and curſe of God. But how it derives from him, or what was the firſt moving cauſe which induced him to extend this mercy to ſuch a creature, is a point that hath exerciſed the minds of many, and given occaſion for hot diſputes, and grievous bickerings among ſuch as call themſelves Chriſtians: proud man, not contenting himſelf to ſtoop to God's Sovereignty, and acquieſce in the divine Prerogative. Hence, ſome there be, who do ultimately reſolve it into God's Natural Goodneſs, and that love which he, as Creator, muſt bear to his creature. Others, who though they pretend to aſſign it to his Will, do yet ſeek a double Will in God, the one *abſolute*, the other *conditionate*, and refer it to the latter; and hereupon do really make it dependent on ſomething in the creature; and therefore though it be determined, yet it is upon a foreſight of that, on which the hypotheſis depends. Againſt all theſe, our Catechiſm aſſures us that it was *his meer good pleaſure*: by which we are to underſtand, that it did purely and entirely ariſe from himſelf, and that he acted his own liberty or freedom fully in it: or that he did it, becauſe he would do it, and there cannot be given any cauſe antecedent to that; not that he did it without any reaſon, or for no end; no, there was the counſel of his will in it; and he being a wiſe agent, doth nothing in vain.

BUT, for a more particular and diſtinct clearing up of this matter, I ſhall endeavour a little to explicate the meaning of it; and then to give ſome inſtances, wherein it will appear. Here then it is neceſſary that we do in God diſtinguiſh of his acts, of which ſome are *natural*, ſome *voluntary*: for without our ſo diſtinguiſhing, our manner of conception about him, muſt needs be confuſed: it is true, all God's natural acts, are in a ſenſe voluntary; for he is the moſt free agent, and his will is himſelf: but yet all God's voluntary acts are not natural: for though he doth nothing but what is agreable to his nature, yet he doth many things which it had been no way repugnant to his nature if he had not done them, or done otherwiſe. Now, between theſe two ſorts of acts, there are theſe differences obſervable.

1. *THE former are neceſſary; the latter are at liberty, and conſequently contingent.* It is true, there is a neceſſity well enough conſiſtent with a freedom of will; natural actions, in a rational Agent may be ſpontaneous; but there is a neceſſity, and liberty, which are things repugnant: things naturally neceſſary are determined to one, and may not vary; things of liberty are indifferent, *ad oppoſita*, ſo that they may, or may not do. God cannot but be himſelf; he cannot deny himſelf; he is a God of truth, and he cannot lie; the Father cannot but eternally beget the Son, &c. And this neceſſity is abſolute, it is impoſſible that he ſhould do other: but then, he might, or might not have willed to make a world, or to have made it thus; or put theſe and thoſe creatures into it. It is true, upon the ſuppoſition that he wills it to be ſo, there is an hypothetical neceſſity that it muſt be; becauſe his will is not capable of changes, but yet it was arbitrary with him whether he would have thus willed. Hence that, Rev. 4. 11. *For thou haſt created all things, and for thy pleaſure they are and were created.*

2. *IN the former there can be no choice, in the latter there is.* Choice, is properly an act of liberty, and ſo not compatable, with abſolute neceſſity: Choice is properly an elicit act of the will; and it always is exerted in one of theſe two ways; either by accepting or rejecting the thing which is ſet before it; or elſe by taking one among ſeveral, giving it the preference; now neither of theſe are applicable to rational actions, becauſe they are the ſame, and may neither be refuſed nor changed: whereas voluntary actions do always come under one of theſe. He hath choſen to do the thing, or this rather than the other, and therefore he is determined not by the thing, but by the choice; and for this reaſon it is called *his good pleaſure*, becauſe it is that which it ſeems good to him to do.

3. *HENCE the former admits of no deliberation, whereas the latter doth.* Deliberation is properly, a conſultation, either with oneſelf, or with others, about the doing of a thing; and it always refers to one of theſe two caſes, viz. whether to do the thing, or not to do it; or, ſuppoſing a deſign to do it, after what way or manner it may beſt be done. Now this can rationally be applied only to voluntary

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or contingent actions, and there is no occaſion for it in ſuch as are natural; more eſpecially as to the former of theſe. For what occaſion is there for any to conſult whether they ſhall do that which they cannot but do? When therefore we ſay that God doth any thing of *his meer good pleaſure*, it intends,

1. *THAT he is under no natural neceſſity of doing it.* For though, all his natural actions pleaſe him, yet they are not the reſult of his meer pleaſure; we cannot therefore infer, or poſitively conclude theſe from the being and perfections of God: if he ſhould not do them, he would yet remain, God bleſſed for ever; they do not flow from his Being conſidered abſolutely in itſelf: the being or not being of theſe acts, make no change at all eſſential in him; but he is the ſame.

2. *THAT he is under no obligation to theſe acts, antecedent to his own good pleaſure.* We muſt ſuppoſe, that if once an act of his will hath paſt concerning any thing, it gives a certain infallibility to it, becauſe herein he hath obliged himſelf to himſelf: but if we conſider the thing antecedaniouſly to this act of his will, he was altogether at liberty to have done it, or not to have done it: the meaning is, that there was nothing but his will, to determine his will to it?

3. *THAT that which primarily moves him to theſe acts, is his will.* It is true, there is mention made of his counſel, which according to our manner of conception, ſuppoſed a prudent deliberation about a thing; and to us, ſuppoſeth reaſons conſidered of, to ſway us, to this, rather than that; but it is the counſel of his will. As, Eph. 1. 11. *Who worketh all things after the counſel of his own will.* And indeed, this deliberation is abſcribed to him only after our manner, for we cannot ſuppoſe any article in eternity, wherein God infinitely wiſe could be at any ſtand.

4. *THAT all the other reaſons of his ſo acting, are the reſultancies of his will.* In the contrivance of God's holy purpoſes, there are a great many connexions, and there are the all-wiſe reaſons of them all; according to *Pſal.* 104. 24. *In wiſdom haſt thou made them all.* But if we proceed analytically in the reſolution of theſe, we muſt run them up, till we at length find them all ſwallowed up in his good pleaſure, and when we arrive there, there is no further that we can go: we muſt ſay of them all, as our Saviour Chriſt in that caſe, Math. 11. 25. *At that time Jeſus anſwered and ſaid, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes.* And as *Paul* in one like it, Rom. 9. 18. *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.* Now that there are ſuch acts of God's meer good pleaſure, is plain from the Scripture: and thoſe both,

1. *TRANSIENT*; or all the works of *Efficiency.* It is a ruled caſe that all God's works out of himſelf are contingent, or acts of liberty; whether the works of Creation, *Rev.* 4. 11. and therefore we find that they received their being, by a word of command from him, *Gen.* 1. Though the Attribute, Creator, be relative, and one that has a creature for its correlate, yet he had been a God perfectly glorious, if there had been no creatures: Or the works of Providence, in managing the affairs of the World, it muſt be ſaid of them all, as, Pſal. 115. 3. *But our God is in the heavens, he hath done whatſoever he pleaſed.* Pſal. 135. 6. *Whatſoever the Lord pleaſed, that did he in heaven and in earth, in the ſeas and all deep places.* There are indeed the reaſons of the things, but if it be asked, why God did them ſo? it is this, becauſe he ſaw good ſo to do.

2. *IMMANENT*; with reſpect to his eternal *Decrees*: In which the foundation was laid for the futurity of all the works of Efficiency. That there is ſuch a Decree, we have before conſidered, and of the nature of it; but we are now concerned in one great Article of it; as will appear more in the next head. Although this was from eternity fixt, and ratified; God himſelf is not more ancient than his Decree; yet if we will entertain right notions of it, we muſt not only conſider it as already made, but in the making of it; or according to its nature: and here the cauſe of it, or what, in God, gives being to it, is to be weighed. Now the Apoſtle calls it the *counſel of his will*, Eph. 1. 11. and the reaſon is, becauſe it is the product of his good pleaſure; and it muſt needs be ſo, from the conſideration of the nature of a Decree. If God had done all his works naturally, a Decree had been ſuperfluous; we conceive a decree to be the iſſue of a deliberation, which hath room only in things voluntary. God doth not lay out his whole Omnipotency in his works of efficiency; there is the *reſidue of the ſpirit* with him: there are innumerable poſſible beings, which ſhall never have exiſtence, equally capable of being ſerviceable to the glory of God, with thoſe that be: whence is it then, that theſe, and no other do paſs into futurity? nothing elſe can be aſſigned as the leading cauſe, but *his meer pleaſure*; He could have made them if he would, and why would he not, but becauſe he did not ſee it good ſo to do? Now, among thoſe things thus willed by him, this was one, viz. The reſtitution of ſome of fallen men to happineſs: and that this flows from *his meer good pleaſure*, is the thing that I am now to make evident. And this may be cleared up to us in ſome inſtances; viz. That there ſhould be ſuch a reſtitution: That this ſhould be terminated on mankind: That it ſhould be conferred only upon ſome of this kind: That theſe and thoſe perſons individually, ſhould be the ſubjects of it, and the reſt ſhould be left to periſh in their miſery; the laſt of theſe will come to be handled under the next head; we may take a brief acount of the other then at preſent.

1. *THAT there ſhould be ſuch a reſtitution.*

The meer good pleaſure of God exerted itſelf in this determination, and there can be no other cauſe aſſigned for it: This will be made good by theſe Concluſions,

1. *THAT the ſinful creature was juſtly fallen into its miſery.* There was no hard dealing in the firſt Covenant, which ſhould call for an abatement in another. If God would have taken the forfeiture, and purſued the ſinful creature to deſtruction, it had been righteous: it was fallen into his hands, and lay open to vengeance; Juſtice had its full ſcope to have proſecuted its quarrel, and recovered its own of ſinners: and if God had ſeen meet to have ſaid, ſo it ſhall be without any remedy, who ſhould have been able to have found any the leaſt fault with him? He was provoked to it; the ſinner had deſtroyed himſelf; he was dead in law; and what ſaith he, Pſal. 51.4. *That thou mighteſt be juſtified when thou ſpeakeſt, and be clear when thou judgeſt.*

2. *GOD could have recovered his own glory of the creature without any reſtitution.* God indeed made all things for his Glory; and he muſt have it by them: but there was no neceſſity that he muſt either reſtore the creature, or loſe it. True, he had not had it in this way; but that was a thing arbitrary with him. That all are not reſtored, we have obſerved under the former head; that he is glorified in them, in their eternal deſtruction, is certain. We read, *Pſal.* 9. 16. and, Ezek. 28. 22. *I will be glorified in the midſt of thee, and thou ſhalt know that I am the Lord, when I ſhall have executed judgment in her, and ſhall be ſanctified in her.* God gets himſelf an everlaſting name, in the triumphs of revenging Juſtice over his enemies.

3. *THE end of this reſtitution proves it to be of his will; which is the manifeſtation of his rich grace.* Eph. 1. 5,6. *Having predeſtinated us unto the adoption of children by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will. To the praiſe of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.* This will be after conſidered; only here we may ſufficienly argue, that the great *Epithet* of Grace is, that it is *free*; and the freeneſs of it, is not meerly in the ſpontaneity of it; becauſe God takes delight in it; but alſo in the liberty of it; that the creature was fallen into his hands forfeited, and he might have taken the forfeiture, but of his own meer motion, without any neceſſity urging, he was pleaſed to remit it: if he had been under any other obligation, but his own will, it would have infringed the Grace appearing in it; but this makes it Grace indeed. *Eph.* 2. *begin.*

4. *THE ſinner cannot be reſtored without a ranſom of God's own providing; and he was at his liberty whether he would provide one or no.* The neceſſity of this way, will hereafter be conſidered: but, upon the ſuppoſition of it, this concluſion neceſſarily follows: that when the ſinful creature had rejected God, and ruined himſelf, God ſhould be under a neceſſity of providing him one to repair him again, is againſt all reaſon: that there is ſuch a thing revealed in the world, is a myſtery which the very Angels are aſtoniſhed at, a wonder which is unſearchable by us, and therefore He who was provided for it, is upon this account *called Wonderful*, Iſai. 9. 6. Surely God's giving his Son, and Chriſt's undertaking, was an act of the greateſt liberty that ever was.

2. *THAT this ſhould be terminated on Mankind.* There were two ſorts of creatures fallen into Apoſtacy, and ſo become miſerable, Angels & Men. It is true, there were but ſome Angels involved here, whereas the whole kind of men was comprehended in the fall of *Adam*, and all the ſorrowful effects of it. Now, that God provided Salvation for the one kind, and not for the other; that Men ſhould taſte of this benefit, and not one of the apoſtate Angels, is very remarkable; the Apoſtle takes ſpecial notice of it, and puts a remark upon it, Heb. 2. 16. *For verily he took not on him the nature of Angels: but he took on him the ſeed of Abraham.* But why he thus determined, can have no other cauſe aſſigned for it, than what is under conſideration. For,

1. *GOD owed no more kindneſs to Men than he did to Devils.* They were both in the ſame condemnation; God's natural goodneſs could not oblige him more to one than the other; they were both his creatures, the workmanſhip of his hands, and both now equally become rebels; and whatſoever aggravations we may put upon the ſin of the one above the other, it is certain, both were horribly guilty, both dolefully miſerable; and if miſery could have moved him, he would have ſeen as much reaſon for compaſſion to devils as men: their doom is ſubſtantially the ſame, Mat. 25. 41. *Depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.*

2. *THE glory of his grace would have as much appeared, in the ſalvation of Devils as of Men.* They were as capable of being made monuments of his free mercy: they had as great ſins to pardon, as horrible a pit to be delivered from, there was as great a ranſom muſt have gone, for their redemption; his love therefore would have as clearly & glorioufly appeared in this as the other.

3. *THERE was nothing, that we know of, in their condition to have hindred his chuſing them, if he had pleaſed.* I know, ſome ſay, they had ſinned the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, but they ſay without book: we have no Scripture account, that tells us, that God could not with the ſalving his honour, have reſtored them, as well as men, and at as cheap a price. And indeed, were it not ſo, the Apoſtle's emphatical obſervation, *Heb.* 2. 16. were of no validity; his diſtinguiſhing love to us could not be hereby made evident; becauſe there was an obſtacle.

4. *THEY would have glorified God in their recovery as well as men do.* The Angelical nature is nothing inferiour, but indeed ſuperiour to that of man: they are of the two, the

the more noble beings; man was made a little lower than they. If then, they had been recovered, they would have done more than we can; they would have glorifyed God according to their nature, and that would have been eminently. There remains therefore nothing to make this difference upon, but *his good pleaſure.*

3. *THAT it ſhould be conferred only upon ſome of this kind.* Though God hath choſen this ſpecies of being to be the ſubjects of this rich favour; yet he hath not extended it to the whole ſpecies in all the Individuals; but there are only ſome, as was before evidenced, and theſe too but a few, in compariſon of the reſidue. Now if it be enquired, why ſome, and not all; it will be found, that ſtill the ſame account muſt be given. I am not now conſidering why this man rather than that; that will come after; but why not all as well as a number. And here,

1. *THERE was vertue enough in the remedy provided for all as well as ſome.* If the ſatisfaction of Chriſt had not been ſufficient for all, it would not have been ſo for one: there would have needed no more coſt to have been laid out for their Redemption. That one Sacrifice had a vertue in it that could not be exhauſted, being infinite. Heb. 7. 25. *Wherefore he is able to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto God by him.* He is therefore ſaid to be *mighty to ſave*, Iſai. 63. 1. His *riches are unſearchable*, Eph. 3. 8.

2. *THE juſtice of God would not have ſuffered any injury by the delivery of all.* It never ſet in ſuch ſtate and triumph, as when it had Chriſt the Son of God its priſoner, and laid upon him the ſins of us all: and if this had been applied to all the children of men, Juſtice would have remained for ever ſatisfied in it, having received a ſatisfactory oblation of Chriſt on their account: and this is a neceſſary inference from the former; for if there were enough, more could not have been needed.

3. *THE mercy of God would have had ſo many the more everlaſting monuments.* God will be for ever admired in all his Saints; the more then that there had been, the more inſtances Heaven would have had, for him thus to be admired in: and though it be certain, that the damned are a foil to ſet off God's diſtinguiſhing love to them that are ſaved; yet if all had been ſaved, the vaſt extenſiveneſs of his Salvation, would have made the greater *Chorus* of thoſe who would eternally have chanted forth his praiſes, in everlaſting Hallelujahs: and ſo he would have been no loſer by it; where, to the ſatisfaction of juſtice, the triumph of grace had been added.

4. *THEY were all alike involved in guilt, and expoſed to his wrath.* The whole race were become alike miſerable; they were all equally guilty, curſed, condemned; equally vile, full of ſin, and enmity; equally become unprofitable: the condition of all was one and the ſame; there was no difference in them. Rom. 3. 9. *For we have before proved both Jews & Gentiles, that they are all under ſin*, Eph. 2. 3. And why God ſhould not damn all, or ſave all, but make ſuch a vaſt difference in his dealings with ſome, and others, what other account can there be given of it, but this? it was *his good pleaſure* ſo to do.

USE. *LET this ſerve to diſcover to us the wonderful good will of God to the children of men, and encourage us to go to him for recovery out of our miſery.* Was poor man become miſerable, by his own default? and was there nothing to oblige God to think a thought of mercy for him; but all provocation to ſtir him up to take his revenge upon him? and hath he yet for all that, *of his own meer motion*, moſt freely purpoſed, and declared his purpoſe to receive a number of this company? how wonderful is his loving kindneſs? how beyond compariſon admirable is this benignity of his? that he ſhould do ſo for enemies, traitors, thoſe that had trampled upon his honour, deſpiſed the riches of his goodneſs, and made themſelves as vile as could be? that could do nothing for him; that were become altogether unprofitable? and is *his meer good pleaſure* the fountain of all this favour? be not then diſcouraged, reckon not any of thoſe objections with which Satan and your miſ-giving hearts would go about to make you deſpair of his help, to be ſufficient to damp your hopes, or drive you away from coming to him for his ſalvation: remembring that if it be his Pleaſure that rules and determines this matter, he will moſt readily take ſuch advantages as may give the cleareſt and moſt full demonſtration of his uſing the ſovereign liberty of his will; and therefore, though you have been the vileſt, and moſt flagitious ſinners in the world, yet, if he will *have mercy becauſe he will have mercy*; you may for all this ſtand as fair as any, for the emanations of this favour to influence you; and beſtow this wonderful reſtitution upon you; which may encourage you to come and ask it of him with hope.

[MARCH 20. 1693.]

SERMON *LXXII.*

4. THE Foundation of this Reſtitution; *His Electing of them from all Eternity to Everlaſting Life.* Here was the deſign of man's Salvation laid and ratified. And here we are led to the contemplation of thoſe myſterious Doctrines of *Election* and *Reprobation*, for the one of theſe ſuppoſeth the other, and the looking at them together will illuſtrate both: and becauſe they are both comprized under the Divine Predeſtination; we may firſt take a brief account of that in general, and then proceed to thoſe in particular.

1. OF Predeſtination in general, take this deſcription, *It is the Decree of God for the mani-*

manifeſtation of his ſpecial glory in the eternal ſtate of men. That this may be diſtinctly elucidated, let us obſerve.

1. *THE thing deſcribed; Predeſtination.* We have this word uſed in, Rom. 8. 30. *Moreover, whom he did predeſtinate, them he alſo called.* Eph. 1. 5. 11. *Having predeſtinated us unto the adoption of children by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will. In whom alſo we have obtained an inheritance, being predeſtinated according to the purpoſe of him, who worketh all things after the counſel of his own will.* The word ſignifies to *define, determine* or *appoint* a thing beforehand; and it comprizeth in it, the bounds ſet to it, the end it is deſigned for, and the means by which it is to attain it: hence it is tranſlated, *foredetermined*, Act. 4. 28. Deſtination, is a certain deſignation of a thing in reſpect both to the end and means; which, becauſe it was in God before the creatures exiſtence, is called Predeſtination. It is true the word in the places cited, is applied to Election; but is as a *Genus* predicated of one *ſpecies*, and there are words of a like import applied to the other, Jude 4. *For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation.* Greek: *before-written*, a metaphor from records. That there is ſuch a Predeſtination as is here deſcribed, may be inferred from the wiſdom of God, which as it would not make a creature, but for an end; ſo it could not but accommodate to each an end according to the make of it; as will be further made to appear in the ſequel.

2. *THE general nature of it; It is the Decree of God.* And ſo it agrees with his other Decrees. It is true, if we ſpeak of God decreeing, ſo the decree is but one: but on the account of the things decreed, it is manifold; for in it is the whole contrivance of all the works of Efficiency, referring to all kinds and individuals; and ſince the executions are various, there muſt needs be the ſame variety in the contrivance, ſince all things are done according to that *exemplar*, Eph. 1. 11. *Who worketh all things after the counſel of his own will.* Whatſoever then hath been already mentioned formerly referring to the Decree in general, is here applicable. All the Attributes which ſhine forth in the Decree, are here moſt illuſtrious; Infinite wiſdom in the contrivance, *Rom.* 11. 33. Sovereign freedom of will in the determination, *Rom.* 9. 18. Immutability in the ratification, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19.

3. *THE ſpecial nature of it is expreſſed in the remainder of the deſcription.* For explication whereof, obſerve,

1. *THAT there is a ſpecial manifeſtation of his glory that God hath deſigned in ſome of his creatures.* The whole world was to be a mirrour in which his glorious perfections were to be ſeen by reflection; and there is no ſecond being but bears an impreſſion upon it of ſome of theſe. *Rom.* 1. 19, 20. There is his infinite, and eternal wiſdom, power, and goodneſs to be read legibly in them. But then there is a peculiar glory of thoſe moral vertues of his, Grace & Juſtice, in which he will be admired. Hence that remark, Rom. 9. 22, 23 *What if God, willing to ſhew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-ſuffering the veſſels of wrath fitted to deſtruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the veſſels of mercy, which he had afore-prepared unto glory.* And on this account we have before obſerved, that beſides the common government by which God manageth the whole affair of the creation, there is alſo a ſpecial government, adminiſtred to ſome of his creatures; about which alſo his eternal purpoſe was concerned.

2. *THAT hence God hath choſen man to be a ſubject of the ſhine of theſe vertues.* It is true, the Angels alſo are to be annumerated to theſe ſubjects; but our peculiar buſineſs is with Mankind. Theſe are among the more noble beings, and more eſpecially capable of theſe glorious impreſſions: theſe therefore muſt be everlaſting monuments of theſe, in whom they are to be ſeen for ever. Hence that, Mat. 25. ult. *And theſe ſhall go away into everlaſting puniſhment: but the righteous into life eternal.* But for a more full and clear diſcovery of the nature of this great myſtery, let us obſerve theſe things concerning it.

1. *THAT the Decree of God is an* Immanent *Act remaining in him.* There are two ſorts of Acts which according to our conception we aſcribe to God, Immanent and Tranſient: Tranſient Acts make a change in the creature, though none in him; they leave ſomething behind them. Thus Creation leaves a World, Juſtification leaves a Pardon; and ſo of the reſt; from which effects we acknowledge Efficiency unto God: the things thus left, are called his works. But Immanent Acts put nothing *into*, or leave no change *upon* the creature, of which ſort is Predeſtination; it remains in God, and makes no impreſſion on the object of it, but it looks upon it, as having done neither good nor evil. *Rom.* 9. 11.

2. *PREDESTINATION is an Eternal Decree, or Act.* This choice or appointment was made before the world had exiſtence. Eph. 1. 4. *According as he hath choſen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy, and without blame before him in love.* Hence that, Jer. 31. 3. *The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, ſaying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlaſting love: therefore with loving kindneſs have I drawn thee.* It was before any of the works of efficiency were brought forth. It is true, it makes no inward difference in the creature, before the application of grace by the Spirit, in effectual vocation, till when, all are in a like ſtate. *Eph.* 2. 3. 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. And hence it is a ſecret not known to us, until it come to be diſcovered by us in this fruit of it. 1 *Pet.* 1. 10. Yet it lies hid in the breaſt of him who predeſtinated from eternity. There was before time a being of this Decree; and God knoweth who are his. 2 Tim. 2. 19. *Nevertheleſs, the foundation of God ſtandeth ſure,*

ſure, having this ſeal, the Lord knoweth them that are his.

3. *PREDESTINATION, in God, is one ſimple and immutable act.* It is not various, or ſuccedeneous; God did not purpoſe one thing before another, but all at once, in the ſame inſtant of eternity. And this will be made evident if we conſider,

1. *HIS Simplicity:* Intimated in that, Exod. 3. 14. *I AM THAT I AM.* There is in Him nothing *paſt*, or to *come*, but all is *preſent*: Whatſoever he decreeth, he always did and will do it; all acts Immanent in God are God himſelf, only diſtinguiſhed in our conception: God is always the ſame without any change.

2. *HIS Eternity*: His Decrees, being Himſelf, are Eternal. They are his everlaſting purpoſes: God comprehends all things and events touching the creature, together and at once in the moment of eternity, in which there is no ſucceſſion, and therefore there can be no *priority* or *poſteriority* in the act of decreeing.

4. *THOUGH there be no order of ſucceſſion in the act, yet in reſpect of the things decreed, and in our conception, there is ſuch an order.*

1. *IN the things decreed.* This is very obſervable in the connections of thoſe things mentioned, Rom. 8. 30. *Moreover, whom he did predeſtinate, them he alſo called: and whom he called, them he alſo juſtified; and whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified.* A man upon an high Tower, ſees an army of men, paſſing by at one caſt of his eye; but yet there is a ſucceſſion in the army; and they follow one another: God ſees all things at once in the Decree in the infinite underſtanding of his, but the things decreed by him are put into their ſeveral ranks and orders of being: the decree is in this reſpect compared to writing in a book, where things are written in order. *Pſal.* 139. 16. And,

1. *THERE are various objects of the Decree.* There were divers members to be faſhioned. *Pſal.* 139. 16. There are innumerable things about which the decree is concerned, all of which it looketh upon; for whatſoever divine efficiency brings forth in time, was the object of the decree in eternity, and that not only as to beings or creatures, but as to all the diſpoſures and changes that they are concerned in; every one of theſe had a place in this purpoſe.

2. *THERE is an order and ſubordination in theſe various objects of the Decree.* The things themſelves, are not co-ordinate, but they have a concatenation in them; and there are ſome which *go before*, and others *follow after*. Hence that account in, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22, 23. The nature and operation of the things themſelves, is an evident demonſtration of this.

3. *HENCE ſome things are both means and ends in different reſpects.* There is indeed a *mean* that is not an *end*, as that which is *firſt in order*; and there is an *end* which is never a *mean*, as that which is the *laſt*; becauſe we muſt determine ſomewhere: but then, there is that which is an end in the ſubordination of foregoing means, and yet but a mean as it is leading to an higher end. Now this ſubordination was placed in the decree, there God ſtated it; and therefore in reſpect of the things, God purpoſed and appointed *this* thing to be for *that*, and *that* for *another*; his own Glory *ultimately*, and all things for *that*. Prov. 16. 4. and yet ſome things more *immediately* for it, other more *mediately*, ſo as that they touch other inferiour ends by the way, though they do not tarry at them. See *Hoſ.* 2. 21, 22.

2. *IN our manner of Conception:* and that is according to the nature of things, and ſuitably to a created underſtanding: we conceive of God's decrees in a rational way, or according to the manner of men in their purpoſing and decreeing, in which we deſign one thing for another; and hence firſt one thing and then another: ſuch notions are we neceſſitated to take up of God, as of a cauſe by counſel, firſt, propoſing the end, and then laying out of the means. *Rom.* 8. 29, 30. becauſe elſe we could entertain no conceptions at all about this glorious myſtery, but muſt be wholly ignorant of it.

5. *THE true order of intention which we aſcribe to God is by way of Analyſis.* This is well to be obſerved, elſe we ſhall be loſt in our ſpeculation. We are not to conceive of it in the method of execution; which is *Gennetical*; for then we muſt aſcribe divers acts to God *ſuccedaneous*, which may not be. If God's intention ſhould be, *firſt* to make a world, then man in it, make him righteous, enter into a Covenant with him, ſuffer him to fall, then ſend his Son to recover him again; and deviſe a new Covenant to repair the damages of the firſt; this would neceſſitate divers diſtinct ſubſequent purpoſes: but here, that which is *firſt* in the order of intention, is *laſt* in the execution: ſo that by *Analyſing* the works of God, we find the order of his Decrees: and this is conſentany to our way of working, in which that which we firſt intend or purpoſe is brought about by an order of means, which being contrived for the effecting of the thing intended, muſt all of them be employed, and do their work in their order, before the thing be accompliſhed, which is a reſultancy from them. We therefore apprehend, the order of the decree, according to the intention of end and means; ſo that in our conception, and with regard to the things, this ſingle decree hath two parts in it, viz. the deſignation of the end, and the aſſignation of the means. There is no wiſe Agent, but he determines an *end* of making, and lays out the way in which to bring it about. There are two words uſed, *Rom.* 8. 29, 30. *fore-knowledge*, which is the appointment of the *end*, and *predeſtination*, which is of the *means* unto it; and there is no other order that we can aſſign of God's intention; for whatſoever is intended, it is under the conſideration of good: now every thing is either

either good *for itself*, and that points us to the last *end*; or else *for some other*, and that belongs to the nature of *means*; and there is no third way in which we can attribute goodness to a thing. The end therefore in order of intention is before the *means*; it must needs be so, for the *end* is more excellent than the *means*. Mat. 6: 25. *That* is willed *for it self*, whereas the other is always willed with a reference to *that*; and therefore the intention of the end is the cause of the intention of the *means*; they had never been purposed but for that.

6. *THE last end of God's purpose of Predestination, is the manifestation of his own glory, in the way of Justice & Grace.* This is the thing he aimed at in it: and all his dispensations towards this creature, are means subordinated to this end: yea God hath a special eye to this in his government of the world: God wills his own glory *ultimately*; and all other things for it. *Prov.* 16. 4. and God intended the unfolding of his other Attributes for the illustration of these; this therefore is the *last* in execution; for when God hath led the whole Creation through all the various changes ordained by him, he will finally make this glory to shine forth out of them. *Ezek.* 28. 22. And when the stage of the lower world is pulled down, & folded up as a garment, then shall the highest Heaven be the place in which his grace shall be celebrated in the everlasting monuments of it; and the elementary world be turned into an hell, where Justice shall sit in triumph through Eternity.

7. *THE only efficient cause of this Predestination, is the good pleasure of God.* This we have already observed in the first cause of mans restitution, and that both as to the thing it self, and the proper subjects of it. It must needs then be so in the designation of it: the moving cause of divine Predestination is not to be found any where out of God. *Exod.* 33. 19. The holy Scripture resolveth it all into his sole will. There are two expressions in, *Eph.* 1. 5. 11. which assure us that this Predestination is fountained in the good pleasure of God. (1.) It is called *the good pleasure of his will*, v. 5. by vertue of which he disposeth all things *arbitrarily*; so Christ acknowledgeth, *Mat.* 11. 25. (2.) *The counsel of his will*, v. 11. whereby though he doth things arbitrarily, yet *not inadvisedly*; there was a counsel about it, and therefore it is devised before-hand. And hence, though it be an *immanent*, yet it is not a necessary act, but properly *voluntary*: there are acts that we ascribe to God which are natural, and so necessary, such as active generation, or the eternal begetting of the Son, and the procession of the Holy Spirit: but God might from eternity have willed otherwise than he did in this decree. He was under no obligation to this more than to that, antecedently to his purpose. Hence also his decree doth not presume any *quality* foreseen in the creature, for which it so determineth concerning it; because it is eternal; for if it should presume any such qualities, and proceed according to them, their *futurition* should be before the decree it self, and so we must seek some higher reason for them, which it is impossible to find.

8. *THE object of this Predestination is Man, considered as a possible being; or capable, in God's All-sufficiency of being whatsoever he pleaseth.* It is needful that we rightly conceive in what respect Man came into this act of Predestination; and it must be in this and no other. For,

1. *THE object of the decree is from eternity.* There cannot be an act without an object: if we conceive of an act of Predestination, we must conclude there is something predestinated; and it must therefore be as *ancient* as the decree in which it is.

2. *HENCE the object of the Decree is in God.* It must be sought for and found in him, and no where else; for there is no other Eternal Being but he; and so in the days of eternity he could not see any being out of himself.

3. *THE object of the Decree is that which in order goeth before the Decree:* i. e. in order of the conception, and of the nature of things. We cannot make any sense of a decree about nothing; for that would be no decree; God must have something in his eye, or his infinite understanding, on which to *determine* his purpose.

4. *THERE is nothing goes before the Decree in any order, but God's All-sufficiency, on which the possibility of the creature is founded.* If we employ'd contemplation in the consideration of things *antecedently* to the purpose of God; all we can say about them is, that Divine Omnipotency was able to give a real being to them, if he saw meet.

5. *HENCE the object of the Decree is that which by the Decree passeth from a meer possibility to futurition.* It was *possible* before, but now it is *future*. In the divine nature we may conclude that it *might be*, but it is by the decree that we may conclude that it *shall be*; for it is certain, that all shall not be, that might be. When God hath done all, he hath the residue of the spirit. *Mal.* 2. 15. And hence Predestination doth not consider the existence of the creature by creation, as the *Sublapsarians* suppose, because creation comes within the compass of the decree, as a *medium*. Nor yet doth it suppose the *prevision* of the corrupt mass of mankind in the state of apostacy, which those also plead; for then God should have intended to make man, before he had intended what to do with him; but this also was put in as another *medium* to the bringing about of the purpose.

NOW further, to evince the *Necessity* of such a decree of Predestination, besides what was before intimated, from the consideration of the infinite Wisdom of God, which would never set him on work to do any thing, without a design what to do with it, we may further argue it,

1. *FROM*

1. *FROM the dependance, as of all ſecond beings, ſo of man upon the will of God.* If man be to be guided to his end by the divine will, there muſt then be ſuch a will of God by which he ſo guides him: and hence he muſt have deſigned in his own breaſt an *end* to which he will *guide* and *lead* him; which hath been before proved in the conſideration of ſpecial Government; and this muſt needs infer ſuch a Predeſtination as we aſſert.

2. *BECAUSE without this Predeſtination of man, the whole frame of inconſtant beings muſt be uſeleſs*; At leaſt they would in a great meaſure loſe their end. We ſee all in this lower world is ſubordinated to the uſe and ſervice of man; *Heb.* 2. 21,22. and if he be not *ultimately* made to bring glory to God, they would ſuffer vanity; as for the preſent they ſeem to do, *and groan under it.* Rom.8.19. If then God decreed to have his entire glory by the whole univerſe, he could not but deſign a ſpecial glory by man, elſe there would be a ſtop put to the aim of thoſe ſubordinate *media*, which cannot be.

3. *BECAUSE man were not elſe at the liberty and diſpoſe of God, if he were not under a decree of Predeſtination.* If he were not at the diſpoſe of God's counſel, he were from under his power; but now, hereby man appears to be at the will of his Creator, when he is a ſubject of divine Predeſtination. *Rom.* 9. 19. Herein God appears to be a moſt ſovereign Potter, to have power over the moſt noble and curious piece of clay, in his own workmanſhip, to make of it a veſſel of honour or diſhonour according to his pleaſure; and God will not loſe his prerogative over his works.

4. *FROM the impoſſibility of God's infinite foreknowledge, not to have ſo determined, concerning all ſecond beings before the world was.* The creature is a product of God's counſel, and all its changes and contingencies flow as conſequents upon the ſame counſel: Now the *Apoſtle* tells us that *foreknowledge* and *predeſtination* are linked together. *Rom.*8.29. For if God *foreknew* all the Events befalling the reaſonable creature, he then *predeſtinated* them to them; for it is certain, that when all things were no where but in the mind of God, in the days of eternity, he could *foreknow* nothing of them, but what was his determinate will and counſel concerning them. And this may ſuffice in general.

USE I. *IS all the world of men under a decree of Predeſtination? Know it then whoſoever you are, that God will get ſomething by you.* He will gain his glory either *from you* or *upon you.* Here you may be aſſured that God did not make you for nothing; and this conſideration if rightly pondered on, will be ſo far from producing that *diabolical* neglect of all means of Grace, and adventuring the hazard of our eternal ſtate upon the decree, that it will teach the miſerable creature, as long as it is in a ſtate of uncertainty, to be going trembling every day, under the impreſſion of ſuch conſiderations, *I was not made for nothing; God made me for his own glory, and his glory he will get out of me; if then I do not ſerve and glorify him in my life and converſation, and ſtudy to live ſo as to ſhew forth his praiſe, he will get a name in my ruine, and everlaſting miſery.* And this will teach you of what infinite concernment it is, and how it ſtands you in hand, to lay about you, in this the day of grace, to make ſure of his love and favour, and to make ſure to prevent the woful hazard that you are otherwiſe running into.

USE II. *LET it counſel us by way of caution, to make improvement of this Doctrine in the order that God hath revealed it in.* i.e. Remember that as God hath predeſtinated all to the *end*, ſo to the *means*: and therefore to take heed of ſeperating between theſe: beware of the deſperate concluſion of ſome, *If I am elected*, &c. this is to pervert this Doctrine to the hazard of our undoing: remember predeſtination is a ſecret with God, and we can know it only by the event, and ſo, as it doth not diſcourage from uſing means, ſo will it not excuſe our neglect: if we do ſo finally neglect, it will prove our reprobation; but not hinder our juſt condemnation. And till we have made ſure of converting grace, we can have no comfortable aſſurance of our election; think it then your intereſt to make your calling ſure, by a careful waiting upon God in all the ways of his appointment for his grace, and by this way you may come to know the good thoughts of love that God had for you from eternity; and ſo be able to adore and worſhip him with thankful praiſe for it: aſſuring your ſelves, that the Goſpel invitations are propoſed unto you, and if you do heartily accept of and comply with them, you ſhall be ſure of eternal life; but if you do reject them, it is your own wilfulneſs, and will make you more guilty before God.

[MAY 15. 1694.]

SERMON *LXXIII.*

2. WE now proceed to the conſideration of the *ſorts* of Predeſtination, which are two, viz. *Election*, and *Reprobation.* The former whereof is here expreſly pointed to, and the latter is implied, and both of which are clearly held forth in the Scripture; and are neceſſarily inferred from the *ends* which men are *Predeſtinated* unto.

BEFORE I come to treat of them ſeverally, I ſhall obſerve ſomething about them *conjunctly.* And here, two things may be ſpoken to, 1. To make it appear that both of theſe are contained in the decree of Predeſtination. 2. To make ſome general Obſervations on them.

1. IT will be evident that both of theſe are comprized in the decree of Predeſtination, if we obſerve theſe things,

1. *IF the vertue of Chriſt's obedience be not applied to all unto ſalvation, but only to ſome, then is there a diſtinction of men, and a ſeperation made between them in the eternal decree.* What is in God's providence effected in time, was contained in the bowels of the decree from eternity. God, in his *efficiency* works after the *idea* of his purpoſe and by what is done in time, we come to know what was intended in the days of eternity. And in the preſent affair it is certain, that the *application* of Chriſt's Redemption depends abſolutely on God, and is the work of his Holy Spirit. Hence that, Joh. 6. 37. *All that the father giveth me, ſhall come to me: and him that cometh to me, I will in no wiſe caſt out.* If Chriſt had only purchaſed a Redemption for all, and offered it accordingly, and left it to man's liberty to accept or refuſe it, there were no force in this argument, but it is far otherwiſe God hath not ſeen meet hitherto, to publiſh theſe glad tidings every where, and we may be ſure that he intends not their ſalvation, for if he deſigned the *end*, he would have deſigned the *means*. Hence that, 2 Cor. 4. 3. *But if our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt.* And where this Goſpel doth come, all do not cordially entertain and comply with it. And altho' man's enmity and obſtinacy be the blameable cauſe of it, and is ſo charged, Joh. 5. 40. *And ye will not come to me that ye might have life.* Yet if the reaſon of the difference, or why ſome do, and others do not, be ſought for, we may trace it up higher, and find it to be in the divine pleaſure. Hence that in *Rom.* 9. 16. *So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that ſheweth mercy.* And in *Deut.* 29. 2,3,4. And all this will finally iſſue in his purpoſe, according to *Rom.* 8. 28.

2. *THE Election of ſome only infers the Reprobation of others.* There are three things contained in this Argument,

1. *THAT there are ſome Elected.* That there is a decree of election, is ſo poſitively and frequently aſſerted in Scripture, that very few have had the impudence directly to deny, but rather ſeek to corrupt the doctrine of it. We are told of God's *elect*, Mat. 24. 22,31. *Tit.* 1. 1. *Of the election*, referring to a company, *Rom.* 11. 5, 7. Of our being *choſen*, &c. Eph. 1. 4. and this cannot be rationally applied to any thing but an eternal purpoſing of their ſalvation.

2. *THAT there are but ſome Elected.* That this election is of *perſons*, and not of *qualifications*, is ſo evident in the word of God, that there is no room of juſtly calling it in queſtion; and may be afterwards more fully evidenced. Now theſe Elect are not *all*, and therefore they can be but *ſome*: that there are but ſome reſtored, we have before obſerved and proved, and that will infer this concluſion according to the foregoing argument; but the Goſpel alſo puts a clear diſtinction between the elect and the reſt. Rom. 11. 7. *What then? Iſrael hath not obtained that which he ſeeketh for, but the election hath obtained it, and the reſt were blinded.* We therefore read in Act. 13.48. Nor will all the evaſions uſed, take off the force of the inference.

3. *THAT it hence plainly follows, that they who are not Elected are Reprobated.* This is that which carnal minds are unwilling to receive, but the argument is undeniable. Election in the propriety of the notion of it, is a *chuſing* of ſome, with a *leaving* of others, and without this there is no proper election: for if all be taken, and none refuſed, in what ſenſe can it be called a choice? Now this dereliction, or leaving of men muſt needs infer at leaſt a *negative Reprobation*; for it plainly ſaith, that God would not appoint theſe to ſalvation by Chriſt. But beſides this, if we remember that, in the decree, God hath appointed all his creatures to the ends unto which they certainly and without fail arrive at laſt, and then conſider that there are but ſome that he hath ordained to life, and left out the reſt, they muſt needs then be ordained to ſomething elſe, and that invincibly infers a *poſitive Reprobation*; and this diſtinction is to be gathered from that in, 1 Theſ. 5. 9. *For God hath not appointed us to wrath: but to obtain ſalvation by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

3. *THIS twofold decree of Election and Reprobation plainly appears from the conſideration of the divine Attributes which God aims at the advancing of in and by mankind.* Theſe are his revenging Juſtice, and his rich Grace. That he hath ſuch a deſign, hath formerly been made to appear, and is plain from that ſolemn Text, *Rom.* 9. 22,23. *What if God willing to ſhew his wrath, and make his power known, endured with much long ſuffering the veſſels of wrath fitted to deſtruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the veſſels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory?* There muſt therefore be veſſels of both theſe, or ſubjects who are to be monuments of them: otherwiſe this deſign muſt fail. If then, God had ſuch a purpoſe as this is from eternity, as we are told he had, and did accordingly deſign who ſhould be the monuments of each of them, then there paſt an act in the decree concerning them both, which in reſpect to the one of them is rightly called Election, and in regard to the other as properly termed Reprobation. For if theſe events do not fall out *fortuitouſly*, but according to God's *fore-ordination*, it muſt needs be ſo. We read, Jud. 4. *There are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation.* Prov. 16. 4. *The Lord hath made all things for himſelf: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.* And if it were not thus, God would be at an uncertainty about the event, whether theſe *Attributes* ſhould obtain the glory aimed at, or be diſappointed of it.

4. *IF there are ſome veſſels deputed for honour, and others for diſhonour, then there are theſe two decrees.* That there is ſuch a deputation we

we may ſafely infer from the *Apoſtles* compariſon in, 2 Tim. 2. 20. *But in a great houſe there are not only veſſels of gold, and of ſilver, but alſo of wood and of earth : and ſome to honour, and ſome to diſhonour.* For tho' *Allegorical* Scriptures are to be cautiouſly uſed, and not over-ſtrained, yet doubtleſs they are written for ſome purpoſe, and that which is the main ſcope of them is to be inferred from them. Now the *Apoſtle* had in *ver.* 19. been ſpeaking of the foundation on which our ſalvation is built, *viz.* God's *fore-knowledge*, which infers his purpoſe, as hath been before evinced : here therefore by this compariſon he illuſtrates the difference that is put between them, in reſpect of the ends they are to ſerve to ; noting that all are not appointed for that honour that ſome are, but to diſhonour, and it ſeems to aim at the ſame thing which he more expreſly illuſtrates in, Rom. 9. 21. *Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the ſame lump to make one veſſel to honour, and another unto diſhonour?* Now this deputation neceſſarily infers theſe decrees ; for in what other ſenſe can we ſuppoſe them to be ſo deputed ? and as the uſe is vaſtly different, ſo we may well aſſign divers articles in the decree about them.

5. *THE conſideration of the two places which God hath prepared for the everlaſting abode of two ſorts of men, will clear the doctrine of theſe decrees.* That mankind ſhall finally be divided into two companies, the one whereof ſhall have their eternal abode in Heaven, and the other ſhall be in Hell for ever, is a ſolemn Scripture truth : and this very event would infer the truth before us, upon a due weighing of it ; but it will yet be more manifeſt, when we conſider that theſe places were *fore-prepared* for theſe uſes; in which we are alſo confirmed by full Scripture teſtimony. Of the preparation of them we may read, Math. 25. 34, 41. *Then ſhall the king ſay unto them on his right hand, Come ye bleſſed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Then ſhall he ſay alſo unto them on the left hand, Depart from me ye curſed, into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.* Iſai. 30. ult. *For Tophet is ordained of old : yea, for the king it is prepared, he hath made it deep and large : the pile thereof is fire and much wood, the breath of the Lord like a ſtream of brimſtone doth kindle it.* In both which places we are given to underſtand, that the preparation principally deſigned is that which was in the eternal counſel and purpoſe of God ; tho' it alſo includes that which is done about it in the work of efficiency ; and it is to be obſerved, that there are alſo pointed the ſubjects *for whom* they were prepared ; and can we ſuppoſe that God would prepare them for ſuch ends, and not intend to occupy them accordingly ? And how can we frame a conception in our minds of his purpoſe ſo to occupy them, without the reſpect to the ſubjects deſigned for them ? for God doth nothing in vain ; and if he purpoſe any thing, he doth it *unchangeably*, and will therefore give being to it : for all theſe reaſons then we are obliged to believe firmly that there are ſuch decrees as theſe comprized in Predeſtination.

II. IT follows now that we make ſome general obſervations on them. There are ſome things to be taken notice of that are neceſſary to be well pondered, in order to our right conception of theſe decrees ; and they are theſe that follow,

1. *THAT Election and Reprobation have no dependance upon any foreſight of good or evil in the creature.* Man's curioſity would fain be prying into divine ſecrets, and muſt be ſatisfied in the reaſon of the vaſt difference which is put between theſe and thoſe ; that this ſhould be choſen, and that paſt by : and man's pride will not ſuffer him to reſt ſatisfy'd in the ſovereignty of God, or allow him that his will ſhould be the ſupream cauſe of all things ; hence, they muſt find the reaſon in the creature himſelf : and becauſe the creature had no being when this decree paſt, they therefore will have it to run upon the conſideration of God's foreſight of what men will afterwards be, whereupon God determines their everlaſting ſtate accordingly: and ſo they make this foreſight *antecedent to*, and the *cauſe of*, Election and Reprobation : pretending hereby to ſalve the honour of God's Juſtice, and free him from the imputation of partiality and cruelty : whereas mean while they go about to rob him of his God head, by ſetting themſelves againſt his ſovereignty, and under-mining his all-efficiency. God's fore ſight cannot ſee any future thing, but what his own decreeing will hath made *future*. There is nothing left in the nature of fallen man that makes him worthy of, or diſpoſed to receive the grace of God ; nor any thing more in one than another ; the beſt diſpoſition being full of enmity: *Rom.* 7. 8. Good-natur'd perſons ſometimes do moſt ſlight the offers of the Goſpel, when the moſt unhewn and refractory are won to the obedience of faith. If any believe on Chriſt and are ſaved, it is not of themſelves, but the gift of God. Eph. 2. 8. *For by grace are ye ſaved, through faith, and that not of your ſelves : it is the gift of God.* And God can, and frequently doth apply this to the chief of ſinners, when he paſſeth by others. Nor indeed have all the means of grace allowed them, but multitudes live and die without any offer of ſalvation by Chriſt made unto them : and there can be no other reaſon rendred why theſe offers are made to ſome, and not to others, but God's *meer pleaſure*. Deut. 7. 7, 8. *The Lord did not ſet his love upon you nor chooſe you, becauſe ye were more in number than any people (for ye were the feweſt of all people.) But becauſe the Lord loved you.* The *Apoſtle* therefore ſets himſelf directly to oppoſe this opinion, by introducing the example of *Jacob* and *Eſau*, Rom. 9. 11, 12.

2. *THAT God's love to ſome was not the cauſe of their Election, nor was his hatred of others the cauſe of their Reprobation.* This may ſeem *myſterious* at the firſt glance, but, if well conſidered, it will appear to be a great truth. We aſcribe *love* and *hatred* to God according to the manner of men, not that there are affections or paſſions properly in him, but becauſe of the various effects of his will in the works of his efficiency, upon the ſubjects in which they are wrought; love and hatred preſume an object, and ſomething that is in it which renders it either lovely or hateful; and that is either good or evil; but we obſerved in the former, that God had no eye to either of theſe in his paſſing of theſe acts; becauſe there was no ſuch thing in the creature to look upon, it neither having exiſtence or futurity antecedent to this decree. When therefore Election is ſet forth by love, and Reprobation by hatred, it is by a *metonymy*, in as much as theſe are conſequent thereupon. *Rom.* 9. 13. The elected are deſigned to partake in God's love, the reprobate to feel the effects of his diſpleaſure, which is called hatred: There is indeed an infinite good will of God in his electing any, and hence he is ſaid to love them from eternity. Jer. 31. 3. *The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, ſaying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlaſting love.* But this love did not move him to elect them, but this election did freely and voluntarily reſolve to love them; ſo that this love did not procure their election; but it had its riſe and original in the election. God did not *elect* them becauſe he *loved* them, but he *loved* them in *electing* them. God's love and hatred do moſt eminently appear in the ſalvation of ſome, and the damnation of others, and this belongs to the execution of the decrees of election, and reprobation; and muſt therefore needs preſuppoſe them. God, in the intention of the means for the exaltation of the glory of his Juſtice and Mercy, did ſecretly purpoſe to permit ſome to fall into ſin, and damn them for it; and to reſtore others by Chriſt, and beſtow eternal life upon them, which intention of God, is *interpretatively* called his love and hatred; becauſe ſuch contrary effects do follow upon them.

3. *THAT Election and Reprobation are acts of God's good pleaſure, or his own infinite ſelf-love.* The truth is, there is nothing that we can think of, wherein the holy ſovereignty of God doth more eminently appear than in theſe decrees: and here is the higheſt cauſe, that can poſſibly be aſſigned to them. When we have run things up to the divine will, we have gone as high as we can. It is the prerogative of God to do what he will, and he can do no wrong in his ſo doing: if he pleaſeth himſelf, there is no ſecond being hath any cauſe to be diſpleaſed. It is a flower of his crown, and he will not part with it. Iſai. 42. 8. *I am the Lord, that is my Name, and my glory will I not give to another.* All God's works are voluntary, he is a wiſe workman, and hath an end in them all; this is ultimately his own glory, beyond which it was impoſſible that he ſhould have a reſpect, nor any other equal unto it. In the advancement of this glory on and by reaſonable creatures, he has an eye and reſpect to thoſe precious Attributes of *Juſtice* and *Grace*, of which he would have theſe to be the monuments; and accordingly in his unſearchable wiſdom, he contrived the way in which it might be brought about, ſo as that theſe might ſhine forth in greateſt luſtre, for which he laid out an order of means, and fixed his purpoſe concerning theſe things, in which he determined the Inſtances of the one and the other; which determination, with reſpect to the advancement of his *Grace*, is called, *Election*, and that which refers to revenging *Juſtice*, is called *Reprobation*: now in all this he acted his meer pleaſure; as the Potter doth by the lump of clay that is before him to work upon.

4. *THAT Election is no act of mercy, neither is Reprobation any act of juſtice.* The want of conſidering this, hath created many prejudices in the minds of men, whiles they have been at a loſs about the conception of the right cauſe, and have perplexed themſelves in enquiring, where is the juſtice of the latter; and the only way to remove theſe prejudices is to reduce them to their proper head. It is true, theſe decrees have for their laſt end, the illuſtration of theſe two glorious Attributes of God; as we before obſerved: but though theſe are illuſtrated by them, yet they are not exerted in them. They were not the *impulſive cauſe* of God's making theſe decrees; He was not moved thereto by the influence of them. Mercy ſuppoſeth a miſerable object, the miſery whereof moves it to pity, and prompts it to relieve it. Revenging Juſtice, ſuppoſeth a guilty creature, that hath made itſelf obnoxious to wrath, the provocation of which ſtirs it up to take vengeance: whereas the creature conſidered as the object of theſe decrees, was neither miſerable nor guilty, but only poſſible. Beſides, theſe decrees are fixed on the perſons that are the ſubjects of each: now mercy might have been as much exalted in the ſalvation of *Judas* as of *Peter*, and juſtice might as well have triumph'd in the ruine of *Jacob* as of *Eſau*: ſo that mercy could not move God rather to elect *Jacob*, nor juſtice engage him rather to reprobate *Judas*: where the condition was on all hands alike, nothing but *Sovereignty* could determine.

5. *ELECTION is no act of rewarding men's goodneſs, nor Reprobation of puniſhing men's ſinfulneſs.* God doth not beſtow any recompenſe upon men by electing them; nor doth he inflict any penalty on them by refuſing them. We formerly took notice that theſe decrees appertain to the immanent acts in God, and therefore the creature is no way affected

affected by them; whereas rewards and punishments are transient acts, and terminate on the creature which is the subject of them. Besides, it is to be well minded, that rewards and penalties, do presuppose some transaction made between God and the creature, in which these are promised or threatned on the supposition of something going before; and must be referred either to *the Covenant of Works*, or to *the Gospel Covenant*; whereas these Covenants do belong to the means in and by which God brings about his purposes concerning men; and so are referred to the execution of the decree; and therefore not performed in the constitution of it: nor indeed could they pass upon the creature before it had a being, and so was not come under the terms of either of these Covenants.

6. *THAT Election is not an act of blessing; nor is Reprobation an act of cursing.* This will be evident from the same reason with the former, *viz.* because these are transient acts, leaving an impression on the creature, which the decree doth not. But besides that, it may be farther inferred, because, on this supposal, every elect person should be actually a blessed one always, and every reprobate a cursed person, immediately upon the passing of the decree; but so it is not: this is very evident; The fallen Angels were reprobate before their fall, but they were not cursed but upon their fall; Multitudes of mankind were reprobated before the apostacy; but the curse came in upon it; it being contained in the threatning, which did not take place till sin had brought them under it, and if man had not sinned, it had never come upon them. Man in his primitive state stood a probationer for felicity, and was actually neither happy nor miserable, till by his own act he determined the case concerning himself; and there are many elect, who are for the present accursed. *Paul* was so, when a *Pharisee*, and a persecutor of Christ, though then he was a chosen vessel; and the *Ephesians* were before their conversion *children of wrath even as others*, Eph. 2. 3. The sentence of death, which is the curse of the law, lies upon all men, till they are pluckt out from it by the effectual application of the grace of God to them.

7. *THAT Election is no act of justification, nor is Reprobation an act of condemnation.* In the pursuit of these decrees, men do arrive at one of these in the conclusion; but these sentences do not pass upon them in and by the decrees: These are *forinsecal* acts, they contain in them a sentence passing upon the creature, upon the trial of his cause, and finding him either clear or guilty, whereas he had done nothing at all, when these decrees were enacted. The *Angels* were made holy, but neither were the standing *Angels* justified, nor *Devils* condemned, till upon the trial of their obedience, some proved their fidelity and were acquitted, others fell into rebellion, and were for that condemned. *Jude* 6. And as to mankind, as they were made upright, in pursuance of the decree, so there was no sentence past upon them till they had been proved; and when they fell under the curse, they were all condemned to death, Rom. 5. 12. *Wherefore as by one man sin entred into the world, and death by sin: and so death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned*: the elect as well as the reprobate; and the justification of some comes in upon their believing in Christ. *Rom.* 5. 1. and as long as they continue in unbelief they are under condemnation. *Joh.* 3. 18, 36. nor are they removed from it by the decree, but by the grace which is consequent upon it.

8. *THE decree of Election and Reprobation are without repeal, they are firm, fixed, immutable decrees.*: They are positive and not suppositive; there are indeed connections in them, i. e. there is the means connected to the end inseparably: but these are all ratified and not in suspense: so that the doctrine which tells us that a man may be an elect vessel to day, and a reprobate to-morrow, is subversive of the decree, and doth as much as to say, that there is neither Election nor Reprobation; for a decree to be mutable, is for it not to be an absolute decree; the reasons why men reverse theirs, are incompatible with the divine nature. We read, 2 Tim. 2. 19. *Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his.* And we may see the reason of it in, Mal. 3. 6. *For I am the Lord, I change not: therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.* And Job 23. 13. *But he is of one mind, and who can turn him; and what his soul desireth that he doth.*

9. *THAT the Elect and Reprobate do all come under the second act of Predestination.* We formerly observed, that in our conception there are two parts or acts in the decree, the former in the determining of the end, the latter, the assigning of the means by which it is brought about; now in both these this second is always intervening between the decree and the execution of it, i.e. the end is come at by the means, and in no other way: all the elect therefore, as they do fall in Adam, whereby they become subjects standing in need of mercy, so they rise again by Christ, and are brought unto faith in him, and sanctification, and none are saved in any other way. All the reprobate are fallen into sin, are justly condemned for it, live and die in it without repentance, or believing in Christ, and so are punished with eternal death for it, in which way, justice hath its triumph; because they are found wilful sinners.

USE. *LET us by the consideration of these things be led to the adoration of the spotless Sovereignty of God, in the determination of the affairs of the creature.* We may look into other notions, till we have run our selves into *atheism* or *blasphemy*, but never arrive at any

any ſatisfaction in this point. God will have all his creatures to know that he is their Lord; and till we come with *Job* to acknowledge that he can do every thing, we are not in the frame that becomes us: but when we are wrought up into this, we are then fit to lie at the footſtool of the throne of Grace, and in an hopeful way to partake in his ſaving mercy, being hereby fitted to acknowledge our whole ſalvation to be owing to his meer good pleaſure, and accordingly to return the whole glory and praiſe of it unto him.

[JUNE 12. 1694.]

SERMON *LXXIV.*

IT follows that we take a more particular account of theſe two: Here therefore,

I. OF *Election* we may take this deſcription; *It is God's predeſtinating of a definite number of men for the manifeſtation of his glorious Grace in them.* In the clearing up of this deſcription obſerve three Concluſions,

Firſt. *THE laſt end of God's Election is the manifeſtation, and exaltation of the glory of his Grace.* Rom. 9. 23. *And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the veſſels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.* Eph. 1. 5,6. *Having predeſtinated us unto the adoption of children by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will. To the praiſe of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.* God could not in the decree of Election look at any thing out of himſelf ultimately: for, if he had any laſt end beſides himſelf, he muſt have ſomething in his eye better than himſelf; for, the laſt end, and the chief good muſt be one and the ſame; but this is impoſſible: *there is none elſe good but God*, i. e. abſolutely, ultimately, or for itſelf, and therefore nothing elſe can properly make a laſt end. Now, we have before obſerved, that there are two precious Attributes of his, which God hath a peculiar deſign at the advancement of *in* and *by* the reaſonable creature, viz. his *Grace*, and his *revenging Juſtice*: the former of theſe in the *Elect*; the latter in the *Reprobate*. The bottom deſign then of Election, is the declaration of his rich Grace, in ſuch a ſubject. *Eph.* 1. 5,6. And here let us obſerve,

(1.) *THAT Election it ſelf is an act of Grace.* We indeed obſerved before, that it is not an act of Mercy, and obſerved the reaſon of it; but yet it had abundant Grace in it; what elſe is Grace but a free favour, either beſtowed upon, or deſigned & ſecured for one that could have laid no claim to it, had not the good will of him who beſtows it, appointed it for him? Such is this, For,

1. *IT is a ſingular favour to any to be Elected to eternal life.* The bleſſings that come in upon election, and derive from it are unſpeakably great, and they were appointed hereunto by election, but for which they had never come to enjoy them. Rom. 11. 7. *What then? Iſrael hath not obtained that which he ſeeketh for, but the election hath obtained it, and the reſt were blinded.* They are therefore aſcribed hither, as to their original. Eph. 1. 3,4. *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly things in Chriſt: According as he hath choſen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy, and without blame before him.* And hereupon they are ſaid to be appointed to ſalvation, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 9. the whole happineſs of the creature is comprized herein.

2. *IT is a free Favour*; it is meerly of his good pleaſure that he hath ſo choſen them. This will appear if we conſider,

1. *THAT the objects of this Election had only the conſideration of poſſible beings.* They had not ſo much as a futurity in an antecedent conſideration to this election. In the ſame decree wherein they were ordained to eternal life, they were alſo appointed to have a being given them: ſo that both their *being* and their *well-being* abſolutely depended on God's ſovereign will. And hence it was impoſſible that they ſhould be able to oblige God to them, or that any natural obligation ſhould be upon him, to make them veſſels of mercy; it was voluntary. *Rom.* 9. 18.

2. *THAT hence they, and the other who are not Elected were in the ſame capacity.* All were alike capable of being whatſoever God ſhould pleaſe to appoint them to. We read, Rom. 9. 11,12. *(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpoſe of God according to election might ſtand, not of works, but of him that calleth) It was ſaid unto her, The elder ſhall ſerve the younger.* God could as well have done juſt otherwiſe, both as to his power, and his liberty: ſuch a choice therefore being ſo made, in which ſuch a difference is put, muſt needs proceed from the *free* and *arbitrary* pleaſure of him who made it; and ſo it is an act of Grace.

(2.) *THAT the aim and end of this Election, is to illuſtrate this Grace.* It is true, God deſigned to exalt his Juſtice too in the bringing it about; for that is a certainty referring to the ſalvation of God's elect, Pſal. 85. 10. *Mercy and truth are met together; righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed each other.* But yet in this, viz. with reſpect to the elect, the exalting of juſtice, is a *medium* to the making of them the monuments of his Grace: this then is the laſt end of it, and this is evident. For,

1. *WHATSOEVER elſe belongs to the Election, is to be aſſigned to the means of bringing it about.* Where there is an end aimed

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at, there are always means contrived for the effecting of it; as God deſigned to exalt his Grace in theſe, ſo he had a way wherein to do it; there are many things which God will do to, and for his Elect, but they all center here, and are to ſerve properly for this, *Eph.* 1. 6.

2. HENCE *whenſoever theſe are mentioned in Scripture as ends, it is to be underſtood only as ſuch which are ſubordinate.* We are ſaid to be choſen to be holy, *Eph.* 1. 4. and predeſtinated to Adoption, *ver.* 5. appointed to ſalvation, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 9. ordained to everlaſting life, *Act.* 13. 47. Now the reaſon of ſuch expreſſions is, becauſe in the order of bringing about God's deſign, all theſe things are effected, as ſo many *media* by which his rich Grace is made to appear to us; and they are the next deſign and product of the foregoing mean, to which they have a reſpect of an end, but not of a laſt end. For, though one thing may be for another, yet as long as that is ſtill for another, we cannot reſt there, but muſt proceed till we come to that which is for it ſelf and no other, and for which all that went before are, & this is the Grace of God, in this affair. Our happineſs, & all that belongs to it, in every part of it, is but a foil to ſet off the Grace of God. Hence we read, 2Theſ.1.10.—*He ſhall come to be glorified in his ſaints, and to be admired in all th. m that believe.*

Secondly. *THAT God having elected ſome to this end, he hath alſo choſen them to the means by which this end ſhall be brought about.* The conſideration of theſe alſo belongs to the doctrine of Election, for without it we cannot apprehend how this Grace is exalted: we therefore before obſerved, that both the end and means do come within the decree of Predeſtination. Thus we read, Rom. 8. 29,30. *For whom he did fore-know, he alſo did predeſtinate to be conformed to the image of his ſon, that he might be the firſt born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predeſtinate, them he alſo called: and whom he called them he alſo juſtified; and whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified.* Doubtleſs God intended, not only to be glorified, but *how* he would be glorified; elſe his infinite wiſdom had not ſhined forth in this decree; for what is wiſdom, but a skill exerted in curiouſly contriving the beſt way to bring about a deſign that is worthy? Here then we are called to the contemplation of theſe means; where we may firſt conſider what they are, and then make a remark or two about them.

1. *TOUCHING the means themſelves*, there are different opinions, between the *Prelapſarians*, and *Sublapſarians*: Theſe *latter* fix the decree of Election upon the corrupt maſs of mankind in the ſtate of apoſtacy, making that the object of it, and ſo exclude all which went before from any conſideration in Election; which we have formerly obſerved to be a miſtake, and given the reaſon why it muſt be ſo judged; for certainly all that went before was according to the determinate counſel and fore knowledge of God, and had a reſpect to the everlaſting ſtate of men, and fell under God's ſpecial government; and not only ſo, but were ſteps to the illuſtration of God's grace in his elect, way being made thereby for the manifeſting of it. The *former* therefore looking upon them to be conſidered only as *poſſible beings*, aſcribe whatſoever concerns them, and in efficiency paſſeth upon them to appertain hither; and ſo theſe *media* are principally theſe that follow, viz.

(1.) *THE creation or making of them*; which ſuppoſeth a purpoſe to give them a being; which purpoſe paſt them from a meer poſſibility, to a futurition, and their being made infers ſuch a purpoſe. *Eph.* 1. 11. And it is neceſſary that a thing be, in order to God's having glory by it: if there had never been a World, God's declarative glory had never been: the things which are not, cannot praiſe him.

(2.) *THE making of them men.* It is not enough that a thing be, but it muſt be a fit ſubject to anſwer the end it is deſigned for, or elſe it will fail of it's end; now it is requiſite that it be a reaſonable creature, in which this grace is manifeſted; any thing inferiour could not have been meet for ſuch a uſe: the whole tranſaction of this affair requires ſuch a ſubject.

(3.) *THE creating of them upright*; So they were in their Head. As, Eccl. 7. 29. *Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have ſought out many inventions.* Which rectitude conſiſted in an habitual conformity in man, concreated *with* and *in* his nature, inclining and impowring him to perfect obedience to the will of God, being in him a principle of knowledge, righteouſneſs, and true holineſs. *Col.* 3. 10. *Eph.* 4. 24. which is called the Image of God; for without it he could not have been treated with in the way of the firſt Covenant, or righteouſly have come under the ſanctions of it.

(4.) *THE covenant made with them in Adam.* In which covenant man was made a probationer for happineſs or miſery; for in it there was a law given him, and ſanctions added to it, promiſing him life in caſe of perfect obedience. *Rom.* 10.5. and denouncing death againſt him if he ſhould diſobey, *Gen.* 2. 17. This put him into a ſtate capable of receiving grace: if there had been no law, there could be no tranſgreſſion; if no penalty, no forfeiture.

(5.) *THE permiſſion of man to fall from his integrity.* That man is fallen the word of God aſſures us, and our woful experience may convince us: that this was not beſide God's knowledge and purpoſe is certain; he could have prevented it, but he did not, becauſe he would not, he therefore permitted it; and though the manner of this permiſſion be a depth beyond our wading, yet the thing itſelf is undeniable; which permiſſion had a proper reſpect to this end in regard to the elect, for had not man fallen, he had not

needed

needed the grace which is revealed in the Goſpel.

(6.) *THE woful ſtate of ſin and miſery into which man is fallen by the apoſtacy.* Which, what it is in the ſeveral parts of it, we have before taken an account of diſtinctly. The wondrous mercy of God was to appear in the grace applied to the elect. *Eph.* 2. 4, &c. Now mercy hath for it's proper object, ſomething that is *miſerable* to which it is moved to afford relief: and the circumſtances of their miſery, do each of them ſerve to ſet out that mercy in the luſtre of it. The great infelicity which man hath hurried himſelf into, and involved himſelf in, makes way for divine mercy to ſhine glorioufly in his redemption from it; and becauſe there is ſin as well as miſery under which he is held, by vertue whereof he ſuffers all this deſervedly, it muſt be unparalel'd grace that brings all this mercy home to him, of which he would not have had any need, if he had not been thus miſerable.

(7.) *THE whole work of redemption wrought out by Chriſt*; wherein he ſatisfied the juſtice of God, and procured this mercy for them. The work of redemption is one *medium* to the exaltation of God's grace. The covenant of redemption belongs to theſe means; the appointment of Chriſt to his work; He is called a mediator, becauſe he was to mediate in this affair. The Juſtice of God ſtood armed with vengeance ready to fall upon the elect as well as others, it muſt be ſatisfy'd; ſins penalty muſt be born, the condition of life in the firſt Covenant muſt be fulfilled, elſe man could not be ſaved: this was undertaken by the Son of God, interpoſing as a Surety and Repreſentative of God's elect: and by doing and dying he made way for grace to triumph. *Joh.* 1. 17. But of this hereafter.

(8.) *THE application of this redemption in calling, juſtifying, adopting, ſanctifying, and glorifying of them.* This is done by the Spirit of God, and in theſe things, of which a diſtinct account follows afterwards; all the grace that is prepared for them, is derived to them, from whence this Attribute is admirably manifeſted. The grace and glory conferred on the creature, are not God's laſt end, but means to the advancement of it; the elect are ordained to them, but the aim of it is that by theſe God may make known in them how wonderful his grace is towards them.

2. CONCERNING theſe means let us remark,

(1.) *THAT in the decree of Election they are not ſubordinate one to another, but all coordinate.* i.e. They have a joint conſideration in God's intendment, as one perfect *medium* to the advancement of this end. In the execution indeed they are ſubordinated, as was but now obſerved, and ſo one is made a ſtep to another, but God did not intend one before another, but all together: we cannot ſay that he intended to permit ſin to be, before he intended the coming of his Son in the fleſh to expiate ſin, for then the purpoſe to permit ſin would not have been with a reſpect to the glory of grace, or a deſign how grace ſhould be advanced by it; nor on the other hand did he determine to ſend Chriſt in our fleſh to die, before he intended to permit the ſin for which he was to die; for ſo the Son of God muſt be appointed to ſuffer, without the conſideration of a reaſon why he ſhould ſo ſuffer; and therefore, although, when we ſpeak of the end and means, we truly ſay that what was firſt in intention, was laſt in execution: yet when we ſpeak of the means among themſelves, it is not ſo, but they do all go together in the purpoſe; tho' there be a ſucceſſion in the accompliſhment of them.

(2.) *THAT Election, with reſpect to the means, includes in it an intendment of love to the Elect.* We formerly noted, that God's love to man was not the cauſe of their Election, but yet in electing of them he had a purpoſe of love to them; now this is not with reſpect to the end, but to the means; the end was his own glory; and that properly regarded his own infinite ſelf-love, but it being the glory of his grace, hereupon, in the way of bringing it about, there is all the *good will* expreſſed to the creature that can be thought of. Hence that, Jer. 31. 3. *I have loved thee with an everlaſting love: therefore with loving kindneſs have I drawn thee.* For in the glorifying of his grace upon them, he purpoſed, to give his Son to die for them, that they might live; to make him a curſe, that they might have the bleſſing; to forgive them all their ſins, to free them from condemnation, to beſtow grace & glory upon them, to deliver them from ſin and Satan, and to exalt them into his favour, and lay them in his boſom forever; and what greater love can be conceived? *Joh.* 3. 16. 2 *Joh.* 4. 9. And on this account the Goſpel every where celebrateth the wonderful love of God to men.

(3.) *THAT Jeſus Chriſt was not the meritorious cauſe of our Election.* He did not purchaſe it for us either by his active or paſſive obedience. He indeed merited our ſalvation, he bought us with a price, and he purchaſed heaven for us to be our poſſeſſion; he redeemed us from the curſe of the law, and ſatisfied Juſtice for our offences; but he did nothing to the purchaſing of our Election, there was no buying of that at all. It is true, we are ſaid to be choſen in him, *Eph.* 1. 4. but it is to holineſs, to adoption, to ſalvation, and ſo to advance the end of Election: but ſtill, both Chriſt, and the benefits which he purchaſed by his own merits, are of the means which were laid out in and by this decree. Chriſt therefore is included in God's election, and is therefore called his elect, Iſai. 42. 1. *Behold my ſervant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my ſoul delighteth.* And the rich grace of God towards miſerable

miſerable ſinners is exalted in and by him, in his Fathers giving of him, and his giving himſelf for their redemption. And hence he redeemed none but ſuch as he found elected. They were only ſuch as his father had given him. *Joh.* 17. 9,11,19.

Thirdly. *THAT the ſubjects of Election are a definite number of men ; or particular perſons ſingled out of the reſt of mankind.* It is true, the glorious Angels come within God's Election. Hence that title put on them, 1 Tim. 5. 21. *The elect Angels.* But we are now treating of Men, whoſe caſe is far different from theirs. For the making of this aſſertion good, take theſe Concluſions,

1. *THAT all are not Elected, but only ſome.* The very nature of election infers this. One thing can in no proper ſenſe be ſaid to be choſen, unleſs there be ſomething left, which ſome way ſtood in competition with it. The Scripture therefore makes a plain diſtribution of men into the elect, and the reſt. *Rom.* 11.7. This alſo is intimated in that expreſſion of our Saviour, Mat. 20. 16. *So the laſt ſhall be firſt, and the firſt laſt : for many be called, but few choſen.*

2. *THAT Election is abſolute and not hypothetical.* This is evident from the nature of the divine decree, unto which the Election of men doth appertain. For, although God hath decreed all the *hypotheſes* or connections that are between things, yet hath he not left the event of theſe uncertain referring to the decree, but fixedly determined it ; ſo that though there be a contingency in reſpect to ſecond cauſes, yet there is a certainty in reference to the firſt. It is true, ſalvation is offered to all in the offers of the Goſpel, on condition of *believing* ; and we are there told of the qualifications of all ſuch as ſhall obtain eternal life : and this connection is in the decree, but ſtill, though God beſtow ſalvation on none, but according to this connection, yet in the purpoſe of God he hath appointed men to this end, by theſe means, and hath determined to give them theſe qualifications in order to ſalvation. Hence that in Act. 13.47. *For ſo hath the Lord commanded us, ſaying, I have ſet thee to be a light of the Gentles, that thou ſhouldeſt be for ſalvation unto the ends of the earth.* For he who hath appointed them to the end, hath ſo alſo done to the means. And we are ſure that theſe qualifications do depend on his free grace to beſtow them : no man can work them in himſelf. Hence that phraſe, *Rom.* 8. 28.

3. *THAT God hath a certain and diſtinct knowledge of all thoſe whom he hath Elected.* And hence it follows that the Election muſt be perſonal, and definite. There muſt be a definite number not only *in numero numerante* but alſo in *numero numerato* ; i. e. not only how many are appointed to taſte of this favour, but alſo who they are individually. We therefore read, 2 Tim. 2.19. *Nevertheleſs, the foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, having this ſeal, the Lord knoweth them that are his.* He doth not ſay, *what* manner of perſons are his, or *how* many were choſen, but *who*, which points us to the *individuals.* That God doth know who ſhall be ſaved, and that perſonally and individually, our adverſaries grant ; and this muſt needs infer that he hath fore-appointed them perſonally to it ; for no other true reaſon of this fore-knowledge can be given ; all being alike naturally indiſpoſed to receive the offers of grace ; and if any do, it is of his free-will that begets them to it. *Rom.* 9. 16. *Jam.* 1. 18.

4. *ALL the Elect ſhall certainly come to Chriſt, believe in him, and be ſaved.* Eternal life is ſecured to theſe. Hence we have that aſſertion of Chriſt, Joh. 6. 37. *All that the father giveth me, ſhall come to me : and him that cometh to me, I will in no wiſe caſt out.* And Joh. 10. 16. *And other ſheep I have, which are not of this fold : them alſo I muſt bring, and they ſhall hear my voice ; and there ſhall be one fold, and one ſhepherd.* There muſt not one be loſt. Joh. 6. 39. We therefore read, 2 Tim. 2. 19. *The Lord knoweth them that are his.* Now how can this be conceived, without the ſuppoſition of perſonal election? They therefore that deny it, do alſo aſſert, that a man may be an elect perſon to day, and a reprobate to morrow ; and what need is there that Chriſt ſhould ſeek loſt ſinners, according to, (*Luk.* 19. 10.) were it not that the perſons appointed to be ſaved by him, are lying in the rubbiſh of the apoſtacy, and to be called out of them.

5. *THAT the Scripture calls the Elect, thoſe whoſe names are written in the book of life.* *Phil.* 4. 3. *Rev.* 21. 27. In which there is an alluſion to the cuſtoms of men, who have books of record, in which, among other things, all the elections of perſons to any places and dignity are won't to be recorded ; and the end of it is to keep it ſure. Now the Scripture uſeth names for perſons, *Acts* 1.15. *Rev.* 11. 13. And what can there be more diſtinctly indigitating the individuals, than to write them down by name? Things are named, that they may be particularly known. We have therefore ſuch an expreſſion, Exod. 33.12. *I know thee by name.* i.e. diſtinctly, intimately and throughly.

6. *THERE is no unrighteous reſpect of perſons to be charged on God in this regard.* There is great improvement made by our adverſaries, of ſuch Scriptures as thoſe, Acts 10. 34,35. *Then Peter opened his mouth, and ſaid, Of a truth I perceive that God is no reſpecter of perſons. But in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteouſneſs, is accepted with him.* Rom. 2. 11. *For there is no reſpect of perſons with God.* Which they ſuppoſe would be imputable upon the principle that we hold ; but it is a vain ſuppoſition. For,

(1.) *IT is not a different reſpect had to perſons is intended.* Wo to every Child of God if he had no more reſpect to him than he hath

to others. It is matter of everlasting joy to God's people that they are men of *his good will. Luk.* 2.14. And it is his grace that makes us to be *accepted.* Eph. 1.6. who should otherwise have been rejected.

(2.) *THE respect of persons which is blamed among men, and denied to be with God, is such a respect as prefers one before another, upon the account of such things as do not better their cause.* As when in matters of Judicature, one shall carry the case, not because right is on his side, but because of his preferment, wealth, relation, &c. and the other shall lose it for want of these; and so it is intended in that law, Lev. 19.15. *Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.*

(3.) *IT is a ruled case, that this respect of persons is not chargable where the person is under no obligation, but at perfect liberty.* A man that is a Judge must do right, and not be biassed; but a man that bestows his estate, may chuse whom he pleaseth. Now is is certain, that God's Election had no regard to any thing in the creature, because what it was to have, belonged to this Election. And the Election itself was an act of God's meer good pleasure, for which he was at perfect liberty, being a debtor to none, but a sovereign Lord of his own grace, and may bestow it where he will, and none is wronged that is not indulged with it, though all are highly favoured who are partakers in it. Nothing moved him but his own will, and that is free from any obligation but what it lays upon it self, and hither it is resolved, Rom. 9. 18. *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.*

USE. *WHAT cause then have God's Elect, upon the discoveries of it to adore and praise God for this favour of his?* The doctrine of Predestination is ungrateful to none that are converted; and that of Election is most precious to all that know themselves to belong to it. It is therefore a *sign* of an unconverted man, not to love this doctrine. Here is the fountain of everlasting love and good will opened: Here we see what thoughts God had for us from eternity. Here we discover the foundation of our salvation; and nothing carries such obligation with it to love and magnify God. Labour we then to affect our hearts with this. Hence consider the riches of grace laid up in it; called *the election of grace*, Rom. 11. 5. called *love*, Rom. 9. 13. Observe the peculiarity of it, that it is restrained to some, nothing better in themselves than others, who are left out from it. *Rom.* 9. 11. Consider the means by which it is accomplished, in which forget not the love in sending Christ to *do* and *dye* to purchase the favour appointed for us to be bestowed upon us. *Rom.* 8. 32. Think of the antiquity of it, that God purposed to make us vessels of glory, before we or any other creature had any being. *Eph.* 1. 4. And revolve often the glorious effects which derive to us from this Election: our effectual Vocation, *Jer.* 31. 3. our free Justification, *Rom.* 8. 33. our wonderful Adoption, *Eph.* 1. 5. and eternal Glorification, *Joh.* 6.39,40. And add to all, the consideration of the firmness and immutability of all this. *Isai.* 55. 3. 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. *Rom.* 11. 28,29. Oh how much is there to be seen of God's heart in this, freely, absolutely, everlastingly, peculiarly, and effectually set upon his chosen? How should it enflame, ravish, and engage our souls to him for ever.

[JULY 10. 1694.]

SERMON *LXXV.*

II. REPROBATION may be thus described; *It is the Predestination of a definite number of men for the manifestation of the glory of God's revenging justice in them.* For the clearing this observe,

[1.] *THAT there is such a decree of Reprobation; there needs no more to be said to prove this, than that there are some, and but some Elected.* The doctrine of Election necessarily infers that of Reprobation; for, if we consider God as the creator and governour of all creatures; we must suppose he designed what to do with them before he made them, else why were they made? And if, when under the law of special government, all were condemned to die, there are but some of them chosen to be restored again to life, for the glory of grace, the rest must needs be designed to glorify him another way, by remaining under the sentence, or else we must say that God hath taken no order about them: And this is properly Reprobation. Hence that distribution, Rom. 11. 7. *The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.* Besides, if God intended the exaltation of the glory of revenging Justice, He designed a subject in which to exalt it, according to, Rom. 9. 22. *What if God willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.* And this is Reprobation.

[2.] *THAT Reprobation is of a definite number.* And herein also it runs parallel with Election, which we observed is so; and gave the evidence of it. Now if Election pitched upon individuals, Reprobation must do so to, as will appear if we consider,

1. *THAT God determined within himself how many reasonable creatures he would make.* We formerly observed that the decree comprized in it all Individuals, yea all the circumstances of things, which is more. *David* tells us, *every member*, &c. Psal. 139. 16. The number of men, women, and children that should be from the beginning to the end of time,

time, was ſet down and determined. For this purpoſe of God was it which cut the thread between *meerly poſſible beings*, and thoſe that were *future*; and therefore all his works are ſaid to be known, &c. *Acts* 15. 18.

2. *THAT when God decreed to make theſe beings, he alſo purpoſed what to do with them.* He allotted to every one the end to which it was to be led; or how it ſhould ſerve to his glory: for otherwiſe there would be ſome things of which it might be ſaid, that they were in vain; which would be a *reflection* upon, and is inconſiſtent with the divine wiſdom. Hence we read, *Prov.* 16.4. *The Lord hath made all things for himſelf: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.*

3. *THAT there are a ſet number of theſe Elected.* There are a company whom God hath choſen out of the whole, and that by name, whom he hath ſet his love upon, and firmly reſolved to make them partakers in eternal life. This hath already been fully and undeniably evidenced under the former head.

4. *HENCE of neceſſity there muſt be alſo a ſet number of thoſe that are Reprobated.* They are all the reſt. *Rom.* 11. 7. and they are a *definite number*, for the whole of mankind are ſo; and God knows theſe individually as well as he doth the Elect, and what he will do with them. Reprobation therefore had no more a reſpect to foreſeen qualifications as the reaſons of the paſſing ſuch a decree, than Election had; ſince all were of the ſame lump, and equal capacities, and therefore was a meer act of God's lordſhip. And ſo he reſolves it, Rom. 9. 20,21. *Nay but O man, who art thou that replieſt againſt God? ſhall the thing formed ſay to him that formed it, why haſt thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the ſame lump to make one veſſel unto honour, and another unto diſhonour?*

[3.] *THAT the laſt end of Reprobation is the manifeſtation of the glory of divine revenging Juſtice.* We have obſerved that there are two *Attributes* or moral perfections in God, which he will have the everlaſting monuments of, viz. *Grace* and *vindictive Juſtice.* For which the Scripture is full, and they are both intimated, in *Rom.* 9. 22, 23. Now the proper ſubjects of the former are the Elect, thoſe therefore of the latter are the Reprobate. It is true, the grace of God is occaſionally or accidentally greatly illuſtrated by the Reprobate, in as much as contraries give light one to another; it is a wonderful circumſtance to ſet forth the good will of God to ſome in appointing them to life, when others as good by nature, and as capable in themſelves are left to periſh; but directly the ſhine of this Juſtice is intended in the ſubject. God is his own laſt end in all things, and therefore he muſt be ſo in the act of Reprobation. *Prov.* 16. 4. Now he is glorified in the Reprobate, by executing his judgments upon them: it is in taking vengeance, *Pſal.* 9. 15,16. And the glory which redounds from hence to him muſt be that of his Juſtice. For although in abſolute ſovereignty he may afflict his creature if he ſees meet, and none can impeach him for it; yet if he take revenge, it muſt be righteous, or elſe there is no reaſon for it, and then it is not his glory. Hence that in, Rom. 3. 5,6. *Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I ſpeak as a man) God forbid: for how then ſhall God judge the world?* Juſtice is either *Commutative* or *Diſtributive.* There is no room for the former properly between God and the Creature, for we can give him nothing but what is his own: it is then the latter that belongs hither. *Diſtributive Juſtice conſiſts in giving a recompence according to a ſtated rule of righteouſneſs.* When the rule is right, and the recompences are meaſured by it exactly, that is Juſtice: and we call it *Relative* in diſtinction from Sovereign Juſtice, becauſe it proceeds according to a covenant Relation between God and his Creature. Diſtributive Juſtice is either rewarding or revenging: the former is the recompence of obedience, the latter of diſobedience. The former is in the accompliſhment of the promiſe, the latter in the execution of the threatning. By the former God diſcovers how much he is delighted in holineſs, by the latter he makes it appear how much he loaths ſin; and in both his own holineſs is diſplayed. Now the ultimate aim of the decree is to make known to the creature this Attribute in its triumphs.

[4.] *IN Reprobation God predeſtinated them to the means as well as to the end.* There muſt be a way in which this purpoſe may be brought about; and it muſt be ſo accommodated as that Juſtice may be ſeen and adored in it. Now as the glory of Grace, which is the end of Election, is manifeſted in the ſalvation of the Elect; ſo the glory of Juſtice, which is the end of Reprobation, is manifeſted in the damnation of the Reprobate. And hence they were predeſtinated to this as a *medium.* Hence that, Jud. 4. *For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation.* Yea and to all the other *media* to this. 1 Pet. 2. 7, 8. *Unto you therefore which believe he is precious; but unto them which be diſobedient, the ſtone which the builders diſallowed, the ſame is made the head of the corner. And a ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which ſtumble at the word, being diſobedient, whereunto they alſo were appointed.* Now in the ordering of theſe *media*, it is ſo over-ruled that the ſinners damnation is juſt, and ſo juſtice is celebrated in and by it: which means, though in the decreeing they were altogether; yet in the execution they have an order of ſubſerviency. And they are,

1. *SUCH as are common to the Elect and Reprobate, in which a foundation was laid for both theſe decrees to take place.* And they are all ſuch as were before mentioned under Election, till we have found man under the

guilt of the apoſtacy. For the creature was not a fit ſubject either for mercy or revenge till then; and yet all that went before were ſteps to this. If man had not been, he could not have been a monument of God's glory: That which is not doth not praiſe him. If he had not been made a cauſe by counſel, he could not have been treated with in the way of a covenant, or indeed been capable of being either happy or miſerable, according to a rule of moral juſtice. For if he had not been capable of knowing his rule, he could not have been blameable for not obſerving it. If he had not had a rule given him, to which he was in duty bound to yield perfect obedience, he could not have tranſgreſſed it; for, where there is *no law, there is no tranſgreſſion*, Rom. 4. 15. If he had not been inveſted with the image of God, whereby he was ſanctified to an ability for univerſal obedience, his coming ſhort of it could not have been righteouſly imputed to him. If the creature loſe its ſtrength by its own fault, it is no excuſe; but if it had been at firſt made without it, the caſe had been otherwiſe. If there had been no ſanctions added to the law, the creature would not have known what it had to ſtand to; nor have underſtood either its *priviledge*, or its *danger*. If man had not been ſuffered to fall, but been preſerved in his integrity, there had been only the rewarding juſtice of God ſhining out in giving him a conſtant life of happineſs; but no room either for mercy to appear in his ſalvation, or revenging juſtice in his damnation. *Rom.* 10. 5. If man had not been left to the *freedom* of his own will, and ſo fallen *voluntarily*, but been under a *compulſive* neceſſity, he had not been the blameable cauſe of his own ruin, nor could it have been ſaid of him, as Hoſ. 13. 9. *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf.* But becauſe all theſe things are met together in his fall, he is hereby come under a righteous ſentence of condemnation, and is rendred a ſubject nextly capable either of mercy or revenge, as his Judge ſhall ſee meet. Now all theſe things came to paſs according to the eternal purpoſe of God; being under his government: and conſequently his permiſſion.

2. *SUCH as are peculiar to the Reprobate.* And they are two,

(1.) *THE leaving them under the bondage of ſin and death.* They are juſtly condemned, and he will not deliver them from it, but let it take place upon them; in which, though he exerts his Sovereignty, as *Rom.* 9. 18. yet he diſplays his Juſtice, and is reſolved that as they are fallen into the hands of it, ſo they ſhall ſuffer according to it. And this is righteous. And this dereliction of his appears in two things,

1. *SOME there be to whom God doth not afford the means and offers of ſalvation by Chriſt.* And theſe muſt needs periſh. There is but this one way of ſalvation, Acts. 4. 12. *Neither is there ſalvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we muſt be ſaved.* And when it is not diſcovered ſuch a people are *without hope*, Eph. 2. 12. they *are loſt*, 2 Cor. 4. 3. And there are multitudes of theſe in the world; they have no news of a Saviour, nor reports of the way of life. There is no viſion afforded them: and what their condition is ſee, Prov. 29. 18. *Where there is no viſion, the people periſh.*

2. *OTHERS do enjoy the outward means, but he doth not apply them for ſalvation to them.* There are many called, but few choſen. They have the Goſpel, but it is not a ſavour of life but of death to them. The ſaving efficacy of the means depends on the Spirits application, but he doth not ſo apply them to all. *Deut.* 29. 2,3,4. And they abuſe them to the increaſe of their own guilt. They hear, and will not obey; He ſtretcheth out his hand all day to them, but they gainſay and are diſobedient; they hold faſt deceit, and refuſe to return: and becauſe they do not believe on the Son of God, *wrath abides on them*, Joh. 3. 36.

(2.) *THE damning of them for ſin.* In which damnation he executes upon them the whole curſe under which they were fallen, according to the tenor of the law which they had violated, being found under the curſe, and not delivered from it, by their embracing of Jeſus Chriſt. Hence we read, Rev. 20. 15. *And whoſoever was not found written in the book of life, was caſt into the lake of fire.* In the execution of which wrath upon them his juſtice ſets in ſtate, and ſhines forth through all eternity. Herein he gives being to the threatning of his own law, and declares his righteous judgments.

[5.] *HENCE it follows that Reprobation is not meerly negative, but alſo poſitive.* Some Divines, to avoid the prejudices of men, whoſe pride will not ſuffer them to acknowledge the ſovereignty of God in this doctrine, go about to make this Reprobation barely *negative*, and call it *preterition*, or a paſſing by. Election they will have *poſitive* and *abſolute*; but Reprobation to be nothing elſe but a leaving, or nor chuſing of them. But it is vain for men to mince here; for as it makes not the caſe of ſinners ſo left, any thing better: If God leave them under ſin and guilt, they muſt needs come under condemnation, and their end will be deſtruction: ſo the glory of God is hereby greatly derogated from; as if he left the creature wholly to it ſelf, and had ſuſpended his government of it. Here then obſerve,

1. *THAT God's permiſſion or deſertion is not a thing only negative.* It belongs to his providence, and that to his efficiency; in which he hath an hand in all things, though the way and manner of it be myſterious and beyond our comprehenſion, and therefore ſuch things of permiſſion are ſaid to be of the Lord, ſo, 1 *Kin.* 12. 15. and elſewhere.

2. *THAT*

2. *THAT God's appointing them definitely to their end, and laying out the way or means in which they ſhall reach it, muſt needs be poſitive.* If God hath ordained to glorify his revenging Juſtice on them, and hath definitely determined who are the ſubjects in whom he will do it; and for that end lets them fall *into*, and leaves them *in*, and condemns them *for* ſin, and all this *according to his counſel*; this muſt needs be *poſitive*, and not only negative: abſolute, and not meerly conditional; but this hath been in the premiſes made evident.

[6.] *THAT this doctrine of Reprobation gives the reprobate no juſt cauſe either of complaining againſt God, or excuſing themſelves for their ſin, and final impenitency.* The carnal mind reluctS and riſeth here. Men think they have a great deal to ſay; if they die and are damned, who can help it? So the *Apoſtle* brings in ſome arguing, that God may thank himſelf if they remain in their unbelief, and periſh *Rom.* 9. 19. And the Prophet brings in the houſe of *Iſrael* talking to the ſame purpoſe, *Ezek.* 33. 10. *Arminians* alſo, and Jeſuits ſeek to load the doctrine with reproach, and tell the world that we teach that God made ſome men on purpoſe to damn them; which, ſay they, is to charge him with an untruth, who himſelf with greateſt ſolemnity declares the contrary upon Oath, urging it as a ſtrong perſwaſion of ſinners to repentance, Ezek. 33. 11. *Say unto them, As I live, ſaith the Lord God, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael.* But this is a calumny. Here therefore give me leave to clear the truth by offering theſe few obſervations on this affair,

1. *THAT Reprobation is no act either of juſtice or injuſtice, but of meer ſovereignty.* Juſtice and injuſtice, as they are diſtinguiſhed from abſolute ſupremacy, refer to a law or tranſaction between God and his creature: but there is no ſuch law to direct God in this act; but he was at perfect liberty: He had not tranſacted with the creature at all, for it was not; only he had a ſupream right with him, as, either to give, or not give it a being, ſo to diſpoſe of it according to his wiſdom and will. In a word, the creature was under no *forfeiture*, and ſo it was not an act of relative Juſtice to appoint it to ſuch an end, and it was at his free diſpoſal, and ſo there could be no injuſtice in the caſe. God indeed intended the manifeſtation of his Juſtice in the execution of this decree, but he exerted his meer ſupremacy in the enacting of it. And to this the *Apoſtle* reduceth it, *Rom.* 9. 20.

2. *THAT Reprobation is no cauſe of the ſin for which the ſinner is damned.* We muſt here diſtinguiſh between an *antecedent* and a *cauſe*. Election is indeed the firſt leading cauſe of ſalvation. Jer. 31. 3. *The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, ſaying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlaſting love: therefore with loving kindneſs have I drawn thee.* That love diſpoſeth all to this end. But though Reprobation, be an antecedent, yet it is not the *moral* nor *phyſical* cauſe of man's either ſin or miſery. For,

(1.) *REPROBATION did not take away the liberty of the creature.* God put into man, in creation, *a freedom of will*, and this decree did no ways abridge him of it. *Adam* acted as a cauſe by counſel, and was not forced, but ſpontaneous in his compliance with the temptation. Men ſin of choice, and not by compulſion. They act with as much liberty, as if there were no ſuch decree. Men are wilful, Pſal. 81. 11. *But my people would not hearken to my voice: and Iſrael would none of me.* Jer. 44. 16. *As for the word that thou haſt ſpoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee.* Joh. 5. 40. *And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.*

(2.) *HENCE man's ſin is properly chargable on himſelf, and conſequently his own damnation.* God is not the author of ſin; He diſclaims it. It is true, his Providence is converſant about it: yea, and he decreed that it ſhould be, but not to be the author of it. And therefore we read, Eccl. 7. 29. *Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have ſought out many inventions.* We are therefore forbidden to charge the temptation to ſin upon him, Jam. 1. 13, 14. *Let no man ſay when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own luſt, and enticed.* *David* hereupon calls it *his own iniquity*, Pſal. 18. 23. And ſo the deſtruction which follows upon it is chargeable upon man as procuring it for himſelf, *Hoſ.* 13. 1. For in all this man acts on his own accord, and according to the naughtineſs of his heart.

(3.) *THAT God made no man on purpoſe to damn him.* i. e. This was not God's laſt end in making of any creature. He indeed made ſome for the glory of his Juſtice, which will triumph over them in their damnation: but that the creatures everlaſting miſery ſhould be the bottom of God's purpoſe about it is contrary to truth, and that which is calumniouſly charged upon our Doctrine; the upſhot whereof is expreſt in, Prov. 16. 4. *The Lord hath made all things for himſelf: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.* Hence, though another gloſs might be made on, *Ezek.* 31. 11. and other ſuch like expreſſions in Scripture, yet we readily aſſent to it as a truth, that God takes no delight in ſeeing the creature miſerable, meerly as it is miſery that it undergoes; though that he is contented and well pleaſed with the damnation of unconverted obſtinate ſinners, that is warrant enough to confirm it, *Prov.* 1. 24, *&c. Ezek.* 8. 18. *Deut.* 28. 63. but that God did not deſign this as his laſt end, appears,

1. *BE-*

1. BE AUSE *God then only can be ſaid to make a thing for ſuch an end, when he gives it a nature and qualities fitting for that end.* For this is properly the wiſdom of an agent, to adapt his work to his deſign; becauſe elſe it cannot ſerve to it, and ſo his labour about it will be loſt. But God did not make man with a nature qualifying and fitting him for damnation, but for happineſs. He was every way adapted for bleſſedneſs, as he came out of God's hand at firſt, and ſtood fair for it, though *mutable*, and ſo capable of miſery: the making of him a ſubject fitted for deſtruction is of himſelf, it is he that brought himſelf into ſuch a plight. Hoſ. 13. 9. *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf.*

2. *HENCE the ſinners damnation comes in only as a medium for the advancement of God's end on the Reprobate.* God is glorified in the ruine of ungodly men, and that by exalting of his Juſtice in taking vengeance on them; which vengeance is diſcovered in their ſuffering of all the miſeries which are contained in the threatnings of the law, by which they are condemned. But that which is to have its ſhine in all this, is Juſtice; and that is the attribute which he is in love with, and will make manifeſt. This therefore, and not the other, muſt needs be his end. See *Ezek.* 28. 22.

(4.) *THAT God intended to damn none but for ſin.* Damnation is not an act of meer Sovereignty, but of relative Juſtice. God damns none meerly becauſe he will damn them, but becauſe they have brought it upon themſelves. Hence that, Jer. 2. 17. *Haſt thou not procured this unto thy ſelf, in that thou haſt forſaken the Lord thy God, when he led thee by the way.* Sin therefore is the only cauſe of men's deſtruction. It is true, there is an infallibility of conſequence upon Reprobation, that all ſuch as are under that decree will die, but they do not die becauſe they were reprobated, but becauſe they ſinned. And were it not ſo, revenging Juſtice would not be manifeſted in this. For Juſtice appears in rewarded men according to their doings, referring to the law under which they are. That Juſtice then may take place, it muſt appear that the man really deſerves the penalty which is inflicted on him. Now this deſert ariſeth from the nature and merit of ſin: the man therefore muſt be a ſinner before he can be juſtly damned; and if he be ſo, he then rightly deſerves it. So we read, Rom. 6. 23. *For the wages of ſin is death: but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* And this proceeds according to the terms of the covenant. Gen. 2. 17. *But of the tree of the knowledge of the good and evil, thou ſhalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die.* We are on this account told how this death was introduced, Rom. 5. 12. *Wherefore as by one man ſin entred into the world, and death by ſin: and ſo death paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned.* So that notwithſtanding the decree, there is none falls under this ſentence, till by his ſin he hath brought it upon himſelf. No man is doomed to hell and deſtruction, becauſe he was reprobated, but becauſe he was a ſinner and deſerved it.

USE. LET me draw three words of Counſel from the premiſes,

1. *LET us all adore the Sovereignty of God, which diſplays it ſelf in this affair; and let this put us to ſilence.* Take heed of unmortified reflections on him who doth his pleaſure. It is enough for us, *What if God willing, &c.* Rom. 9. 22. It is enough for us, that none are doomed to the pit but for ſin. Hell is *Judas's own place*, but he found the way to it, by his wickedneſs. *Acts.* 1. 25. The *Amorites* are devoted to ruin, but they muſt fill up their meaſure, *Gen* 15. 16. But why did God purpoſe to leave them thus? Sovereignty muſt determine what is right on this account, and there are many ſuch things with him. Why muſt ſo many Infants be burnt in *Sodom*? So many in the Old World drowned in their Mothers womb? So many babes in *Babylon* daſh'd againſt the ſtones? Were not others as great Sinners as they? God ſaith, *He took away Sodom as he ſaw good*, Ezek. 16. 50.

2. *LET Sinners who are yet in their ſins, and uncertain of their everlaſting eſtate, not conclude themſelves Reprobates.* You have no rule to do ſo in the word of God. Hence do not deſperately neglect the uſing of the means of Grace, as if there were no hope; there is, *an who knows*, concerning you: you have the Goſpel; though you have ſinned never ſo grievouſly, God can give you repentence, and bring you to Salvation, and he invites you to it. Take heed then of riſing up againſt the decrees of God. Iſai. 45. 9. *Wo unto him that ſtriveth with his maker: let the potſheard ſtrive with the potſheards of the earth: ſhall the clay ſay to him that faſhioneth it, What makeſt thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?* It is the ſpirit of Devils, and diabolical men, to cry out, why doth he find fault; if he hath reprobated and will damn me, how can I help it? An humble Soul will ſay, I deſerve to be for ever left; if he ſays, he delights not in me, let Angels and Men read his ſpotleſs Juſtice in my ruin for ever: I have forfeited my Soul into his hands, and I owe it, if he ſeeth meet, to eternal vengeance, and have nothing but ſovereign mercy to ſeek to, which may if it will, &c. and there I will lie.

3. *LET the Children of God who are ſecured of their Election, be taught from hence to magnify the grace of God to them hereby.* Put yourſelves then in an equal ballance; remember there did but the Sheers go between you and others. Say then, the Lord might have appointed my claim before the Throne, and my eternal crown, to *Judas* and *Pharoah*; and the free Sovereign Lord might have made the furnace of *Judas* in

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the bottomleſs pit to have been my furnace: Oh how ſhall I enough admire this Grace, and adore this good will of God, who was at perfect liberty, that he prepared a Kingdom for me, when he ordained ſo many thouſands to wrath? Can Time and Eternity expreſs Hallelujah's enough on my part to ſet forth the heighth, and depth, and length, and breadth of this love to me, in writing my name in the book of Life, who was a piece of clay in the hands of the potter, and he might, if he had ſeen good, have made me a veſſel of diſhonour.

[AUGUST 7. 1694.]

SERMON *LXXVI.*

5. WE now come to conſider the Ratification of this purpoſe about Man's Reſtitution; expreſt in thoſe words; *He entred into a Covenant of Grace.* There are two things obſervable in this, viz. 1. That the grace of God is peculiarly diſcovered in man's Reſtitution. 2. That there was a Covenant which God entred into about it. Each may be ſpoken of.

I. *THE Grace of God is peculiarly diſcovered in man's Reſtitution.* Here two Enquiries may be made. 1. What this Grace is? 2. How it is peculiarly diſcovered in man's Reſtitution?

Queſt. 1. *WHAT is this Grace?*

Anſ. *THE word Grace is variouſly uſed in Scripture.* We muſt therefore enquire in what ſenſe it is here to be underſtood. The word according to its notation imports, *ſomething that is free:* and ſo, whatſoever is given freely, may be aſcribed to Grace: and ſo all that God ever did for any of his creatures which is beneficial to them, may be ſaid to be of his Grace. And in this large ſenſe we ſhall ſometimes find the word uſed in Scripture. But there is a more reſtrained ſenſe in which this word is to be taken, and is moſt commonly intended by the Spirit of God. In the Goſpel therefore, it is for the moſt part uſed, in one of theſe two ſenſes. (1.) For the Benefits themſelves, theſe are called Grace by a *metonimy*, becauſe they are effects of it; and theſe are either, the ſpiritual Gifts which are beſtowed on men to edify, which are ſometimes called Grace, and are common in the viſible Church, to converted, and unconverted: or the vertues of Sanctification, which are infuſed in regeneration, which are called the graces of the Spirit, in diſtinction from the former gifts; but theſe are not here intended by Grace. (2.) For the fountain or original from whence theſe graces flow, or the way *how* and *in* which they derive from God to us; and ſo we underſtand by it one of the divine Attributes, in which God manifeſts himſelf to the children of men. And it is far oftner uſed in this ſenſe than any other; and thus it comes under our preſent conſideration, and may be deſcribed: *Grace is God willing to exalt a reſidue of fallen men to a ſtate of life, for his own ſake.* In which deſcription obſerve,

1. *THE ſubjects of this grace, and that is a reſidue of fallen man.* Here,

(1.) *IT bears a reſpect to man now fallen.* It hath an eye to the apoſtacy. Hence man's fall, was one of the *media* to the illuſtration of it, as was before obſerved. There was Grace afforded to man in his integrity, and that ſpecial, in the Covenant that God entred into with him, and the promiſe of happineſs annexed to the command of obedience, as the reward of it; but this is of another kind, and hath more peculiar remarks belonging to it; being ſuted to man's lapſed condition.

(2.) *THERE are but a reſidue of them that are made ſharers in it.* It is not common to them all; though the offers of it are larger than the application. It runs pararel with the reſtitution, and is neither narrower nor wider than that. And this is one great difference between Mercy and Grace; for though all the grace that is ſhown to fallen and miſerable man, is rich mercy, and is often ſo called in the Goſpel; yet all mercy doth not belong to this Grace; that being more common, God's mercy is over all his works; there are multitudes have large ſhares in that, but there are but few that participate in this.

2. *THE matter in and about which it is illuſtrated*, viz. *the exalting of them to a ſtate of life:* and that is by the reſtitution it ſelf. The fall had thrown all mankind into a ſtate of death; the threatning and the curſe of it was fallen upon them; and ready to do full execution upon them: but this Grace ſteps in and prevents it, by bringing them back from death to life. And hence the ſubjects of this grace, and of the reſtitution are the ſame, who are (as was before proved) but *ſome*, and thoſe a definite number. The precious fruit then of this grace, is their life. Hence that, 1 Joh. 4. 9. *In this was manifeſted the love of God towards us, becauſe that God ſent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.* And this life comprizeth as much in it, as the death of the threatning did: and in it is as much reſtored as was loſt by it; which will come under a particular diſtinct conſideration afterward. Here only in general, *Man's whole and compleat ſalvation is comprehended in it.* And here is another great difference between common mercy and grace: Mercy only moderates the preſent miſery of ſinners, and mingleth goodneſs with the miſery, ſo that the ſinner is not under the whole weight of it, but hath ſome ſuccour. But yet it ſtill leaves him under the dominion of the curſe, and held by the power of the death that he is under. Whereas Grace diſſolves the curſe, deſtroys the death, and gives life. Mercy only

only viſits the priſoner, and gives him ſome ſupports, but leaves him there ; whereas Grace opens his priſon, and brings him out of it, and ceaſeth not till it hath poſſeſſed him of eternal life. Mercy throws ſome crumbs and bones to the dogs under the table ; Grace advanceth the vileſt ſinners,and ſets them at the table, and provides all rich entertainment for them.

3. *THE Grace of all this is, that he doth it for his own ſake.* And this is to be taken up in two or three things,

(1.) *THAT nothing out of himſelf, or in the creature, did move him to it.* The divine motives to ſhew any kindneſs,are all in him, he fetcheth none from abroad. When pity and grief at their miſery is attributed to him, it is after the manner of men. We read therefore. Rom. 9. 18. *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.* He takes occaſion by their miſery ; but he doth not do it for the ſake of that : much leſs doth he it for any worthineſs of theirs, and therefore they are ſaid to be unworthy. Hence that,Luk.15.19. *And am no more worthy to be called thy ſon.* Theſe two therefore are put in oppoſition each to the other, Ezek. 36. 21, 22. *But I had pity for my holy Name, which the houſe of Iſrael had profaned among the heathen whither they went. Therefore ſay unto the houſe of Iſrael, Thus ſaith the Lord God, I do not this for your ſakes, O houſe of Iſrael, but for mine holy names ſake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.*

(2.) *THAT it is done for them freely,without any merit of theirs.* Grace and merit are directly contrary, and cannot be joint cauſes in the ſame ſubject, of its receiving a favour. If it *merit* it, it is a *debt*, and then it is not grace, but juſtice to beſtow it. There would be mercy in reſtraining it ; but when it is of grace, it is not *earned*, but given of the bounty of the donor, and no wrong had been done to the perſon if it had not been given him : and therefore this life is called a gift, in oppoſition to wages, *Rom.* 6. 23.

(3.) *THAT God hath a ſpecial aim at his own glory in beſtowing it upon them.* God's Name, is in Scripture uſed, to ſignify his declarative glory. When he is ſaid to do any thing for his name-ſake, the meaning is,that he doth it to get himſelf a Name in the world : He is then admirably glorified in and by this kindneſs of his to the children of men, in that he gives it to them freely : and to this he hath a reſpect in doing of it ; for he is his own laſt end in all his works : and it is free love and good will that is herein celebrated, and that is his grace : of which more in that which follows.

Queſt. 2. *HOW is this Grace peculiarly diſcovered in man's Reſtitution ?*

Anſ. *IT is certain that God made choice of this to be the thing in which he would have this Attribute to have its luſtre.* And hence, altho' there be much of his free bounty to be read in his other works ; yet in this he would have all the lines of it to meet, and for that reaſon needs muſt his infinite wiſdom accommodate it ſuitably to ſuch a purpoſe ; it is therefore worthy of our ſpeculation. Let us then ſpend a few thoughts upon it. And here there are three heads to which this may be reduced.

1. *THE nature of the Reſtitution it ſelf ſaith that it is rich Grace.* We cannot ſuppoſe a creature wholly plunged into guilt and miſery and impotency, any way capable of meriting its own recovery ; if ever it partake in it, it muſt be done *freely* for it. Now one way in which Grace is exalted is in the greatneſs of the kindneſs, which is freely beſtowed. We ſhall have occaſion afterwards to commorate upon this. Here only let us make a little glance, and it will highly commend it ; and there are two things wherein it is to be obſerved,

(1.) *THE evil and miſery that it reſtores them from.* And that is the greateſt and moſt dreadful that can be thought of. They were fallen as low as Hell, ſunk down to the depths of the pit ; overwhelmed with all the curſes written in the book of God : they were under the weight of ſin and death : when the Grace of God came to apply it ſelf to them, it found them as forlorn and miſerable as the curſe of the law could make them : lying under the wrath of God for the preſent, and going apace to the ſuffering of eternal vengeance, in a pit where no water was ; and out of this horrible pit it takes them, and diſchargeth them from all this. See how it is expreſſed, *Eph. 2. begin.*

(2.) *THE good and happineſs that it reſtores him unto.* And that is great and aſtoniſhing as the other. It raiſeth him as high as ſin hath made him low ; it brings him from death to life, from hell to heaven. It raiſeth him from the dead, and puts him among the living ; it doth all that for him which makes him happy through the endleſs ages of eternity ; and fill him with greateſt ſatisfaction. We have a glance at it in, Eph. 2. 6,7. *And hath raiſed us up together, and made us to ſit together in heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus. That in the ages to come he might ſhew the exceeding riches of his grace ; in his kindneſs towards us, through Chriſt Jeſus.* And we are told that it exceeds words and conceptions, Eph. 3. 20. *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.*

2. *THE ſubjects on whom theſe benefits are beſtowed.* This puts the colours upon the former. When we have conſidered what is done for them, and then lay by it, who they are for whom all this is done, it will beſpeak the tranſcendency of this Grace. And there are two ways in which theſe are to be conſidered for the ſetting forth this grace as it ought.

(1.)

(1.) *IF we conſider them in themſelves.* And there are ſeveral things here to be noted.

[1.] *THEY are altogether undeſerving of ſuch a favour.* They have no merit at all. There is a twofold merit which Papiſts talk of, of *condignity*, and of *congruity*; though the latter is very improperly called merit. However neither of theſe could be aſcribed to them.

1. *THEY have no merit of Condignity.* They have no worth at all either in their perſons, or in any thing they do, or can do. They are not able to ſhew any thing at all by which to lay a claim to any the leaſt favour from the hand of God. *Gen.* 32. 10. They cannot earn from God a drop of water, or a cruſt of bread, but it muſt be given them if they have it. Much leſs then can they contribute any thing, to the procuring of ſuch rich and royal favours as theſe are. If they could do all, they were unprofitable; what then muſt they be who can do nothing at all? being *without ſtrength*, as in *Rom.* 5. 6.

2. *THEY have no merit of Congruity.* Not only are they incapable of earning any thing really by all they can do; for ſo can no creature, not the moſt holy Angel: but they are utterly and altogether unprofitable. *Pſal.* 14. 3. There is not any good thing in them, *Rom.* 7. 18. Nay there is not the leaſt actual diſpoſedneſs in them to receive this grace when it is offered to them; having only in them a paſſive capacity of having it conferred upon them by God. They cannot ſo much as do any thing to prepare and diſpoſe themſelves for the receiving of it; or to be willing to have it. God muſt make them fit ſubjects of it by an Almighty power working in them, before they can give it any cordial entertainment. Phil. 2. 13. *For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleaſure.* Hence, Iſai. 43. 21. *This people have I formed for my ſelf, they ſhall ſhew forth my praiſe.*

[2.] *THEY are every way ill deſerving creatures.* Not only have they nothing to oblige God to reſtore them; but they have all that in them which may provoke him never to do it. They have deſerved all the contrary plagues and judgments from the hands of God. The hell into which they were fallen and lay, was an hell of their own procuring; and if God had left them under the power of the law, and to the executions of revenging Juſtice, he had done them no wrong at all. *Iſai.* 43. 24. Nay, inſtead of doing any thing toward the farthering of their reſtitution, they do all they can to hinder the accompliſhment of it. They are haters of God, they depart away from him, they are a lump of enmity againſt him and his ways. Rom. 8. 7. *Becauſe the carnal mind is enmity againſt God: for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* They ſay of Chriſt, we will not have this man to reign over us, they bid the Almighty depart, and tell him they deſire not the knowledge of his ways. When he redeemed them they were enemies, Rom. 5. 10. *For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.* And when he comes to ſeek them up, and bring them back, he finds them going aſtray like loſt ſheep; and ſtops them, when running away from him, and in a full career to the bottomleſs pit; they had not the leaſt thought of enquiring after him. Iſai. 65. 1. *I am ſought of them that asked not for me: I am found of them that ſought me not: I ſaid, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my Name.*

[3.] *THEY are ſuch as he hath no need of.* He doth not apply this recovery to them, becauſe he ſhould otherwiſe want them, or did not know how to do without them in this way. For,

1. *HE was happy and bleſſed in himſelf.* God did not make the world of need, or to better his own happineſs. He is all perfection in himſelf eſſentially, and all that the creatures have is derived from him, by his efficiency; He lived without them, or any other being, when there was no world, and that he did eternally, and ſo he ſhould have done, if no world had been; the creature can give him nothing firſt. (*Rom.* 11. 35.) i. e. nothing but what was his firſt, and it received from him.

2. *HE had an innumerable company of heavenly Angels to ſerve and praiſe him.* If he had wanted the creatures ſervice, Heaven was ſtored with ſuch as were the moſt noble pieces of the creation, and every way fitted and diſpoſed to glorify him, always attending on the Throne, ready to do his pleaſure, and fulfil all his commands; and there are an uncountable company of them. *Heb.* 12. 22. *Dan.* 7. 10.

3. *HE could, if he had ſeen meet, have made as many more monuments of his glory & praiſe.* If he would have actual ſervice from ſuch a creature as man, he could have made a new generation of men, with a word. He had the reſidue of the Spirit with him; He did not lay out all his power in making of the world. What ſaith he, Mat. 3. 9. *And think not to ſay within your ſelves, We have Abraham to our father: for I ſay unto you, that God is able of theſe ſtones to raiſe up children unto Abraham.*

4. *AND he could have gotten to himſelf a name, glory and renown, in their ruin & eternal deſtruction.* He was not neceſſitated either to ſave them, or elſe to loſe his honour by them, and ſo have made them in vain. God is no loſer by thoſe that are not reſtored; His honour will ſhine forth eternally in the triumphs of Juſtice, when his garments ſhall be died with their blood, and he ſhall tread them in the wine-preſs of his indignation for ever. They had procured it for themſelves by their revolt from him, and ſinning againſt him. And if they had gone with the reſt of thoſe unhappy creatures whoſe doom it is to ſuffer eternal vengeance,

he had had his glory on them alſo. What then but Grace is to be celebrated in this great affair?

(2.) *IF we conſider them comparatively with ſuch as are left out of this Reſtitution.* We obſerved that it is but of *ſome.* Others therefore have no ſhare in it. Now let us lay them together, and ſee if any thing but Grace could make the difference,

1. *WHAT could it be but Grace, that pitch'd upon Men, and not fallen Angels to be thus reſtored?* That when all they are left in chains of darkneſs, faſt bound to Judgment, and not ſo much as one of them is recovered; but they muſt for ever ſuffer his vengeance; man ſhould be thought on, and determined to be the ſubject of this great and glorious work: that he ſhould chuſe to lift up the heads of poor deſolate men out of priſon, and ſet them at his own table; what elſe could move him to it, but his meer good will? They were both equally fallen off from God, and armed themſelves in rebellion againſt him; had both advanced another end than that which they were made for: ſet up for themſelves: they had both equally become unprofitable, having loſt their original holineſs, and being filled with curſed principles of rebellion; yea and Angels were as capable of being made monuments of Grace, and bringing as much glory to God by it. There recovery was no more impoſſible than man's. It would have been as great a favour to them, and as undeſerved, yea, and greater, upon the ſuppoſition that their ſin was greater; and God would have had as much praiſe from them, and they would have done him as much honour. What then but Grace? Heb. 2. 16. *For verily he took not on him the nature of angels: but he took on him the ſeed of Abraham.*

2. *WHAT but Grace that put the difference between thoſe of mankind who are reſtored, and thoſe that are left?* There is a vaſt difference made between thoſe that return to life, and thoſe that lie in their ſins, and die eternally. And how comes it to be made? To what are we to aſcribe it? They are all equally children of wrath by nature, *Eph.* 2.3. They had all one father who brought them under guilt and miſery. Rom. 5. 12. *Wherefore as by one man ſin entred into the world, and death by ſin: and ſo death paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned.* 1 Cor. 15. 22. *In Adam all die.* All equally full of a native enmity againſt God. Rom. 8. 7. *Becauſe the carnal mind is enmity againſt God: for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* All alike unprofitable and incapable of doing any good. Pſal. 14. 3. *They are all gone aſide, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doth good, no not one.* All alike indiſpoſed to entertain the offers of Grace, and accept of the terms of the Goſpel. The ſame power that converts an elect perſon is able to do ſo by a reprobate; and God ſhould have had as much glory by one as another. It muſt then be of his own will, and that muſt be Grace ſo to determine.

3. *IF we ſhould run over all the parts of man's Reſtitution, we ſhould find Grace to fill them all.* There will be occaſion to obſerve this more fully in the particular handling of them. Here then there will need but a glance.

1. *IF we begin at Election,* (and there doth this great affair take its riſe,) *we ſhall find that this is of meer Grace.* Rom. 11. 5. *Even ſo then at this preſent time alſo there is a remnant according to the election of grace.* Eph. 1. 5. *Having predeſtinated us unto the adoption of children by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will.* This hath been already fully diſcovered in the doctrine of Election; and it is utterly impoſſible that any created finite cauſe, or any thing out of himſelf, ſhould move or incline the eternal and immutable will of God, to ſet his love on any rather than others, or to fix his choice on a creature which was to receive its being, and all its good of his meer pleaſure.

2. *PASS over to Redemption:* in which way is made for the recovery of God's Elect by the interpoſition of a Redeemer, to ſatisfy the law, and purchaſe eternal life for them; *and this muſt alſo be of Grace.* It was an act of God's inexpreſſible love to ſend his Son to this end. Joh. 3. 16. *For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son: that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* It was no leſs incomparable love in Chriſt to come about this work, and engage in it, yea, and carry it through. Eph. 3. 19. *And to know the love of Chriſt, which paſſeth knowledge.* And it was an act of God's free grace to accept of this Redemption; for, though a Surety may ſtand in law for debt, to ſatisfy for the debtor, yet, where the caſe is criminal, it is at the offended Judges pleaſure, whether he will accept of a Surety, or will cauſe the offender himſelf in perſon to ſuffer the penalty that he hath incurred: he ſhews him therefore a ſpecial favour, when he doth ſo accept of it.

3. *COME we to the work of Application,* in which the fruits of the Redemption are brought to us, and made ours, and we are actually reſtored thereby; *and this alſo is of his meer Grace.* For none are called but thoſe that are elected. *Rom.* 8. 29. And conſequently none but ſuch as are redeemed: and the ſame Grace makes application. Hence their faith by which they come to a right to this is a fruit of free grace. *Eph.* 2. 8, 9. They believe not of themſelves; and he *juſtifies them freely,* Rom. 3. 24. They are *accepted* in Chriſt, *Eph.* 1. 6. It is his righteouſneſs that is imputed to them, to juſtification, who had none of their own. He *adopts* them freely; it is given to them on believing. *Joh.* 1. 12. He *ſanctifies* and *glarifies* them freely; for theſe are links in the ſame chain. *Rom.* 8. 29, 30.

USE.

USE. *LET the conſideration of this truth, put encouragement into the hearts of awakned and humbled Sinners.* Such are apt to miſgive in themſelves, and Satan ſeeks to drive them to deſpair. You have ſeen your ſins to be many and great, felt the ſentence of wrath againſt you for them, on your own conſciences, and know that you can do nothing for your ſelves, and that the world hath no relief for you; and are afraid whether there be any help for ſuch as you to be had with God. Now think of this and take heart,

1. *CONSIDER you are Men and not Devils.* You are not of that company whom God hath for ever forſaken, never to have mercy upon them; but you are of that ſort whom God hath pleaſed to reſtore from death to life; of that race whom God hath his Elect among, and out of whom he will gather a great number to make them partakers in eternal Salvation. Hope then, and do not deſpair and dye.

2. *CONSIDER that God's deſign in man's reſtitution is to reveal his rich Grace in the ſubjects of it.* Whatever then your caſe may be in reſpect of ſin and miſery: how deeply ſoever your conſciences do charge on you the guilt of ſin, your unworthineſs, and the heinous aggravated provocations which you have given to God; yet now remember that it is Grace that God hath deſigned the magnifying of in the Salvation of men, and that every of theſe aggravations of your miſery, will be ſo many commendations of that Grace in your being ſaved by him out of them all.

3. *CONSIDER that ſuch as you are invited, and the invitation is nextly given to you.* See how the Spirit of God expreſſeth himſelf in this regard, Iſai. 55. 7,8,9. *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, ſaith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, ſo are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* So alſo in, *Jer.* 3. *begin.* Hearken how Chriſt himſelf expreſſeth his call, Mat. 11. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.* Yea, and the Spirit of God makes way for the application of his Grace, by awakening, and emptying ſinners, that ſo the Grace he hath to beſtow may be welcome and acceptable to them; wait then in hope, and if ſo you ſeek him, you ſhall find him.

[SEPTEMBER 4. 1694.]

SERMON *LXXVII.*

II. *THERE was a Covenant that God entred into about man's Reſtitution.* Hereby was the Grace ratified which was to be exerted in the ratification of it; it is therefore called *a Covenant of Grace*; becauſe it was all that Grace provided, by which we might be ſaved. In purſuit of this we may enquire, 1. What Covenant is here intended? 2. How our Reſtitution was ratified in it?

1. *WHAT Covenant is here intended?*

A. *THERE are divers gloſſes made upon it by ſuch as expound this Catechiſm.* And poſſibly it might be diverſly underſtood by the Compilers of it. The difference between the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace hath been all along underſtood and acknowledged in the Church of God, eſpecially ſince the days of the Goſpel. But the notion of the *two Covenants* of Grace, viz. of *Redemption* and *Reconciliation*, hath not been ſo diſtinctly taken up: and hence they have been frequently reckoned but one, and ſo treated of; which hath rendred the doctrine of Grace more obſcure and indiſtinct. And thus ſome interpret it here. But that theſe are two diſtinct Covenants, though both have Grace in them, and deſigned by them, hath been more evidently of later years made to appear from the word of God. The one was made from *eternity*, the other in *time*; one was made *for us*, the other *with us*; in the one Chriſt is conſidered as a divine Perſon, in the other as God-Man: in the one he becomes a Surety, in the other he ſtands as a Mediator. In ſum, the latter ſuppoſeth the former, & is built upon it; God having Covenanted with his Son for us, made way for his Covenanting with us in him. Now if we will weigh the matter, it will evidently appear that no other than *the Covenant of Redemption* can be here rightly intended; it being an eternal agreement to deliver us from our miſery, and bring us into ſalvation, as we are here told: in which we could not poſſibly be concerned as Covenantees, but only as the objects of the Grace therein deſigned. Here then the doctrine of this Covenant doth properly and *methodically* belong. But, having lately publiſhed a brief Treatiſe on this Subject, I ſhall now ſay the leſs of it, and only give a ſummary account of the matter in the reſolution of the 2d. Enquiry, viz.

2. *HOW our Reſtitution was ratified in it?*

Anſ. *THIS will appear in the conſideration of the Covenant it ſelf, in its nature and deſign,* In which we ſhall ſee how all was made ſure and unchangeable. Here then let us obſerve,

1. *THAT the doctrine of the Covenant of Redemption belongs to that of Election.* God in electing of ſome to everlaſting life, did enter into this Covenant. It is true, this

and Election are not one and the ſame thing, this Covenant being but one branch of it, and not the whole. There is a great deal more goes into Election than this; but yet it is not a diſtinct thing from Election, but an ingredient of it. And therefore they that ſuppoſe (as ſome do, and the words in this Anſwer ſeem to infer) that this Covenant preſumes Election to be firſt paſt, are greatly miſtaken; and render this Covenant a ſuperfluous thing. We are ſaid to be choſen in Chriſt, i.e. in the Covenant made with him.

2. *THAT in Election this Covenant belongs to the means.* We before obſerved that Election reſpects both the end and means, which though inſeparable, and at once in the decree, yet have their order. Now the end of Election is the promiſe of free and rich Grace: and as Election pitcheth upon ſome to be the monuments of it; ſo there muſt be a way in which this Grace may be made illuſtrious in them. And we obſerved there are many ſteps in this *medium*; which though in the decree they are but one entire *medium*, yet they not only follow one another in the execution, but have a connection one to another in the wiſe contrivance of God; and they accordingly make way one for another. Hence man's *fall* and *miſery*, made him to need *a recovery*, and was a *medium* to the ſhining of Grace in his recovery. And man's fall bringing him under a ſentence of condemnation according to a righteous law, hereupon there muſt be a redemption-price paid to the juſtice of God for his delivery, elſe he cannot be ſaved. Now the contrivance and confirmation of this in the divine purpoſe is that which we call the *Covenant of Redemption*. So that in it there is a ſuppoſal of man's apoſtacy, and proviſion made for his relief under it. Not that the *permiſſion* of the apoſtacy was decreed before the recovery was thought of, but both together, how elſe ſhould that permiſſion be a *medium* deſigned for the exaltation of Grace? Though yet God did decree, firſt to let man fall, and then to provide him a *remedy*. But they were joyned together in the decree. Here then is the place of this Covenant.

3. *THAT this is analogically called a Covenant.* It is ſo called in Pſal. 89. 3. *I have made a covenant with my choſen; I have ſworn unto David my ſervant.* Which can intend no other in the *Anterype*. So *Zech.* 9. 11. And is called the counſel of Peace, *Chap.* 6. 13. Now the reaſon why God repreſents it to us under the title of a Covenant, is becauſe of the great reſemblance it hath to ſuch a thing among men. And there are all thoſe things in it, which according to our conception amount to a full and perfect Covenant in all the parts of it. There are Parties concerned in it; there are Articles of agreement in it; there is a connection between theſe Articles on each part; there is a mutual conſent in them, and they are fully agreed upon, and ſealed. And when theſe things are looked into we ſhall ſee both what the Covenant is, and how firm the ſalvation of God's Elect is made by it. Here then,

(1.) *THE whole Trinity are concerned in the decree of Election.* It is indeed ſometimes aſſigned to the Father, it being the firſt work, and ſo accommodated to his order of ſubſiſting. *Eph.* 1. 3, 4. But it being the counſel of the divine will, which is common to all Three, it belongs to the Deity: it is an eſſential act, *Joh.* 5. 19. It is God that loved us; God that appointed us to the Kingdom. And as in this God-head there are Three Subſiſtances, ſo they are all one in their actings which are divine; and for that reaſon the decree is called *a Counſel*; not becauſe God admitted any but himſelf in the conſultation, but becauſe the Three Perſons are agreed in this determination, being undivided.

(2.) *THAT in the things decreed by Election, there is a particular concern of each of the Three Perſons, perſonally conſidered.* This is well to be obſerved. As to the end indeed, that is the glory of Grace, and in this they are equally concerned. It is the glory of God that is the ultimate deſign of it, and Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt ſhall be equally honoured in it, but in the *media* to this end; each of them hath his perſonal relation; and this is according to the Oeconomy of the divine Perſons. It was in the divine Will to exalt Grace in the Salvation of man; and accordingly man is made, treated with, and by the over-ruling Providence of God falls into ſuch a condition as to need ſalvation in a way of Grace; and here each of them doth his part in bringing it about.

And here,

1. *THERE muſt be a Salvation appointed for them, and the perſons appointed who ſhall partake in it, and a propoſal made for the bringing of it about; and an aſſurance given that in this way it ſhall be done.* Of this appointment we are informed, 1 Theſ. 5. 9. *For God hath not appointed us to wrath: but to obtain ſalvation by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Luk. 22. 29. *And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.* And this being the firſt work, is aſcribed to the *Father*, as belonging to his order of ſubſiſting, being firſt of the divine Perſons.

2. *THAT fallen man may obtain this Salvation, he muſt be redeemed.* God ſuffered him to fall, that he might be ſaved by Grace. And being fallen, he is become a priſoner of juſtice, a lawful captive, and muſt be redeemed by price. The law muſt have its ſatisfaction, and none but a divine Perſon was capable of paying it: and this muſt be done in order to his having happineſs reſtored to him. This therefore being the next thing, belongs to the Second Perſon, or *the Son of God*, and on that account the title of Redeemer is put upon him, becauſe he came on this

this errand. Gal. 4. 4, 5. *But when the fulneſs of the time was come, God ſent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons.*

3. *THAT man may be made actually to partake in this Salvation, the virtue of this Redemption muſt be applied to him.* For if Chriſt be not made ours, he cannot profit us. We muſt be inveſted with this benefit: it muſt be brought home to us; and we cannot apply it to our ſelves. We cannot be perſwaded to accept of it, without an almighty influence on us. There muſt then be a divine Perſon for this too; and this being the laſt work in it, belongs to the *Holy Ghoſt*, who is the Third and laſt in the order of perſonality, He therefore is our Sanctifier. Hence that, 2 Theſ. 2. 13. *But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, becauſe God hath from the beginning choſen you to ſalvation, through ſanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.* And we have all Three put together, 1 Pet. 1. 2. *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through ſanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and ſprinkling of the blood of Jeſus Chriſt.*

(3.) *THAT all this was determined & made ſure in the decree of Election.* As God reſolved to have the glory of his Grace, in the ſalvation of ſuch a ſubject, ſo he reſolved of the way of it, and the work of each Perſon about it was concluded upon: otherwiſe there was no decree of Election. A Decree is a firm purpoſe, not a thing in ſuſpenſe, or under deliberation, but eſtabliſhed. And Election is, as of the means, ſo of the end. Now theſe are neceſſary *media*, and therefore the one of them is mentioned, 1 Theſ. 5. 9. *by Jeſus Chriſt:* i. e. through his redemption. The other, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 13. And if this redemption and ſanctification had not been as ſure in the purpoſe, as the ſalvation, it had not been a Covenant well ordered in all things, as it was.

(4.) *WE muſt of neceſſity conceive of each of the divine Perſons freely conſenting in this affair.* The divine will is indeed but one, ſo that it is impoſſible but that they ſhould all will the ſame thing: yet as we are to conceive Three Perſons in one God-head, ſo we muſt conceive them to have perſonal properties, or elſe the notion and name of perſons is not only improperly but falſly aſcribed to them. When we ſpeak of the Father ſending the Son, and the Father and Son ſending the Spirit, we muſt conceive of them as perſons conſenting thus to be ſent. For they are equally God with the Father; and muſt on that account be voluntary in what they engage in. Chriſt therefore tells us that *he laid down his own life, & none took it from him*, Joh. 10. 17, 18. And he declares his free conſent. Heb. 10. 7. *Then ſaid I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God.* And we muſt reckon ſo of the Spirit, for he is God.

(5.) *IN this conſent they became mutually obliged each to the other.* There was no other concerned as acting in this tranſaction but theſe Perſons; and therefore they could not be obliged to any elſe. And to make a Covenant obligation, there muſt be parties related to each other in it, and ſo it is here: if therefore here were not a confirmation, that could not be future, but muſt be uncertain and depending; the contrary whereto we are aſſured of in the Scripture. The Son ſtood bound to the Father, and on this account is ſaid to come to do his will; and on this account upon the performance of it he challengeth the reward, *Joh.* 17. *begin.*

(6.) IN this Covenant we have to conſider,

1. *THE Parties Covenanting.* And that is God, and the Son. There are Three Perſons intereſted in it, and each hath his part in it; and in that conſideration we may call them Three Parties; but the parts of the Covenant are but two, and ſo the parties are not more. So that we may account God the Father and God the Holy Ghoſt as one Party, and God the Son as the other. Though the former be more frequently aſcribed to the Father, yet we find that the Holy Ghoſt hath alſo his part in it, which aſſures us that he is of one Party. For the honour and praiſe of our ſalvation belong to him as much as to the other.

2. *THE thing in which this Covenant is concerned is the Redemption of men from the curſe of the law.* And for this reaſon we call it by ſuch a name. It is the doing of all that is requiſite to the making way for ſuch a Salvation; and the bringing of it about in ſuch a way as, whiles Grace is magnified, Juſtice may alſo have its due, and not ſuffer in the leaſt. It is the buying of the priſoner out of the hand of the law, and the redeeming of the forfeited inheritance for him; it is therefore ſo ſtiled, *Eph.* 1. 14.

3. *HENCE we are to conſider how each Party is concerned in this, by a voluntary undertaking.* In and by which it amounts to a Covenant in the beſt conception we can have of it, and according as God himſelf propoſeth it to us. And for a right taking of this up, let us obſerve theſe things,

[1.] *THAT God will have ſome of fallen men to be monuments of his Grace in their Salvation.* Whether he would have glorified this Attribute in this way or no, was in it ſelf a thing arbitrary: and ſo, whether he would ſave any of that poſterity: ſo that in all this he acted as a free agent. Man's death for ſin was a righteous penalty, but his recovery again is of Grace, and therefore God could be under no obligation to it, but his own good pleaſure; but God hath ſeen it meet thus to do. He will have ſome of this unhappy race to taſte of his favour, and be reſtored to life, and this good will of his is the foundation of our felicity.

[2.] *THE Son of God is looked upon as the*

next

next perſon to procure this Salvation for him. Man's fall forfeited his happineſs, and procured his miſery, and ſo he needs Salvation. The law held him faſt, and would not let him go without ſatisfaction: he was poor and inſufficient to make it for himſelf; no meer creature was capable of doing it for him, nor bare him ſo much good will as to have done it; none eye pitied him; none but he who is God could do it. It muſt then be one of the divine Perſons who doth it, or it can never be done; and ſo either Juſtice muſt ſuffer injury, or God muſt miſs of his purpoſe, as the caſe ſtands with man in his apoſtacy. It is moſt agreable to the order of the divine Subſiſtances that this province fall upon the Son, the ſecond Perſon, and accordingly it is propoſed to him. We have an account of this propoſal, Iſai. 53. 10. *Yet it pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him, he hath put him to grief: when thou ſhalt make his ſoul an offering for ſin, he ſhall ſee his ſeed, he ſhall prolong his days, and the pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand.*

[3.] THAT the Son may do this to effect there are ſeveral things requiſite, viz.

1. *THAT he become man's ſurety, and undertake for him to do all that is requiſite to purchaſe his Salvation.* He muſt put himſelf in our ſtead, he muſt become reſponſible for us; and this muſt be by a free and voluntary act of his own; for he is under no natural neceſſity ſo to do and be; nor could he be compelled to it. In which Suretiſhip,

(1.) *HE muſt engage to take our nature upon him.* For without it he could not go through ſuch an undertaking, nor could it have been of any uſefulneſs for us. It was man that ſinned, and it muſt be man that dies for ſin. And hence the futurition of his Incarnation flowed from this undertaking of his; becauſe elſe he could not have diſcharged this ſuretiſhip. Hence he is ſaid for this end to partake of the ſame nature with us, Heb. 2.14. *Foraſmuch then as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood; he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame, that through death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil.*

(2.) *HE muſt engage in this nature to ſubject himſelf to the law.* For the aſſumption of it is to this end: and it muſt be for us; becauſe we were under the law, and the Surety muſt put himſelf into the condition of him whom he is ſurety for; that being the very nature of ſuretiſhip. Hence thoſe two are put together, Gal. 4. 4. *But when the fulneſs of the time was come, God ſent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law.* He could not as God be under the law at all, nor for us, but by being a man.

(3.) *HE muſt engage to fulfil the whole righteouſneſs of the law in our ſtead.* For this is the very purpoſe or deſign of his putting of himſelf under it. He therefore urgeth it for himſelf, *Mat.* 3.15. To this end he muſt entirely keep the law in all its commands; that ſo the promiſe of life may belong to him for us: and he muſt bear our guilt, and ſuffer our puniſhment, both of which are contained in *his being made ſin for us*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. This therefore he muſt undertake for: and in this was he to be our Redeemer.

2. *THIS Suretiſhip of his muſt be accepted of God.* It is not enough in this caſe, that the ſuretiſhip be offered, and the perſon reſponſible, as in reſpect of debts cannot be denyed; but the caſe is *criminal*, and God is offended, the Sinner is a man of death; and the injury is done by him perſonally; and for an *innocent* perſon to be ſubſtituted in the room of a *nocent*, and dye for him, is at the pleaſure of the offended Judge: and thus it is with man. God therefore muſt approve of him, elſe the value of his obedience will not amount to ſatisfaction. God therefore teſtifieth to this approbation, *Mat.* 3. 17.

3. *HE muſt have an aſſurance given him, that his obedience ſhall obtain the diſcharge of thoſe for whom he undertakes from the law condemnation that is upon them.* He muſt know that his work ſhall ſucceed. *Iſai.* 53.10. And that they for whom he gives himſelf ſhall be delivered by it: elſe all his work would be loſt. And there are three things which are contained in this,

(1.) *THAT God will be atoned to them.* Sin hath ſtirred up God's holy anger againſt them; and he is purſuing them to death: and till he is reconciled, they are children of death, and expoſed to all the curſes written againſt them. If by this work he do not pacify God's anger, and procure his favour for them, the work is loſt: for it is to bring about this reconciliation that it was undertaken. The offerings therefore of old were called *Atonements*, the Sacrifice was to pacify God's anger, and procure remiſſion and acceptance.

(2.) *THAT they ſhall be atoned to him.* For this alſo is requiſite in order to their Salvation; they are not only under his juſt anger, but full of enmity againſt him; they muſt therefore be reconciled, which is to be done by the application of powerful and ſaving Grace to them; for which reaſon God is ſaid to reconcile them to him, 2 *Cor.* 5.19.

(3.) *THAT hereupon they have all ſpiritual and eternal bleſſings beſtowed on them for his ſake.* For herein their Salvation doth conſiſt. They are to be brought to glory. *Heb.* 2.10. To be bleſſed with all ſpiritual bleſſings, *Eph.* 1. 3. He is to have them depoſited into his hands, and to be at his diſpoſe, even all fulneſs from which they are to receive a plenteous ſupply.

4. *THAT all theſe things may be ſecured, they do mutually engage themſelves one to another by firm promiſe.* And ſo a Covenant is ratified between them. The promiſes are conditional, and that on both parts; and they are mutual obligations, in which there is

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ſomething to be done, and ſomething to be received upon the doing it, and this amounts to a Covenant in the very notion of it among men.

(1.) *GOD the Father offers to the Son that if he will do this work, he ſhall be ſure of all this.* He propoſeth theſe terms to him, tells him it ſhall be well pleaſing to him, and he ſhall have a Seed to ſerve him. Pſal. 22. 30. *A ſeed ſhall ſerve him, it ſhall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.* So Iſai. 53. 10. *When thou ſhalt make his ſoul an offering for ſin, he ſhall ſee his ſeed, he ſhall prolong his days, and the pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand.* Pſal. 110. 7. *He ſhall drink of the brook in the way; therefore ſhall he lift up the head.* He ſaith he ſhall have a glorious recompence; that is that which is called the joy ſet before him. *Heb.* 12. 2. He gives him all the aſſurances of his acceptance; and all the engagements requiſite for his ſucceſs.

(2.) *GOD the Son accepts of the offer, and upon the motion complies with it.* He takes his Father at his word, and ſaith, *I will come to do thy will; and it is written in the volume of the book.* Pſal. 40. 7. It had not been before that written in the Scripture, it is then the records of Eternity, which are compared to a book, in which things are regiſtred; He proffereth to his Father that he will comply in all things with his propoſal.

(3.) *GOD the Holy Ghoſt undertakes and promiſeth that he will ſee to the application of all the Grace appointed by the Father, and purchaſed by the Son to thoſe for whom it is deſigned, and ſo to bring them to Salvation.* And though the Scripture doth not ſo expreſly point to the engaging of the Third Perſon in this concern; yet we have that there which infers it, in as much as his coming is there predicted, and Chriſt more than once tells us of his ſending him, *Joh.* 14. & 16. which aſſures us that there was a futurition of this work from eternity, as well as of Redemption; which muſt needs imply his conſenting and covenanting to come.

5. *IN and by this Compact the Salvation of God's Elect is made ſure.* There is now by vertue of this a ſettlement of this matter immutably; there is effectual care taken that none of them ſhall periſh; there is a love that God bears to them from Eternity; there is a Redemption-price indented for with one that is able to pay it to the utmoſt; all that is needful to bring them to Grace, and through that to Glory, ſettled by the firmeſt Covenant that can be. It is a Covenant confirmed with an *Oath*, Heb. 7. 21. It is between Perſons that are immutable; it was ratified in the days of Eternity: it was an act of divine free-will; and made for perpetuity. Pſal. 119. 89. *For ever, O Lord, thy word is ſettled in heaven.* Yea, to ſhow us the firmneſs of it, all the elect that died before Chriſt coming and diſcharging this work in our fleſh, were ſaved upon the credit of it. And Chriſt himſelf is in this regard ſaid to *be ſlain from the foundation of the world.*

USE I. *HOW doth this conſideration ſerve to commend to us the wonderful love of God to all his choſen.* This great care of his to ſecure for them their eternal Salvation is a witneſs of it, in that he not only had a thought of good will for them, but that he ſettled all the concerns of their Salvation in an everlaſting Covenant not to be broken. Well may we ſay, *Behold, what manner of love he hath loved us withal?* That ſuch a Covenant ſhould paſs for them in the days of Eternity before they had a being, and that all the glorious Perſons in the adorable Trinity ſhould be perſonally concerned in it, and engaged about it, and all that concerns it from the beginning to the end, be particularly contrived and inſerted in the volume of that Covenant, ſo that there is nothing wanting. How ſhould we then let out our hearts into admiration at, and praiſing of God for this ſo inexpreſſible kindneſs of his?

USE II. *HERE alſo we ſee what a ſolid foundation the hopes of God's called ones have for eternal life.* Have we but made our calling ſure, we need not fluctuate in our minds about the iſſue of our great and eternal concern. Indeed, if we look elſewhere we may be puzled about it; but when we conſider, that ſuch a Covenant as this paſt, and is ratified, in which all whoſe names are in it, are appointed to Salvation unchangeably, and if God Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt can bring them to it, they ſhall certainly in due time be inveſted with it; and then conſider, that all the benefits that are peculiar to the people of God flow down from this Covenant, and are the performances of it, of which this of effectual calling is one; we are hereby aſſured that we belong to that bleſſed company, and our names are written in Heaven, and that therefore the mighty power of God ſtands engaged to keep and conduct us through faith to Salvation; how quiet and confident may we be againſt all that threatens us either from within or without, and bid defiance to every thing that would go about to ſeparate us from this love of God which is in Chriſt? Let us then all, both Young and Old, ſeek after this calling, and the aſſurance of it upon a good evidence; and when we have it, let us improve it to draw to our Souls by it all the Conſolations which are laid up in it, to ſtrengthen and eſtabliſh us againſt all the temptations that aſſault us in our warfare.

[OCTOBER 2. 1694.]

SERMON *LXXVIII.*

6. WE proceed to conſider of *the Reſtitution it ſelf, with the terms of it.* Wherein we are given to underſtand what is the benefit the children of men do partake in by vertue of it. There are therefore two things done for them in and

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by this Reſtitution, 1. They are delivered from a ſtate of ſin and miſery. 2. They are brought into a ſtate of Salvation. And from both of theſe it appears that the whole happineſs of the creature was contrived in this affair. We may take a brief account of each of them.

1. *THEY are delivered from a ſtate of ſin and miſery.* In this we are pointed to the *term from which* this Reſtitution brings the man. How, or after what manner this is done, muſt be afterwards conſidered. Here we only take notice of the thing it ſelf. In which,

(1.) *HERE is a deliverance aſſerted.* And that preſuppoſeth a thraldom into which he was fallen; for if he were not enthralled, he would not ſtand in need of a deliverance. Man's *Anaſtaſy* preſuppoſeth his *Apoſtacy.* Now there are two ways in which men may be delivered, viz. by the payment of a price, and the reſcuing them by power, and both of theſe are in ſeveral reſpects concerned in this, as will afterwards appear. And on this account is Chriſt called the deliverer, *Rom.* 11.26.

(2.) *THAT which they are delivered from is a ſtate of ſin and miſery.* *There* we may remember the Apoſtacy left them; *here* then the Reſtitution finds them; and brings them out of that woful condition which the fall had brought them into. And by conſidering of what hath been already ſaid of that twofold ſtate, we may underſtand what is implyed or contained in this deliverance.

1. *THEY are delivered from a ſtate of Sin.* Now a ſtate of ſin is a being bound under ſin, and left in the hands of corruption, under the dominion and influence of original ſin, and ſo a miſerable neceſſity of ſinning in thought, word and deed; which is the condition of all men by nature, *Rom.* 3.12. Now in this deliverance,

(1.) *THEY are delivered from the guilt of ſin.* Rom. 8.1. *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Chriſt Jeſus, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit.*

(2.) *THEY are freed from the reigning power of ſin.* It is dethroned, and hath no more a ſovereign authority over them. Whatſoever moleſtation it may give them for the preſent, it is no longer their Lord: they are not voluntary ſervants to it, if it doth any thing in them it is by force, by captivating them. Rom. 7. 23. *But I ſee another law in my members, warring againſt the law of my mind, & bringing me into captivity to the law of ſin, which is in my members.* But the body of death is crucified, and in that reſpect dead. Col. 7.23. *For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Chriſt in God.* They are not under the law of ſin. *Rom.* 8. 2.

(3.) *HENCE they are freed from acting of ſin, with that freedom and delight which ſometimes they did.* They once yielded their members to be the inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs, but now they do not ſo do. When they ſinned, they followed their entire natural inclination. Rom. 6. 20. *For when ye were the ſervants of ſin, ye were free from righteouſneſs.* But now if they ſin at any time it is againſt their will. Rom. 7. 15. *For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.* Hence they diſclaim it as none of their own. ver. 20. *Now if I do that I would not: it is no more I that do it, but ſin that dwelleth in me.*

(4.) *THEY ſhall in God's time be wholly delivered from the being of ſin in them.* The ſinfulneſs of their nature ſhall be taken away, and no remains of it left in them, and then all actual ſin will conſequently ceaſe; they ſhall ſin no more: there is a perfect man they are to arrive to. *Eph.* 4. 13. and that muſt needs include in it a ſinleſs ſtate. Hence that triumph, 1 Cor. 15. 55,56,57. *O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory? The ſting of death is ſin: and the ſtrength of ſin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

2. *THEY are delivered from a ſtate of Miſery.* This, we obſerved, was conſequent upon the former. It was ſin that brought death into the world, *Rom.* 5. 12. And when that is deſtroyed, the other will ceaſe.

(1.) *THEY are freed from the Curſe.* Gal. 3. 13. *Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us.* This was contained in the threatning, and derived from ſin as the meritorious cauſe of it. And hence, though many afflictions do for the preſent abide upon them, yea, and a bodily death, yet there is no curſe in them; all afflictions are ſanctified for their good; and the very ſting of death is taken out. 1 Cor. 15. 55. *O death, where is thy ſting?*

(2.) *HENCE they are freed from thoſe fears and horrors which ariſe from the apprehenſion of the Curſe.* This is that which is called *the ſpirit of bondage*, which we are ſaid not to receive again, *Rom.* 8. 15. And theſe when acted upon the conſcience make the life miſerable; but they are delivered from the cauſes of them.

(3.) *THEY are delivered from the tyranny of Sin, Satan, and World.* Their ſlavery was great, and they were very unhappy by it: they were priſoners to theſe cruel lords, who made them to ſerve with rigour: but their priſon doors are opened, and they are ſet at liberty, *Iſai.* 61. 2.

(4.) *THEY are finally ſaved from all Troubles and Sorrows.* The troubles of this life ſhall in due time ceaſe, they ſhall reſt from their loads, and they ſhall be for ever delivered from the wrath to come. 1 *Theſ.* 1. 10. *Rev.* 20. 6. Sin being taken away, none of the unhappy fruits of it ſhall remain.

2. *THEY are brought into a ſtate of Salvation.* This is *the term to which.* Salvation indeed in the latitude of it includes both; it ſuppoſeth an uncomfortable condition which it ſaves men from, and a deſirable ſtate which it confers upon them. But here it points only to the latter. As therefore this Reſtitution frees him from the evil he was fallen into,

into, and brings him out of his horrible pit: ſo it reſtores him to the good which he loſt by the Apoſtacy. There was ſomething he was fallen from, and that was life, the recovering of which is here called Salvation: it was life that he loſt, this then is reſtored to him: and this Salvation is oppoſite to the twofold ſtate before ſpoken of. Hence,

(1.) *THEY are brought from a ſtate of ſin to a ſtate of holineſs.* The life of ſanctification was man's ſtate in innocency, by vertue of the image of God which was upon him, and into this ſtate is he brought again. Eph. 4. 24. *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs, and true holineſs.* And this is the ſtate of vivification, by which they are quickned. *Eph.* 2. 4, 5. In it they are made conformable to God, and his glorious will. *Rom.* 12. 2.

(2.) *THEY are brought from a ſtate of miſery to a ſtate of happineſs.* And there is a double happineſs which is taken notice of in Scripture; *inchoate* in this life, which flows from the ſtate of reconciliation they are brought into. *Pſal.* 32. 1,2. and *perfect* in the conſummation of all thoſe felicities which are at length to be enjoyed for ever in the kingdom of Glory. *Pſal.* 16. *ult.* Theſe things will come to have a diſtinct conſideration in the ſequel. It may then ſuffice only to have pointed at them now. Only let us here ſee how infinitely it concerns us all to get an intereſt in this Reſtitution. If we would eſcape ſin and miſery, and be happy for ever, this is the only way to it; and if we now miſs of it, we ſhall repent when it is too late.

7. *THE laſt thing we have here to conſider of, is the way in which this Reſtitution is brought about*; i.e. by a Redeemer.

FOR our methodical proceeding in this, and the things which follow, it is here to be obſerved, that man's Reſtitution hath two parts in it, viz. *Redemption* and *Application.* In the former of theſe, man's Salvation is purchaſed for him: in the latter, it is brought home to him, and he is inveſted with it. We are led to the former of theſe here, which is to be traced through divers following Queſtions. That which is before us at preſent is only a general introduction of the doctrine of man's Redemption. Where we are to conſider, 1. What this Redemption is? 2. The neceſſity of it in order to the Salvation of fallen man. 3. That for this it is requiſite that there be a Redeemer.

1. *WHAT this Redemption is?*

A. *REDEMPTION in the largeſt ſenſe that it is uſed comes under a double conſideration,* viz. *Redemption by price, and by power.* And both of theſe do truly belong to Chriſt as our Redeemer; and were both perſonally diſcharged by him in the execution of his Mediatorial Offices; although the latter of theſe doth more eminently appear in the work of Application. But inaſmuch as the foundation of our Salvation is laid in the former, and the other is built upon it, *that* may be the Subject of our preſent conſideration, and the *latter* may be taken notice of when we come to the contemplation of his Kingly Office. And indeed the more proper and ſtrict notion of the word Redemption belongs to the former; and accordingly we may take this deſcription of it; *Redemption is a ſatisfaction made to the law of Juſtice for a certain number of fallen men by the payment of a ſufficient ranſom, according to agreement. Emption* ſignifies *a buying*; *Redemption, a buying again*; and ſo it ſuppoſeth the ſubject to be under a forfeiture; and is in our vulgar account applied both to things and perſons. There is the Redemption of Inheritances that are ſold, of Goods that are forfeited, of Captives, of Slaves, of Condemned perſons: all which caſes bear ſome reſemblance to the matter in hand. But for a more diſtinct explication of this we may in the deſcription obſerve,

I. *THE ſubjects of this Redemption*, viz. *A certain number of fallen men.* And every word here calls for a ſpecial remark to be made on it.

1. *THEY are Men.* There are two ſorts of creatures that have loſt happineſs, and fallen into a ſtate of ſin and miſery, viz. Angels and Men; but the former of theſe do not come within the compaſs of this Redemption, only the latter. It is the infelicity of apoſtate Angels, that they are left for ever without all hopes of recovery, becauſe there is none to redeem them. There is *Emphaſis* in that, Heb. 2. 16. *For verily he took not on him the nature of Angels: but he took on him the ſeed of Abraham.* And therefore we have that awful expreſſion, Jud. 6. *And the Angels which kept not their firſt eſtate, but left their own habitation, he hath reſerved in everlaſting chains under darkneſs, unto the judgment of the great day.* Thus it is man's great and peculiar priviledge, that God hath provided a Redemption for ſuch. Joh. 3. 16. *For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son: that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.*

2. *THEY are fallen Men.* Such as are ſwallowed up in the ruine of *Adam's* Apoſtacy; ſuch as have forfeited themſelves and their all; are lawful captives; and fallen under a juſt condemnation; for this Redemption belongs to their Reſtitution. It was by man's fall that he came to ſtand in need of this. Man was created at liberty, and if he had not by ſin made himſelf a priſoner of Juſtice, he would not have needed an enlargement. Hence that expreſſion, Zech. 9. 11. *As for thee alſo, by the blood of thy covenant, I have ſent forth thy priſoners out of the pit wherein is no water.*

3. *THEY are a number of fallen Men.* It is not all the whole race that are thus redeemed. The doctrine of univerſal Redemption is here to be exploded. Redemption, (as was but now obſerved,) is one part of man's

Reſtitution, and we have before ſeen proved, that the ſubjects of Reſtitution are not *all* but *only ſome*. Beſides if we conſider that the end of Redemption is the ſalvation of the redeemed, we muſt then either ſay that all are ſaved, or that Redemption loſeth its end as to the greater number of mankind; which muſt reflect upon the wiſdom and power of God. If God intended to ſave them, and for that end redeemed them, why are they not ſaved? If he did not intend to ſave them, why did he redeem them? We are told what Redemption is for, Gal. 4. 5. *To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons.* As for the notion of *Conditional* Redemption, ſo much and fondly entertained by ſome, viz. that Chriſt hath ſatisfied for them to procure Salvation in their behalf, in caſe they comply with his terms; it proceeds from ignorance, and a confounding of the Covenant of Redemption as to its Articles, with thoſe of the Goſpel Covenant in its external diſpenſations. And if that were the true notion of Redemption, how comes it that theſe Articles are not propoſed to all, but millions live and die, and never hear of them? Let men evade it as they will, we have no reaſon to believe that Chriſt would die for thoſe for whom he would not pray, *Joh.* 17. 9. As for the diſtinction that ſome uſe of *ſufficient* and *effectual* Redemption, the beſt of it is, that it is very improper; for though it is a great truth, that there is enough in the price that was paid to have purchaſed the whole number of mankind, yet to call that a Redemption which was never intended for, nor applied to the ſubject, is ſcarce intelligible. In a word, God's Election, Chriſt's Redemption, and the Spirit's Application, carry on the ſame deſign; and conſequently have the ſame ſubject.

4. *THEY are a certain Number.* They are not only ſo many in groſs, but theſe and thoſe by count and name. That they are ſo in God's Election, hath been already made to appear, and theſe and no other are the ſubjects of Redemption; there needs therefore nothing here to be added.

II. *THE Redemption it ſelf that was laid in for theſe Subjects*, in the reſt of the deſcription. And here obſerve,

(1.) *THE general nature of this Redemption, or what is done in it*; viz. *Satisfaction is made to the law of Juſtice, on their account.* In every proper Redemption, there are demands made, and a compliance with them is come into for the accompliſhment of it. For our better taking up of this, conſider,

1. *THAT man was at firſt placed under the law as a rule of Relative Juſtice.* That God gave man a rule at firſt is certain; and the very *Gentiles* that have not the written law, being a law to themſelves, are a witneſs of it. *Rom.* 2. 14, 15. Now this is called *a law of righteouſneſs*, Rom. 9. 31. becauſe it was the ſtated rule of God's juſt proceedings with the reaſonable creature, in the management of his ſpecial government over it: in which he gave him to underſtand what he was to ſtand to, and what he was to expect from him.

2. *THAT this law required of man perfect obedience to its commands, and forbad him any the leaſt tranſgreſſion on pain of death.* He was to do all, to omit none, to do nothing beſide or againſt the preſcriptions of this law. And there was a forfeiture, a penalty annexed in caſe of his failing in any of theſe reſpects. This was put to the Seal of the firſt Covenant, Gen. 2. 17. *In the day that thou eatſt there of thou ſhalt ſurely die.* And ſo it referred to every article whereto that Sacrament was a Seal. And therefore every ſin is accordingly threatned with Death. Ezek. 18. 4. *The ſoul that ſinneth, it ſhall die.*

3. *MAN by ſin is fallen under the threatning, and ſo become a priſoner of juſtice.* And that upon a double account, viz. both as a *debtor* and an *offender*: for he owes perfect obedience ſtill, and is ſuable for non-payment; and he hath provoked God, and is become a man of death for his tranſgreſſing the law. Guilt lies upon him, and is a priſon in which Juſtice holds him, and he cannot get out. Hence all men in their natural ſtate are legally dead men, *Rom.* 5. 12.

4. *THIS Juſtice muſt have ſatisfaction in order to its giving the man a diſcharge.* If the law conſent to his delivery, it muſt be anſwered in its demands; or otherwiſe the man doth not come off in way of Redemption. Till that be compounded with, the man is a lawful priſoner; and cannot truly be ſaid to be redeemed. This is the way in which Juſtice itſelf fetcheth the man out of priſon, and gives him his liberty. *Rom.* 3. 16.

(2.) *THE ſpecial nature of it, or the way in which it is done*: i. e. *by the payment of a ſufficient ranſom.* Redemption by price is the laying down of a ranſom; this therefore is aſſerted concerning Chriſt, 1 Tim. 2. 6. *Who gave himſelf a ranſom for all.* Here then,

[1] *THIS Redemption is in the way of a Ranſom.* And in this reſpect we are ſaid to be bought, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. And this is oppoſed,

1. *TO Power.* There is a power of Chriſt which is exerted in our redemption from our enemies into whoſe hands we are fallen, and who will hold us faſt till they are forced by conſtraint to let us go; as will afterwards come to be conſidered. But in the treaty with the law, there is no ſuch force uſed, but a compoſition made, and all the Articles of it fully complied withal. And for this reaſon Chriſt is ſaid *to be made under the law, that he might redeem us*, Gal 4. 4.

2. *TO Prayers or Supplications.* Our deliverance out of the hands of Juſtice is not by way of Petition, but Satisfaction. He hath not begged us, but bought us out of the hands of Juſtice. We are freed by way of exchange. There is indeed an interceſſion which is made by Chriſt in purſuit of his

Prieſtly

Priestly Office, in which respect he is our Advocate, but that is for the application of his Redemption to those for whom it was undertaken. But he did not obtain that by Prayers, but paid for it. How that was, will afterwards be observed.

[2.] *IN this Ransom there was a sufficient price laid down for the utmost satisfaction of Justice on their account.* The law was fulfilled in it, according to, *Matth.* 5. 17. It was a very great price that was laid down. *The redemption of Souls is precious*, Psal. 49. 8. A Princes ransom is another ghess thing to that of a condemned person. It was an exceeding transcendent price; there is none comparable to it. If all the Earth, and Seas, and Stars too, were massy Gold, Diamonds and Carbuncles, they were of no worth in valuation with this. 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. Uncountable *Hecatombs* of Sacrifices signify nothing in competition with it. *Mich.* 6. 8. It was a full proportionable price to the full demands of what Justice could possibly make; not the least ἰῶτα of the law was overlook'd in it. *Matth.* 5. 18. It wrought a perfect agreement between mercy and truth, righteousness and peace. *Psal.* 81. 10. There is nothing abated in the severity of the law, but it hath all that it requires.

[3.] *THE way in which it comes to be a Redemption price for any of fallen men*, viz. it was paid according to agreement. A Sum doth not properly or truly bear the denomination of a Redemption, because of the sufficient intrinsical worth or value of it: and therefore in all such Redemptions there is a compounding for, and then a payment of the Ransom. Here let these things be taken notice of,

1. *THAT man is by sin become a lawful prisoner of Justice.* He is shut up under it. *Gal.* 3. 23. He is therefore called a lawful captive. The Justice of God hath warrantably made a siezure of him, as one who is righteously exposed to the severity of it. His mouth must be stopped, he hath nothing to plead against it. *Rom.* 3. 19. He hath brought himself by his own default into this unhappy condition.

2. *THAT the case is Criminal.* It is true, as was but now observed, he owes obedience to the law as a due debt, but yet the default of non-payment of that debt is a crime. Sins of omission bring him under the threatning, and render him a man of death; the curse runs so, Gal. 3. 10. *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.* But he is not only short of actual obedience, but a direct transgressor, and hath done the things that are worthy of death, and against which the law hath pronounced a most fearful sentence: so that he stands impeached before God's Tribunal.

3. *THAT it is at God's liberty whether he will take any satisfaction for the life of the sinner, and so discharge him.* He that hath a Captive of war in his hands, or a Criminal in point of law, is at his choice whether he will let him be redeemed or no, or make his life to go for it. He is in his hands, and he hath the power of life or death over him: it is therefore an act of mercy to such a prisoner if he will at all let him escape, upon the payment of any price. And for this Reason, this is ascribed to the arbitrary Sovereignty of the will of God, *Rom.* 9. 18. *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy.*

4. *HENCE there must intervene a Covenant contract, to render this price effectual.* There is no wrong done if a man offer that which may be thought of more value, for the saving the life of a condemned malefactor, though the Judge refuse it, and resolve he shall die for it: but when, the matter is compounded, then Justice requires the discharge of the prisoner, upon the payment made: so that, though there is a sufficiency in this price of it self, and there must be so, as will be evidenced, yet we must have an eye to the Covenant of suretiship if we would be satisfied how it becomes a Ransom. That there was such a redemption as this indented for, we have already observed in the consideration of the Covenant: and that it hath been paid in full, and a discharge given on the account of it, will be manifest when we have considered this work in its parts; in which there will appear to be nothing wanting for the compleating of it.

USE. *WHAT abundant cause have we then to celebrate this rich kindness of God to poor man, in that he hath provided a Redemption for him?* The greatness of this favour will be more especially set forth in the following consideration, but yet here is that which may make it admirable, for us to think that when man by his own fault had made himself beyond conception miserable, and that by giving the highest provocation to the great God, who might now have fallen upon him in his just displeasure, and glorified his revenging Justice on him in his ruin, God did of himself lay in for his recovery; and when the man could do nothing for himself, sent him a Redemption, as Psal. 111. 9. *He sent redemption to his people, he hath commanded his covenant for ever; holy and reverend in his name.* We must say this is the Lord's own doing, and ought we not to account it marvellous? How much hath God herein displayed of his good will to men? And what a door of hope is there hereby set open to miserable sinners, that they may escape the wrath of God, and vengeance of Hell? Let us then with all humble thankfulness entertain the report of these glad tidings; and looking upon our selves to be deeply concerned therein: Let it encourage and quicken us to make out after an interest in it, by seeking unto God for it, in the way which he hath revealed in his holy Gospel, according to the invitation therein made to us. That so, through the vertue of this Redemption we may obtain eternal Salvation.

[OCTOBER 30. 1694.]

SERMON *LXXIX.*

2. IT follows that we enquire into the *Neceſſity of ſuch a Redemption in order to the Salvation of fallen man.* For the clearing up whereof we need look no farther than that rule of ſpecial Government which God at firſt put mankind under, and according to which he leads them to an everlaſting ſtate, which may be laid open in the following Concluſions,

1. *THAT God hath an abſolute Sovereignty over all the works of his hands.* There is no diſpute to be made of the divine Prerogative. If a potter challengeth an arbitrary power over the lump of clay, which yet is his fellow-clay; what may not God do over all ſecond beings, to whom he gives, not only their form, but their whole being? God himſelf therefore ſo argues, *Jer.* 18. *begin.* The creature is entirely his; he was under no obligation to give it a being; he made it at his pleaſure, and for his pleaſure. *Rev.* 4. 11. He may then do with it what he pleaſeth: he may make what he will of it, and do what he will with it, and do it no wrong. And ſo all his poſitive precepts are ſigned with the aſſerting of this Supremacy, *I am the Lord.* And this is reaſon enough to ſilence us under all his Providences, when we can give no other.

2. *THAT God made man to glorify him actively, and gave him a nature fitted for it.* God indeed expects, and will have his glory by all his creatures; they were made for the manifeſtation of it; but he hath it not from all in the ſame way and after the ſame manner. There are ſome creatures that do only bear the ſtamp or character of his perfections upon them, and are therefore ſaid to glorify him *paſſively*. There are other creatures whoſe buſineſs & duty it is, to read and collect thoſe remarks of the divine perfections that are to be obſerved in the works of Creation and Providence; and reflect them back to the God of them, by a ſuitable acknowledgment of him in regard of them, which is done by praiſing, honouring and glorifying of him on their account; and this is it that he requires of man. Pſal. 111. 2. *The works of the Lord are great, ſought out of all them that have pleaſure therein.* Pſal. 107. *ult. Whoſo is wiſe, and will obſerve theſe things, even they ſhall underſtand the loving kindneſs of the Lord.* And as he may do ſo on prerogative, ſo he hath in wiſdom given to man ſuch a nature as is fitted for ſuch an employment; a more noble nature than to other ſublunary beings. *Job* 35. 10. He gave him an underſtanding able to read, and a will able to chuſe, and affections ſuited to purſue this end; and hence he requires nothing of him but what is reaſonable; for God always uſeth his wiſdom in exerting his ſovereignty; and it would have been vain to have expected that of him, which it was impoſſible for him to do: but ſuch a creature is adapted to ſuch a way of ſerving his creator. Hence that, Job 28. 28. *And unto man he ſaid, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom, and to depart from evil is underſtanding.*

3. *THAT God gave to man a rule ſuited to that nature, according to which he would be glorified by him; and a principle impowering him to comply with that rule.* God's government of his creatures is by a rule: and as there is a way which he hath deviſed and laid out to himſelf according to which he ordereth all things, called *his counſel*, *Eph.* 1. 11. So there is a law which he hath given to ſuch creatures as are *cauſes by counſel*, in which he hath ſhewn them what is the obedience which he expects of them, *Mich.* 6. 8. *Job* 28. 28. Now this rule is fitted to the nature of ſuch a creature; and was accordingly written on man's heart at firſt, and he was able by the light of nature to read it. And hence there is ſo much to be read in the remains of that light on the natural conſcience, as *Rom.* 2. 14. *For when the Gentiles, which have not the law do by nature the things contained in the law, theſe having not the law, are a law unto themſelves.* It was a law according to which it was convenient that ſuch a creature ſhould ſerve his maker, and there was not only juſtice, but equity too in God's requiring him ſo to do. It is therefore call'd a *reaſonable ſervice*, Rom. 12. 1. And that man might have no plea to excuſe his neglect of this ſervice, God endowed him with an inward moral principle, diſpoſing him to, and enabling him for obedience. This is the ſanctification which was upon all his faculties and powers, which is called the image of God; which conſiſted in righteouſneſs and true holineſs, *Eph.* 4. 24. And for that reaſon it is ſaid, Eccl. 7. 29. *God made man upright.* Without it man could not have obeyed, and therefore by the loſs of it he is become impotent, *Rom.* 5. 6. But he had it at firſt, and is therefore every way inexcuſable if he neglect to do that which God both requires of him, and furniſheth him for.

4. *THAT becauſe God would diſplay his Juſtice in purſuance of this rule, he therefore added ſanctions to it, to the performance whereof he obliged himſelf.* Here obſerve,

1. *THAT God intended a peculiar manifeſtation of his Juſtice in his dealing with man.* That God is eſſentially juſt is not to be queſtioned; and indeed he can do no wrong. The Apoſtle argues, Rom. 3. 5, 6. *But if our unrighteouſneſs commend the righteouſneſs of God, what ſhall we ſay? is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I ſpeak as a man) God forbid: for then how ſhall God judge the world?* Now this is one of thoſe perfections which he would illuſtrate in his ſpecial government. It is true, he is juſt in all his ways, (*Pſal.* 145. 17.) But there is a more particular diſcovery of this in his treating with Men and Angels: and for that reaſon there is a particular judgment appointed for theſe to paſs, Acts 17. 31. *Becauſe he*

hath

hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteouſneſs, by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given aſſurance unto all men, in that he hath raiſed him from the dead. Where by the world we are to underſtand Men and Angels.

2. *THAT God therefore conſtituted this law to be a rule of his Juſtice in his proceedings with men.* There is a relation between God and man, as he is their Governour, and they are his Subjects; and this is the foundation of his relative Juſtice; which is not left arbitrary, but proceeds according to a rule under which he obliged them by his ſovereign pleaſure. *Relative Juſtice* therefore ſuppoſeth ſuch a law: elſe the creature can never know what it hath to ſtand to. It is *diſtributive Juſtice* that is here concerned; for as to commutative Juſtice, there is no room for it between God and his creature; ſince it hath its all from him, and owes its all to him. And that is adminiſtred in the applying of rewards or puniſhments, according to the creatures demeanour of it ſelf; and that muſt reſpect ſome rule, elſe it cannot be called Juſtice: and this rule was contained in the law which God gave to man at firſt; unto which he was to ſtand or fall at God's Tribunal. Hence that, Rom. 2. 6 *Who will render to every man according to his deeds.*

3. *THAT he might manifeſt his Juſtice in this way he did two things,*

(1.) *HE added ſanctions to this law.* A law becomes a rule of relative Juſtice, not meerly by the preceptive and prohibitory part of it, but by the ſanctions that are added to it; in the former it tells man what is his duty, and is expected of him; but in the latter it gives him to underſtand what he is to ſtand to, and what he ſhall have by his obedience or diſobedience. Hence God ratifieth this law into ſuch a rule, by the *promiſe* and the *threatning* that was annexed to it. The promiſe was implied in the threatning, when God ſaid he ſhould die in caſe of diſobedience, he inſinuated that he ſhould live upon his obedience. And we are told that it was ſo, Rom. 10. 4. *For Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth.* The threatning indeed was nextly connected with the Sacrament of the Covenant, *Gen.* 2. 17. but it muſt needs refer to the whole law to which it was put as a Sacrament; and that was nothing leſs than death. Now by theſe two God declared unto man what he was to ſtand to, and there fixed the way of the procedure of Juſtice.

(2.) *HE obliged himſelf to the performance of theſe ſanctions.* And indeed it was by this obligation that he ratified the rule of relative Juſtice. And the manner of declaring the threatning, (*Gen.* 2. 17.) ſignifies this obligation. God is a God of truth, if he ſaith he will do a thing, he will certainly do it, whether it be in a promiſe or threatning. Hence that, 1 Sam. 15. 29. *The ſtrength of Iſrael will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man that he ſhould repent.* *Eve* miſinterpreted it when ſhe ſo expreſt it in, *Gen.* 3. 3. God did not reſerve it as a matter arbitrary, but reſolved that he would celebrate his Juſtice in purſuance of this law to the leaſt tittle of it; Chriſt therefore who well underſtood God's mind in it hath ſo declared, Mat. 5. 18. *For verily I ſay unto you, Till heaven and earth paſs, one jot or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled.*

5. *IN the ratifying of this rule with our firſt parents, God treated with the whole kind in them.* When God created the *Angels*, he not only made ſome of that *ſpecies*, but all the *Individuals*, and accordingly every one was to ſtand or fall for himſelf: and hence eventually, there were ſome that kept their integrity, and others that left their firſt ſtation and fell. But when God created man, he made only one man, and one woman, and called their name *Adam*, which is a common name for the whole ſpecies. *Gen.* 5. 2. and having made them the head of their poſterity, he tranſacted with them as ſo, not only by giving them a rule for all men to obſerve, but alſo by comprimizing all humanity, as derivable from them in the channel of natural generation, in them; of whom theſe ſtood as repreſentatives, in whom they were to ſtand or fall; that God might ſo do, belongs to his prerogative; the equity of it is confirmed by the common practice of men according to the light of nature, and will be fully cleared up one day by him who is the Judge of quick & dead. And that he did ſo do is evident in the word of God. 1 Cor. 15. 22. *For as in Adam all die, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.* Rom. 5. 12, 18. *Wherefore as by one man ſin entred into the world, and death by ſin: and ſo death paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned. Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation.* Nor doth it any way invalidate this to plead, as ſome do, that this intends only a bodily temporal death; unqueſtionably it is the ſame death that was in the threatning, *Gen.* 2. 17. and what that contained in it, let the whole word of God determine. It was that death which contained under it the whole puniſhment of ſin, and ſee the *Antitheſis*, Rom. 6. 23. *For the wages of ſin is death: but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.*

6. *HENCE by* Adam's *Apoſtacy his whole race are involved in guilt.* We have formerly taken the account of this. That our firſt parents did, by their eating the forbidden fruit, violate the Covenant obligation they ſtood in unto God, and thereby bring upon themſelves the whole curſe of the law; and that this curſe is derived by that tranſgreſſion to their *progeny*, hath been diſtinctly handled in its place; and the inference which is firmly to be drawn from it, is that all mankind, as ſoon as they derive from this ſtock, are guilty before God: and we have obſerved, that guilt is a juſt obligation lying upon a creature

ture to ſuffer puniſhment for a tranſgreſſion againſt which the law hath denounced it. Now we are told that all the world are in this caſe, *Rom.* 3. 19. and yet there are multitudes that never committed actual ſin, and yet that they are guilty appears becauſe execution hath proceeded againſt them. And by this Argument the Apoſtle proves that the law was in force, before it was given at Mount *Sinai*, Rom. 5. 13, 14. *For until the law ſin was in the world: but ſin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheleſs, death reigned from Adam to Moſes, even over them that had not ſinned after the ſimilitude of Adams tranſgreſſion, who is the figure of him that was to come.* And if it were only a temporal death, which yet is not univerſally true, ſtill that gives evidence to the thing, becauſe it was brought in by ſin, and had the nature of a puniſhment in it; however the ſting be taken out, and it turned for good to the redeemed of the Lord.

7. *HENCE, in order to the Salvation of fallen man there muſt be a removal of this guilt.* It is vain to ſpeak of man's being ſaved as long as he is under guilt. Guilt hath all miſeries involved in it, and is a cloſe priſon holding the man faſt, and he cannot poſſibly break looſe. It binds him over to the judgment, where he that is found guilty, cannot eſcape the damnation of hell; and the righteous Judge will proceed accordingly without any reſpect of perſons. There muſt then be ſome way found to take this off, and deliver the ſinner from it, or elſe his ſalvation is deſperate. A man cannot be guilty and happy together. It muſt therefore be ſaid of every one that is ſaved, that he *is freed from condemnation*, Rom. 8. 1.

8. *THAT for the removal of this guilt, the ſinner muſt be bought out of the hand of Juſtice, by a full ſatisfaction made to the law of it.* This concluſion neceſſarily and undeniably follows from the premiſes. This indeed is mightily oppugned and ridicul'd by the *Socinians* of our age; but it muſt needs be ſo. For,

(1.) *ALL mankind in their natural ſtate are under the law as a Covenant.* Believers indeed are under it as a *a rule of life*; but till men are gotten into the new Covenant, they are under the old one. Now to be under the law as a Covenant, is to be under the ſanctions of it; and every one muſt ſtand or fall according as he is related to the promiſe or threatning contained therein. And thus, we have heard, all *Adam's* natural poſterity ſtand related, according to, *Rom.* 3. 19.

(2.) *HENCE, by reaſon of the Apoſtacy, they are accurſed by the law.* The Apoſtle aſſerts this, Gal. 3. 16. *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.* For what elſe is it to be an accurſed creature, but to be under a law ſentence to ſuffer all the miſeries which it hath doomed its tranſgreſſors unto. Sin brought the curſe upon man, and every man is a ſinner in his natural ſtate. *Rom.* 5. 12. and by vertue of that the curſe lies heavy upon him:

(3.) *THE law diſchargeth none without full ſatisfaction.* If there be the leaſt guilt upon the perſon, it purſues him to death for it; if it be an idle word, it keeps an account of it, and will reckon with the man for it. Math. 12. 36. *But I ſay unto you, That every idle word that men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give account thereof in the day of judgment.* Nay if a man have but entertained an evil thought in him, it will proſecute and ruine him for it, if it be not forgiven him. *Act.* 8. 22. and there is no forgiveneſs without ſatisfaction. *Mat.* 5. 18.

(4.) *THE relative juſtice of God would ſuffer violence, if a ſinner ſhould be pardoned before ſatisfaction be thus given.* And hereupon the great deſign of the glorifying of this Attribute would fail; for the foundation of it is laid in the law. There muſt therefore be an agreement between mercy and juſtice, according to, *Pſal.* 85. 10. which can only be in this way. Now this ſatisfaction thus made to the law of God on the account of the ſinner, and accepted for him, is properly a Redemption; ſuch an one ſo ſatisfied for is redeemed. Hence that, Gal. 3. 13. *Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us.* If then ſuch a Satisfaction be indiſpenſibly neceſſary, ſo is Redemption.

3. *WE now come to conſider that for this it is requiſite that there be a Redeemer.* And indeed the very conſideration of Redemption neceſſarily implies it. For,

1. *REDEMPTION is performed by the payment of a price for that which is to be redeemed.* Redemption by power or force is a very improper expreſſion, though ſometimes uſed; but is not conſiderable with reſpect to the law of God which muſt have ſatisfaction. Hence that, 1 Cor. 6. 20. *For ye are bought with a price.* Now if there be ſuch a price paid, there muſt be one to pay it; and he is properly the Redeemer.

2. *IN the Redemption of fallen man the ſatisfaction muſt be made by ſuffering.* The threatning of the law is here to be reſpected. The ſentence of it muſt be complied with. Juſtice requires the blood of the ſinner, or his ſurety. Heb. 9. 22. *Without ſhedding of blood is no remiſſion.* There is a death contained in the law ſentence, and a death it will have ſomewhere; nor can it be compounded for or bought off any other way. He therefore only who ſuffers the penalty due to the ſinner in his ſtead, and ſo procures a diſcharge for him, can be ſaid to redeem him; and to him belongs the title of a Redeemer; it muſt be a perſon that doth this.

3. *REDEMPTION muſt be carried on in the way of a treaty.* And that alſo requires one to manage it under the title of a Redeemer. For there muſt be propoſals made, it being a voluntary and not a neceſſary thing: there muſt be a mutual agreement, and a diſcharge taken out, and a purſuance of the thing to effect; which cannot be done but by one who will undertake, and look upon himſelf

himſelf as concerned to proſecute the affair. A Redeemer then there muſt be; of whom we are to treat in that which follows. Here only let us in general make theſe remarks,

(1.) *THAT it is not poſſible that any man ſhould be his own Redeemer.* The very thing that is required in this affair, makes this an undeniable truth. For how ſhould any one of fallen men find in himſelf that which may give ſatisfaction to the juſtice of God. Had he a price ſufficient in his hands he might buy himſelf off, but he hath not. Could he perform perfect active obedience, that would pay no debts, being a daily rent he owes to God, and but his duty; though, if this would do, he cannot do it: but there is a paſſive obedience due; and to be redeemed from it, and yet ſuffer it in perſon, is inconſiſtent.

(2.) *THAT any perſon will not ſerve to make a Redeemer of.* There are divers things requiſite to be found in ſuch an one, which we may afterwards take notice of in Him who is our Redeemer, viz.

1. *HE muſt be one who doth not himſelf ſtand in need of Redemption.* It is impoſſible that he who is guilty by his own default, ſhould ſtand to ſatisfy for others that are ſo. If he cannot redeem himſelf, certainly he cannot do it for his brother. The law accepts not ſuretiſhip from a broken party. Pſal. 49. 7, 8. *None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ranſom for him: (For the redemption of the ſoul is precious, and it ceaſeth for ever.)*

2. *HE muſt be one that is willing to interpoſe and take this work upon him.* We obſerved that the relation is voluntary, and not natural and neceſſary. Who ſhall impoſe upon any and force him to put himſelf in the room of a guilty perſon, and ſuffer in his behalf for that which in himſelf he never deſerved? Chriſt therefore our Redeemer did it ſpontaneouſly, Pſal. 40. 7. *Then ſaid I, Lo I come.* Joh. 10. 17, 18. *Therefore doth my Father love me, becauſe I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of my ſelf: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.* For what Juſtice can make demand of ſatisfaction of another for my obligation, except he will put himſelf into the hands of the law for me?

3. *IT muſt be one that is able to make the ſatisfaction:* Elſe whatever he may be in title, he cannot in effect be a Redeemer. Juſtice therefore will accept of none but one that is reſponſible; and for this he muſt be fitted for both active and paſſive obedience, and be able to put ſuch a value upon it, as ſhall render it equivalent to what was required of all thoſe on whoſe account he undertakes; Juſtice alſo would be a loſer by him, which it muſt not be in any wiſe. It is therefore one of Chriſt's titles, that he is *mighty to ſave*, Iſai. 63. 1. And hence that, Pſal. 89. 19. *Then thou ſpakeſt in viſion to thy holy One, and ſaidſt, I have laid help upon one that is mighty: I have exalted one choſen out of the people.*

4. *HE muſt be one whom God will accept of in this affair.* Not only is it voluntary in the undertaker to redeem, but in him who hath the captive in his power to allow him a Redemption; in as much as he is a lawful priſoner, and at the arbitrary diſpoſe of him into whoſe hands he is fallen: ſo that if he refuſe ever to grant him liberty on any account, and deſpiſeth the greateſt offers that are made, he is not to be impeached of injuſtice, becauſe it is a thing arbitrary. And therefore it is not for nothing, that we have the intimations given of the acceptance that Chriſt had with God on this account. Hence that, Mat. 3. 17. *And lo, a voice from heaven, ſaying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.*

USE I. *LEARN hence how much our Reſtitution coſt the Son of God.* Though it comes to us on free coſt, in a way of free and rich Grace, yet he paid a great Sum for the procurement of it. If he could be our reſtorer in no other way but by becoming our Redeemer, and he could not be ſo, but by making compleat ſatisfaction to the law and juſtice of God in our ſtead, how much then may we conceive that this ſtood him in? The Apoſtle puts an *Emphaſis* upon it in, 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. *For as much as ye know that we were not redeemed with corruptible things, as ſilver and gold: But with the precious blood of Chriſt, as of a lamb without blemiſh & without ſpot.* How much then is his infinite love to poor ſinners diſplayed in this, and how glorious a luſtre doth the conſideration hereof put upon it? Well might the Apoſtle put ſuch obſervations upon it, Gal. 2. 20. *I am crucified with Chriſt. Nevertheleſs I live; yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me: and the life which I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himſelf for me.* Eph. 3. 19. *And to know the love of Chriſt, which paſſeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulneſs of God.* And accordingly repreſent it before us as a thing that is without a parallel, Rom. 5. 7, 8. *For ſcarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man ſome would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet ſinners Chriſt died for us.* And this he did for us when we were caſt out to the loathing of our perſons, and there was none eye that ſo much as pitied us.

USE II. *HENCE what ſtrong obligations doth this Redemption lay us under, to love, praiſe and glorify our Redeemer.* The Apoſtle reckoned it argument enough to lay Chriſtians under an everlaſting obligation to this duty, 1 Cor. 6. 20. *For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your ſpirit, which are God's.* And doubtleſs he had this on his heart, when he uttered that fearful execration, 1 Cor. 16. 22. *If any man love not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, let him be Anathema,*

thema, Maranatha. We therefore have ſuch inſinuations of the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 107. 1, 2. *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever, Let the redeemed of the Lord ſay ſo, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy.* Labour we then all, both Young and Old, to get a title to this Redemption, and the apprehenſion of it in our ſelves; and then let us make this improvement of it, to put our ſelves upon making it our ſtudy what to render to him for ſo great a benefit: and by meditating on the excellency and admirableneſs of it, to enkindle an holy zeal in us, in purſuance of the mortification of ſin, and all manner of holy converſation, according to the teachings of the grace of God. *Tit.* 2. 11, 12.

[DECEMBER 25. 1694.]

SERMON *LXXX.*

QUESTION XXI.

WHO is the Redeemer of GOD's Elect?

ANSWER.

The only Redeemer of GOD's Elect, is the Lord JESUS CHRIST, who being the Eternal Son of GOD became Man, and ſo was, and continues to be GOD and Man, in two diſtinct Natures, and one Perſon for ever.

HAVING conſidered of the nature and neceſſity of Man's Redemption, and that for it, it was requiſite that there ſhould be a Redeemer. As alſo, how this affair was ſettled in an eternal compact. We are now to proceed to a more diſtinct enquiry into this myſterious and aſtoniſhing Redemption. And here two things will come under our contemplation. 1. The Perſon of the Redeemer together with his Fitneſs for ſuch a Work; which is pointed at in the ſix ſubſequent Queſtions. 2. His Execution of this Work, in two Queſtions more.

I. *THE Perſon of the Redeemer together with his Fitneſs for ſuch a Work.* Touching the Perſon himſelf, I ſhall not inſiſt on a diſtinct conſideration of him, ſeparate from the conſideration of his fitneſs to redeem, where there will be occaſion to treat of it. Only in general obſerve, That the ſame Perſon who undertook this province in the Covenant of Redemption, was he that engaged in, and went through it in purſuance of that Covenant. Who, as we have obſerved, was no other but *the eternal Son of God, the ſecond Perſon in the ſacred Trinity*, who in reſpect to the deſign he was proſecuting is called *Jeſus a Saviour:* and with regard to his unction to it is called *Chriſt*, God's anointed. Let us then paſs over to the ſpeculation of his fitneſs to redeem. That the Son of God might actually redeem us, it was requiſite that he ſhould be every way fitted and furniſhed for his work. And for this there were two things neceſſary. (1.) That he might be furniſhed for the work it ſelf. (2.) That his work might be accepted and ſo become effectual to accompliſh the end for which it was undertaken. And hereupon there are two things to be looked upon as belonging to this preparation of his, viz. His Incarnation, and his Unction. The former of theſe is laid open to us in this Queſtion, and that which follows; the latter in the Four that come after, which we may accordingly look into.

1. *THE firſt thing in Chriſt's fitneſs to Redeem is his Incarnation.* It may not be amiſs to give the reaſon why we are to aſſign it hither; ſince it is a conſideration of weight, and hath afforded matter of diſpute. That the Incarnation of the Son of God hath a proper reſpect to his Redemption is undeniable, without it he had not been, could not be our Redeemer, as will be afterwards made evidently to appear. Now it is certain that this Incarnation is no part of the work it ſelf; nor doth it belong to either of them. There are two parts aſſigned to the work of Redemption wrought out by Chriſt, viz. His Humiliation, and Exaltation. I know of none that aſſign it to his Exaltation, but divers do to his Humiliation. Now that Chriſt's Incarnation is no part of his Humiliation may be ſufficiently demonſtrated. By Chriſt's *Incarnation* we underſtand, *the aſſumption of an humane nature by the Son of God into union with his Perſon*; of which we are to conſider afterwards. Now that this aſſumption did not belong to his Humiliation as a part of it will be made to appear by theſe things,

(1.) *IF this belongs to his Humiliation, then he was actually humbled by vertue of this aſſumption, which he was not.* If indeed we reckon his humbling himſelf for any act of his condeſcendency to his creatures, ſo it may be acknowledged. So God himſelf is ſaid to humble himſelf, *Pſal.* 113. 6. But if we take it as we do here, for his debaſing himſelf, it cannot be affirmed of it. For it muſt be either in reſpect to the nature aſſuming, or aſſumed; but in neither. Not in regard of the nature *aſſuming*, which was divine, for that is in it ſelf incapable of being humbled or abaſed; and he therefore took our nature on him that he might be humbled in it. *Phil.* 2. 7. Nor in reſpect of the nature *aſſumed*, which was humane, for that was indeed exalted and honoured by this

this aſſumption: for, though it hereby loſt its diſtinct humane perſonality, yet it gained a more glorious condition, in being of the Perſon of the Son of God.

Againſt this it is Objected,

Obj. *THAT it was in regard of neither nature by it ſelf, both of both in conjunction meeting in Chriſt in the ſtate of a Mediator.*

To which I reply,

1. *THAT the conjunction of his two natures belongs to his Incarnation.* And hence if by this conjunction he was humbled, it muſt refer to one of the two, which renders the conjunction to be a debaſing of Chriſt: for ſtill it is true, that the Perſon himſelf is divine, and hath nothing added to him but the relation of the aſſumed humanity; which relation doth no way diminiſh his eternal glory; nor is that nature made more low by it.

2. *THAT Chriſt's Incarnation did not of it ſelf put him into the ſtate of a Mediator.* It only fitted him for it, but it was his Office that made him ſo; ſo that he was, in order of nature incarnate antecedently to his bearing of his mediatorial Offices. For they were given him conſidered as God and Man in one Perſon.

(2.) *CHRIST's Humiliation was that part of his Redemption in and by which he made ſatisfaction to the law of God on our account.* But his Incarnation made no part of this ſatisfaction. The Humiliation of Chriſt is, by all the *Orthodox*, accounted to be that which in all the parts of it referred to the ſatisfaction of the juſtice of God; but he did not ſatisfy by taking our nature, only he became capable of it.

AND whereas it is here objected, *That Chriſt was humbled in his very Incarnation; and hence it muſt needs be a part of his Humiliation.* It may be readily anſwered; That becauſe that things are together, it doth not follow that they are the ſame: and ſome things may be together in time, and one in order of nature before the other. There were but two ſtates in which Chriſt was to be, referring to Redemption, for both of which he was to take our nature, viz. Humiliation and Exaltation; and he muſt therefore of neceſſity no ſooner be in our nature, but be in one of them. Now his Humiliation was the firſt, being to make way for his Exaltation, which was the reward of it. *Phil.* 2. 7,8,9. Hence he was no ſooner Incarnate, but he was in a ſtate of Humiliation; and together with our nature, he took the infirmities of it upon him. Yet we are to diſtinguiſh between the aſſumption it ſelf, and the quality he put himſelf into when he aſſumed it. Chriſt was firſt to appear in our nature in a ſtate of Humiliation, when therefore he took our nature, he put himſelf into a debaſed ſtate, but all the conſiderations of that debaſed condition, were only adjuncts of his Incarnation, and not eſſential to it: and theſe adjuncts were not only ſeperable, but in due time ſeparated. Hence,

(3.) *CHRIST's Incarnation bore an equal reſpect to his Humiliation and his Exaltation.* And hence may as properly be called a part of the one as of the other. Chriſt as God is capable of neither, but he became man that he might be capacitated for both of them. *Phil.* 2. 6. &c. It is in our nature that he was humbled, and it is in the ſame nature that he is exalted. So that if his Incarnation be part of his Humiliation, we muſt neceſſarily conclude either that when his work of Humiliation was done, he laid aſide or put off our nature again; or elſe that, being ſtill Incarnate, he remains in a ſtate of Humiliation now he is in Glory; and conſequently that the work of ſatisfaction is not performed, upon which he was to be exalted, which we neither do, can, or may believe. It then properly belongs to his fitting or preparation for this great work, and is accordingly here to be enquired into.

IN the farther proſecution of this Article, we are led by the *Catechiſm* to take notice of two things, 1. The nature of this Incarnation; in the preſent Queſtion. 2. The manner of it, in that which follows.

1. *IN our enquiry into the nature of it, there are two things we may lay out our thoughts about.* 1. The neceſſity of it. 2. The Incarnation it ſelf.

Firſt. TOUCHING the *neceſſity* of it. The enquiry may be; *Why muſt the Son of God become Man in order to his being a fit Perſon to be a Redeemer?*

A. IN reply to which let it be obſerved in general, *That the Son of God, having in the Covenant of Redemption undertaken the province of a Redeemer, did therein engage to perform all that was requiſite to make him effectually ſo.* Now there were ſuch things neceſſary to be gone through by ſuch an one, as required his being a man, ſo that he could no way keep covenant with his Father, but by ſuch an aſſumption. Here then are two things worthy our taking notice of. 1. That the Perſon of the Redeemer muſt needs be God. 2. That he could not be our Redeemer without being Man too. A word or two of each.

(1.) *THAT the Perſon of our Redeemer muſt needs be God.* Such is the work, that no other could have engaged in and gone through it. It muſt have broken the back of the ſtrongeſt Angel of Heaven, though they excell in ſtrength. There was *Omnipotence* requiſite to the diſcharge of this affair. That is therefore one of his titles, Iſai. 9. 6. *The mighty God.* Iſai. 63. 1. *Mighty to ſave.* He muſt be God on a threefold account.

1. *TO ſuſtain his humane nature in and under its work.* It was more than ſuch a frail thing could go through and not ſink and break under it, if it had not been ſupported by his divine power. To bear the whole weight of the wrath of God due to ſinners, and to hold out and go through, and not be ſwallowed up with it, required infinite

ſtrength to ſupport him,and on this account, he is ſaid to *offer himſelf by the eternal ſpirit*, Heb. 9. 14.

2. *TO put the value into his obedience whereby it might be ſatisfactory to the juſtice of God.* It muſt be precious blood indeed that was able to redeem us. Hence that in, 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. *Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things,—but with the precious blood of Chriſt, as of a lamb without blemiſh and without ſpot,* And if the reaſon of its being ſo precious be asked, we are ſufficiently anſwered, becauſe it was the blood of God. *Acts* 20. 28. It was an infinite debt we had contracted, and it muſt be infinite ſatisfaction that could pay it, for the Redemption of ſo many millions as are to be made happy by it for ever: and the value of this ſatisfaction muſt flow from the worth of his Perſon. He muſt then be God.

3. *TO be fit to purſue this Redemption to efficacy* That he might with boldneſs appear before God for us, to demand the Salvation of his Redeemed. He is a mediating Redeemer; and could not be ſo but in being God as well as Man. He muſt be able to lay his hand upon both God and man, *Job* 9. 33. and therefore muſt participate in the nature of both.

(2.) *THAT he could not be our Redeemer without being Man alſo.* This will appear on the conſideration of theſe things,

1. *THAT in the reſtoring of man from miſery to felicity, reſpect is to be had to the Covenant of Works.* God will not leap over that Covenant to ſave one of the children of men. He hath made it ſurer than Heaven or Earth, *Mat.* 5. 18. It was the firſt fixed rule of relative Juſtice between God and man. It muſt therefore be complied with in the whole tenor of it. If any receive a reward of glory, it muſt be upon a perfect obedience to it, for to that was the promiſe connected. If any be delivered from the curſe of it, after he hath incurred it by diſobedience, the threatned miſery muſt be ſuffered. If man be ſaved, *mercy* and *truth* muſt meet. *Pſal.* 85. 10. Proviſion muſt be made that God may as well *be juſt as be a juſtifier of any*, Rom. 3. 26.

2. *HENCE be that is man's Redeemer muſt be one able to comply with that Covenant on this account.* Man being himſelf fallen ſhort of this obedience, cannot be his own Redeemer, but muſt look for it from another. Now man's Redemption is not a meer work of power, but of righteouſneſs too; in which reſpect the revelation of it is called, *the revelation of the righteouſneſs of God*, Rom. 3. 21. So that although Chriſt be almighty in reſpect of his God-head, yet if he cannot perform for man this righteouſneſs which the law demands, in that nature which is omnipotent, that nature is not ſufficient to conſtitute him an able Redeemer; but there muſt be ſomething elſe to render him ſo.

3. *IT is requiſite that man's Redeemer be ſubject to the law of Juſtice which was given to man.* For if he muſt anſwer it and yield full ſatisfaction to it, he muſt be in ſubjection to it. It muſt be able to charge upon him all that it had againſt them whom he ranſoms, and accordingly, arraign, judge, condemn and do execution upon him in purſuit of that charge: how elſe ſhould it recover its own of him? The law can come upon none but ſuch as are under the command of it, and ſubjected to it. He is therefore ſaid *to be made under the law, that he might redeem ſuch*, Gal. 4. 4,5. Now he was not capable of this as he was God. The law-maker, who is abſolutely ſupream, cannot come under the cenſure of his own law.

4. *THE law of the firſt Covenant hath none but man for its ſubject.* When God Covenanted with man, it was with him as he was ſuch a *ſpecies* of being; the whole kind were contracted in our firſt parents, and with them all, & none elſe, was that compact made: it was to man the precept was directed. *Job* 28. 28. and to him was the promiſe and threatning. *Gen.* 2. 17. So that this law can challenge ſubjection of none but one that is a man, and of *Adam's* race and lineage. Chriſt therefore was firſt made of a woman, that ſo he might be under the law. Hence the connection, *Gal.* 4. 4. Had he aſſumed any other nature, it would not have done. To have taken an *Angelical* nature, would have done us no kindneſs. This is deſigned in that emphatical expreſſion, Heb. 2. 16. *For verily he took not on him the nature of angels: but he took on him the ſeed of Abraham.* They therefore who deny the Incarnation of the Son of God, pluck up a neceſſary foundation of man's hope for Salvation. Had not the Word been made fleſh, we ſhould never have ſeen God in glory. In ſum, had Chriſt been meer man, he had been too weak; had he been only God and not man, he had not been fit to be our Redeemer, as the caſe ſtood with us upon the apoſtacy under which we lay.

Secondly. WE now paſs to the conſideration of the Incarnation it ſelf, according as it is laid down in the Anſwer before us. Which we may take an account of in four particulars, (1.) The Perſon aſſuming our nature. (2.) The nature which was aſſumed by him. (3.) The aſſumption it ſelf, where we are to obſerve the diſtinction and union of theſe two natures. (4.) We may add to look into the communion between them, which follows upon the former.

I. *FOR the Perſon aſſuming our nature.* We are told that it was *the Eternal Son of God.* The Apoſtle commending the doctrine of godlineſs for a great myſtery, makes this the firſt article in which it appears to be ſo, 1 Tim 3 16. *And without controverſy, great is the myſtery of godlineſs: God was manifeſt in the fleſh.* And when the Prophet would give us the letters of Chriſt's name, the *firſt* is, *Wonderful.* Iſai. 9. 6. And indeed every point in this Incarnation of Chriſt is a wonder too

too aſtoniſhing for us to comprehend; the cleareſt eyes of our weak underſtandings are not able to gaze on this light without dazling: and therefore it is our ſafeſt way to let faith embrace the truth of divine revelation, in believing that it is ſo; which we have reaſon enough to do, becauſe God hath ſaid it; although if we critically examine at our bar how it *is* or *can be*, we muſt be non-pluſt, and put to ſilence. I ſhall therefore here only give you Scriptural evidence for the proving the truth of two aſſertions,

(1.) *THAT the Perſon aſſuming our nature was true God.* As this belongs to each Perſon in the ſacred Trinity, ſo the word of God abundantly confirms it concerning the Perſon of the Redeemer.

1. *THE divine Names are there given to him.* And not only ſuch as are ſometimes given to men; as *Pſal.* 82. 6. but the incommunicable name, *Jehovah*, which peculiarly notes the divine eſſence, and, as ſome *Criticks* obſerve, ſounds as much as, he who was, is, and is to come: and was never in Scripture aſcribed to any meer creature. See, *Gen.* 18. 14. *Pſal.* 68. 19. and; *I am*, which is alſo peculiar; compare, *Exod.* 3. 14. with *Joh.* 8. 58. which notes the enjoyment of himſelf in an *eternal now.*

2. *THE divine incommunicable Attributes are there aſcribed to him as his right and propriety.* So *Prov.* 8. 22. *Joh.* 1. 1. *Eternity* is acknowledged to him. *Omnipotency*, Rev. 1. 3. *Ubiquity*, or incomprehenſible Omnipreſcence, *Mat.* 28. *ult. Omniſcience*, Joh. 2. 24, 25. *Immutability*, Heb. 13. 8. and many other inſtances might be reckoned up.

3. *HE is equal to God, and therefore muſt needs be God.* There is no compariſon, much leſs any equality between God and a creature. *Pſal.* 89. 6. *Iſai.* 40. 17. God is equalled by none but himſelf, and yet ſee Phil. 2. 6. *Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.* And for that reaſon the Lord of hoſts calls him *his fellow*, Zech. 13. 7. And what ſaith Chriſt himſelf of himſelf, Joh. 10. 30. *I and my Father are one.*

4. *HE performs divine works, or ſuch as none but God can do, in his own name, and by his own power.* Meer creatures have indeed been inſtrumental, but not in their own name, but his, *Acts* 3. 6. nor their own vertue, but his, *ver.* 12, 13. But Chriſt co-operates with his Father in all his great works. Joh. 5. 17, 19. *But Jeſus anſwered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, The Son can do nothing of himſelf, but what he ſeeth the Father do: for what things ſoever he doth, theſe alſo doth the Son likewiſe.* And in his own name, Mat. 8. 3. *And Jeſus put forth his hand and touched him ſaying, I will, be thou clean, And immediately his leproſy was cleanſed.* The blind ſaw, the deaf heard, the dead lived at his pleaſure. Yea the work of *Creation* is aſſigned to him, Joh. 1. 3. *All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* Heb. 1. 2. *By whom alſo he made the worlds.* And the great works of *Providence*, Joh. 5. 21. *For as the Father raiſeth up the dead and quickneth them: even ſo the Son quickneth whom he will.*

5. *HE hath the form of God.* Phil. 2. 6. According to our conception, things are differenced by their forms; that therefore which hath the ſame form is the ſame thing; and if it be an individual form it is the ſame individual thing; and ſo it muſt be here, for God is but One. And hereupon, that which we call the definition of God is proper to him. It is the ſpecial nature of the Deity, to have life of it ſelf, and ſo hath Chriſt, Joh. 5. 26. *For as the Father hath life in himſelf: ſo hath he given the Son to have life in himſelf.*

6. *HE is the object of Faith.* Divine confidence for eternal life is to be placed on him as well as on God. Joh. 14. 1. *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe alſo in me.* Yea, faith on him is enough to give a man title to ſalvation. Joh. 3. 16. — *Whoſoever believeth in him, ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* And men are eternally happy or miſerable, according as they believe or believe not on him. *ver.* 36. Now no meer creature can be the object of our faith.

(2.) *THE Perſon aſſuming our nature was the Son of God, or the Second Perſon in the bleſſed Trinity.* It was not the God-head or divine eſſence abſolutely conſidered; though, how all ſhould be but one God, and yet but one of theſe Perſons aſſume, is beyond our fathoming; yet it is no where aſcribed to any of the other, but ever to him: Nor to the whole Deity abſtractly conſidered. It was the divine Wiſdom that was with God from eternity, *Prov.* 8. 22. It was the Word, *Joh.* 1. 14. the Son, *Gal.* 4. 4. We are then to believe it to be, though we know not how it is. And if we cannot reach the underſtanding of the diſtinction of the perſons themſelves, how ſhould we ſee through this?

II. *THE nature aſſumed was Humane.* So we are told, that the Eternal Son of God *became Man.* But of the particular manner of this, we ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak under the following Queſtion, to which I refer it. Only let us obſerve that he took this nature upon him, into union with his divine perſon truly and really; as the word of God abundantly teſtifies. And for that reaſon it is that he ſo often calls himſelf, *the Son of man.*

USE I. *LEARN we hence what ground of confidence we have to look for compleat Redemption from Chriſt.* Is our Redeemer God? Well then may he be ſaid to be mighty. If he had been leſs than God, well might our faith ſtumble. How could any other have born the eternal weight of divine wrath, and not have ſunk under it? How could he have broken thoſe everlaſting bars of divine Juſtice that held us faſt, had he not been God? Had he had the force of all the Creation in one, it would not have done it. To deny Chriſt to be God, is to undermine our faith; nor ſhall we ever be able to give a good reaſon of our

hope, unleſs we firmly believe him to be a divine Perſon. But what cannot he do for us who is God?

USE II. *STAND ſtill and contemplate the admirable condeſcendency of the Son of God, who, to bring about the Salvation of fallen man, cauſed time and eternity to meet in one.* The infinite Being to tabernacle in an houſe of clay: how highly hath he dignified our nature above that of Angels? And how glorioufly hath he favoured us, that to do us good, he was pleaſed to become one of us? And becauſe we could not elſe have been Redeemed, rather than to ſuffer us to lie and periſh in our curſed ſtate, put on the nature of man to *do* and *die* in for us? Can we ſufficiently celebrate this good will of his to ſuch vile ſinners? Let us then worſhip him becauſe he is God, and yet draw near to him with holy confidence, becauſe he is our brother, and hath taken part in our nature, that ſo he might have a fellow feeling of our miſeries and ſuccour us.

[JANUARY 22. 1694.]

SERMON *LXXXI.*

III. *WE are now to look into the Aſſumption itſelf, under which the Nature of the Incarnation of the Son of God is to be obſerved.* Concerning this we are told, *that he was and continues to be two diſtinct Natures in one Perſon forever.* Here then we may firſt inquire into the *diſtinction*, and then into the *union*, of theſe two natures in the Perſon of the Son of God, which will give us the beſt inſight into this myſterious Incarnation that our ſhallow underſtandings are capable of apprehending in this Life.

Firſt, *CONCERNING the diſtinction of theſe two natures.* It may be comprehended in this aſſertion, viz. *That in the Perſon of Chriſt each nature remains the ſame, perfect in eſſence & properties without any kind of change or the leaſt mixture.* There is neither alteration in either of them, nor confuſion in both of them, by reaſon of this aſſumption. They are as really the ſame as they were before the conſideration of the union made between them. The Son of God is truly God, and the Son of Man is truly Man, though this conſtitutes but one Perſon. And here in particular,

(1.) *EACH Nature retains its Eſſence entire and perfect.*

1. *THE divine Nature remains in its Eſſence.* The whole entire Godhead is in the Perſon of Chriſt, Col. 2. 9. *For in him dwelleth all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily.* Our Redeemer is the moſt abſolute firſt Being, Rev. 1. 8. *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, ſaith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.* He who appeared in fleſh is God. 1 Tim. 3. 16. *God manifeſt in the fleſh.* He hath life in himſelf, *Joh.* 5. 26. He is the true God, 1 *Joh.* 5. 20. Theſe things are eſſential to the Deity, and were found in him who was incarnate.

2. *NEITHER doth the humane Nature of Chriſt loſe its Eſſence.* But he is true and perfect man. He took the ſame form, ſhape, faſhion with other men, *Phil.* 2. 7. The humane nature of Chriſt remains in itſelf a ſecondary Being, a reaſonable creature, conſiſting of a Soul and Body, as will be afterwards more enlarged on. He is the Man Chriſt, 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. And on this account he ſo often calls himſelf the Son of Man.

(2.) *EACH Nature retains its eſſential Properties.* And this is neceſſary from the former.

1. *THE divine properties are not taken away or laid aſide by this Aſſumption.* He put none of them off in his Incarnation. He abides eternal ſtill, he could therefore ſay of himſelf as in, Joh. 8. 58. *Before Abraham was, I am.* He is ſtill infinite and omnipreſent, *Mat.* 28. 20. He is ſtill omniſcient, knowing the very hearts and ſecrets of men, *Joh.* 2. 24, 25. He hath a divine underſtanding, *Joh.* 21. 17. and a divine Will, *v.* 22. yea, he is ſtill God eternally bleſſed. *Rom.* 9. 5.

2. *HIS humane properties continue without being taken away.* Conſider him in the nature aſſumed, and he is a compound, limited, timed Being. He is a finite creature, hath a Body that is circumſcribed, and cannot be every where at once, *Math.* 28. 6. hath an underſtanding that is bounded, a will that is ſubordinated, affections that might be excited or ſtirred, with joy or grief. He was capable of ſuffering, and being led to a created happineſs, for he went in a path of life, *Pſal.* 16. *ult.*

3. *THEY ſuffer not any the leaſt change.* There is no tranſmutation that they are ſubjected to. The Godhead is not changed into the Manhood, nor is the Humanity transformed into the Deity. The *Eſſences* do not alter one into the other: nor yet their *properties*; neither of them ceaſeth to be what it was, and become what it was not. The humane nature, having a derivative life, doth not change into the divine which hath one of itſelf. Eternity doth not begin to be; nor doth the finite humanity of Chriſt become infinite. And this muſt be a proper conſectary from the premiſes.

4. *THEY are not mixt.* There is no confuſion in them. There is not a compound confection made of them, as there is in the compoſition of ſeveral ſimples; as of the elements in the elementary bodies; nor as the eſſential parts of a being conſtitute a third being, by their being united together: But there meet in Chriſt, two natures, and theſe continue two as really as if they had never ſo met. And hence when Chriſt as God knew all things, yet as Son of man, there was a time when there was ſomething which he knew not. *Math.* 13. 32.

Secondly. *TOUCHING the union of theſe two Natures,* give me leave to premiſe, *That next*

next to the adorable myſtery of the Trinity of Perſons in the unity of the divine Eſſence, I know no Goſpel Doctrine more myſterious. Tho' nothing be more manifeſt upon divine teſtimony than *that it is ſo*; yet what more hard for our underſtanding to comprehend, than *how it is?* Let us then be ſober in our enquiry into it, leſt we darken counſel with words without knowledge.

I ſhall here content my ſelf with a few ſhort glances upon ſuch a deſcription of it as this, viz. *That the Second Perſon in the bleſſed Trinity, hath, after a wonderful manner, taken an individual humanity to ſubſiſt inſeperably in his own Perſon for ever.* This is but a ſhort deſcription, far ſhort of the thing that it aims at; but yet too long for us to be able to fathom, though it ought to command our belief; it not being againſt reaſon, though above our reaſoning: and a certain truth becauſe God hath ſaid it. Here then,

(1.) *IT is a wonderful union.* And it is fitting that this *Epithet* be put into the deſcription of it: for though all the works of God's efficiency are wonderful, yet this ſurpaſſeth all the reſt. When therefore the Apoſtle would prove the doctrine of godlineſs to be a great myſtery, this is the firſt Article by which he demonſtrates it, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. And doubtleſs this was one reaſon why he had his name, *Wonderful* given him, *Iſai.* 9. 6. A thing is then wonderful, when we apprehend it to be, but cannot comprehend the reaſon of it. We ſee or believe the effect, but the cauſes are too myſterious for us, and ſo our underſtanding is non-pluſt in the contemplation of it. Now there are three things in which more eſpecially this union is myſterious.

1. *THAT two natures ſo vaſtly different ſhould meet together and unite in one.* That the word ſhould be made fleſh, *Joh.* 1. 14. that the Eternal Son of God ſhould become a man, and tabernacle in an houſe of clay: that the Everlaſting *Jehovah* ſhould be made like to us, and he who is our Father by creation, ſhould be our brother and near of kin to us by his Incarnation: that he ſhould be both God and a creature, the Maker and the thing made. There cannot be a greater diſtance in nature than between God and a creature among beings: and that this infinite diſtance ſhould be brought to meet in one is truly wonderful.

2. *THAT the Son of God ſhould aſſume an humane nature, and not an humane perſon.* In all other men where there is an individual humanity, there is a diſtinct perſon: but in this aſſumption the union is ſo made, that though the humane nature abides, yet the *perſonality* is loſt, or ſwallowed up in the perſon of the Son of God. Hence that, Luk. 1. 35. *And the angel anſwered and ſaid unto her, The holy Ghoſt ſhall overſhadow thee; therefore that holy thing which ſhall be born of thee, ſhall be called the Son of God.* If we ſpeak of the nature, Chriſt is a man, but if we ſpeak of the perſon, the man Chriſt is God. And to ſee two ſuch natures in Chriſt, entire in eſſence and properties, and yet but one perſon conſiſting in both, is truly myſterious.

3. *THAT the Second Perſon of the Trinity ſhould alone aſſume this nature; and neither the Father, nor the Spirit.* When we conſider all the Three Glorious Perſons as enjoying one and the ſame undivided eſſence entirely; and hence that the whole eſſence is wholly in every one of theſe Sacred Perſons, it muſt needs be a myſtery beyond our graſping, to tell how the Son only was united perſonally to this nature: the over-curious enquiry into which hath made ſome to grow giddy, and turn *Hereticks.* That God ſhould be manifeſted in the fleſh, and yet this manifeſtation terminate in the Son, theſe things confound carnal reaſon, and ſurprize the humane underſtanding; it would loſe it ſelf in the ſpeculation, did not faith come in and ſupport it.

(2.) *IN the deſcription it ſelf,* obſerve,

1. *THE Son of God is in himſelf a compleat Perſon, and hence receives no perſonal perfections by the aſſumption of the humane nature; nor hath any neceſſary dependance upon it.* He was *Son* before he was *Man*; nor doth his being the Son of God neceſſitate his being the Son of man. He was Son from Eternity, but he became man in time. And though the futurition of his Incarnation was eternal, being laid in the Covenant which was from everlaſting, yet his Sonſhip was in order of nature before it; that futurition neceſſarily flowing from the Sons conſent in that Covenant. And being a divine Perſon he could want nothing to compleat his perſonality: nor be capable of being made better or more perfect by any addition; for all divine perfections are infinite, and to that which is infinite there can nothing be added. Hence this union was not natural, but voluntary: it was a free act of the Son of God.

2. *THE humanity of Chriſt was a compleat individual humane nature.* The Incarnation of the Son of God was not an uniting him to the whole kind, or to all of it that are redeemed by him. It is true there is a *myſtical union* between Chriſt and his Church, and every gracious member of it; but that is not the *hypoſtolical union* we are now conſidering of, as the *Familiſts* dream: but there was one diſtinct and particular humanity that was provided for him, and in which he tabernacled. Hence God is ſaid *to prepare him a body,* Heb. 10. 5. And the parts of it were his own ſo as no other humane nature is. Luk. 24. 39. *Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I my ſelf.* The Son of God did not only become *a man,* but *this man.* It was that humanity that was born of the *Virgin,* Luk. 1. 35. And it muſt be ſo, elſe he had not been capable of redeeming other men from the curſe.

3. *THAT the individual Humanity of Chriſt is not this or that Man by itſelf.* Herein it differs from every other humanity in the World. Among men this humanity conſti-

tutes

tutes this man, and ſo there reſults a perſon from it: but it is not ſo here. *Peter* is one man, and *Paul* is another, becauſe they enjoy a diſtinct humanity each from other, though of the ſame kind; becauſe individuation among intelligent ſubjects makes a perſon. But now the humanity of Chriſt belongs to the perſonality of the Son of God, and hereupon it hath none in itſelf. For it is certain that Chriſt is not two perſons; for Scripture always makes him but one, and it is as certain that the Son who aſſumes the nature is a compleat perſon, and is not made another ſubſiſtence by this union.

4. *HENCE the individual Humanity of Chriſt, hath its entire ſubſiſtence in the Son of God.* And it always had ſo from the very firſt of its Being. It was never a ſeparate humanity by itſelf, but was made with this dependance or inbeing. It was not firſt produced and then united to him, but its union was made in the production of it: it was never a tree by itſelf, but it was at the firſt inoculated into his divine perſon and grew upon it. A graft indeed bears other manner of fruit from the ſtock it is graffed into, and grows upon; but yet it is not a tree by itſelf; but is a branch in the tree, and a piece of the tree into which it is inſerted, having no root or ſtock but what it receives by this engraftment. The humane Nature of Chriſt produceth humane actions and effects; but it is ſuſtained, upheld and influenced by the divine Perſon whoſe it is. Hence his blood is called *the blood of God*, in *Acts* 20.28.

5. *THE union of theſe two natures in the Perſon of Chriſt is not only by divine approbation, or determination, but operation alſo.* If it were no other relation which that individual humanity bears to the Son of God than meerly an acceptation of it, or the putting of ſuch a title upon it, there would be no myſtery in it, and any other humanity might be, without change on it, the Son of God: But there was a very great and ſecret work of the Spirit of God in fitting of this humanity for the Son in the aſſumption. Heb. 10. 5. *A Body haſt thou prepared for me.* The word ſignifies to fit a thing compleatly in all reſpects for its uſe. So that here was infinite wiſdom and power at work in making and diſpoſing of this Body in its union, that it might be fit to be a ſacrifice, *Luk.* 1.35. and Body here intends an humane Nature.

6. *THE Second Perſon in the Trinity ſtands in a real relation to this Humanity, without any real change in his Perſon.* Immutability is one of the eſſential Perfections of the Deity, God challengeth it to himſelf, *Mal.* 3. 6. And it is aſcribed to Chriſt as he is a divine Perſon, in *Heb.* 13. 8. So that though there is a new relation which the Son taketh on him to this nature, for it is the Lord's Body, as, 1 *Cor.* 11. 29. Yet there is no real change wrought on him by it. It is hard to illuſtrate this by any ſuitable compariſons of things among men, becauſe all will come ſhort of the myſtery. But it is certain, that a man naked, and a man cloathed, makes no real change in the man. And all Phyloſophy makes a manifeſt difference between real, relative, and imaginary; a relation is ſomething leſs than real, and yet more than imaginary.

7. *THERE is a real change wrought in the humanity by this Union.* Though the divine nature of Chriſt undergoes no real alteration, yet the humane nature hath a very great one; there was therefore a great deal done to fit it for this ſervice, *Heb.* 10. 5. It was made a meet tabernacle for the Son of God to dwell in, fitted to do and ſuffer for us, to go through the whole work of our Redemption, to make full ſatisfaction to the juſtice of God, &c. In all of which there muſt be a wonderful operation, for it was thus capacitated for that which no other humanity was ever made capable of. It was an aſtoniſhing change in lifting up this individual humanity above the rank of created Beings, by uniting it to the Perſon of the Son.

8. *THIS Union being made, there is God and man in one Perſon forever.* The ſubſiſtence of the eternal Son of God, is now become the ſubſiſtence of the man Chriſt Jeſus. And now the man Jeſus Chriſt is the Second Perſon in the glorious Trinity. The perſon of the manhood of Chriſt is a divine Perſon; and though we cannot ſay the humanity is the divinity, yet we muſt ſay that this Man is God. And ſo we have *Thomas*'s confeſſion concerning him, Joh. 20. 28. *And Thomas anſwered and ſaid unto him, My Lord, and my God.* And that of *Nathanael* amounts to as much, Joh. 1. 49. *Nathanael anſwered and ſaith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Iſrael.* Theſe few obſervations may help to fortify our Faith, tho' not ſatisfy our curioſity; and let us wait patiently for more, till we come to ſtand in the light of Glory.

IV. *WE may now proceed to look into the Communion there is between the two natures in the Perſon of Chriſt.* For though it be not mentioned in the *Catechiſm*; yet it is naturally conſequent upon it, for *union is for*, and *the ground of communion*; and it is certain that the Son of God took our nature into this union with his Perſon, that in it he might perform the great work of Redemption, which he could not have done without it. Hence there muſt be a co-operation of theſe two natures in this work, elſe the end of this union were loſt. Touching this Communion then, obſerve theſe three things.

1. *THOUGH there be a communion between the two natures in Chriſt, yet the properties of one nature do not paſs into the properties of the other.* Though there be a communion, yet there is no confuſion, no commixture. We have already obſerved, that the two natures remain entire and diſtinct in the Perſon of Chriſt,

Chriſt, notwithſtanding this union; the one of them is not ſwallowed up by the other, though they do both of them meet in one perſon. And, becauſe the manner of communion muſt needs follow the manner of the union, it is neceſſary that there be two kinds of faculties, and properties, correſpondent to theſe two natures, remaining in him. There cannot be a change of properties without a change of natures: he therefore muſt have two underſtandings diſtinct, *Mar.* 13. 32. and two diſtinct wills, *Mat.* 26. 39. If the properties ceaſe, the nature will ceaſe with them, i. e. to be the ſame it was; for the nature of a thing is ſeen in its properties. And hence alſo there muſt needs be two ſorts of operations or effects wrought by theſe natures. It is impoſſible that two diſtinct natures ſhould perform one and the ſame individual action formally; though they may joyn in the ſame work, yet each muſt have its diſtinct and individual activity in it. As the principles are diſtinct, ſo alſo muſt be the operations which flow from theſe principles. Divine actions are not humane, nor are humane actions divine. If there be in Chriſt two underſtandings, the one created, the other increated, there muſt then be two ſorts of exerting them; the one infinite, the other finite; and ſo of the reſt. For there is an infinite diſproportion between a divine and an humane act.

2. *THOUGH the actions of the two natures in Chriſt are diſtinct, yet in working they are conjoyned.* There is a co-operation of theſe natures in the works that are done by Chriſt as Mediator. And here obſerve,

(1.) *THEY do co-operate in the ſame Perſon.* Though all things elſe conſidered in the perſon of Chriſt are twofold, viz. Divine and humane; yet the Perſon himſelf is but one. 1 Tim. 2. 5. *For there is but one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Chriſt Jeſus.* Hence theſe diſtinct operations are not the actions of divers perſons, but of *one Mediator*. The divine & humane nature are, according to our manner of conception, the parts of the Perſon of Chriſt; though the divine nature cannot properly be called a part, becauſe it is infinite. Now that which is done by any part, is done by the whole in regard of that part; if the Soul meditates, the man meditates; if the Body ſit or walk, the man doth ſo; and this flows from the union of the parts in one.

(2.) *THEY co-operate for the ſame end.* The divine nature hath not one deſign, and the humane another, but both together have one and the ſame work to do, viz. the Redemption and Salvation of fallen man; in the advancement whereof they do mutually joyn. Chriſt is therefore ſaid *to Redeem us*, Gal. 3. 13. *Divines* do here warily obſerve a difference between an *action* and a *work* in Chriſt. A work is ſomething done by action, and divers actions may concur in one work. Now the actions in Chriſt are diſtinct, but the work is but one, to which each contributes according to its influence which it hath into the work.

(3.) *THE actions of both natures are properly bounded upon the Perſon of the Son of God.* Though ſome be referred to one nature, ſome to the other, as the principle of operation; as a tree may bear divers ſorts of fruits, by reaſon of grafts in it; yet the perſon is the term of operation in which they are bounded. And therefore Chriſt is ſaid *to die, and to riſe again, to heal the ſick*, &c.

(4.) *HENCE, whatſoever Mediatorial actions are performed by Chriſt in either nature, they are properly ſaid to be Theandrical*; i. e. *the works of Chriſt God-man*: Becauſe, though they are in nature diſtinct; yet they concur in the perſon and in the ends of them. And this we may obſerve in the diſcharge of every Office: His Prieſthood, *Heb.* 9. 14. And ſo of the reſt.

3. *FROM this communion there flows a communication of properties in both natures, with reſpect to attribution or predication.* Not that they do really exchange properties, but only there is ſuch a nearneſs in them in the Perſon of Chriſt, that the Scripture doth frequently attribute them one to another. And there are three ſorts of theſe attributions which *Divines* have taken notice of, and are to be found in the word of God.

(1.) *THE properties of each nature are attributed to the whole Perſon of Chriſt, and accounted as perſonal.* And as the properties are ſo, ſo alſo are the actions; becauſe the Perſon of Chriſt performed theſe operations, or becauſe they are properties and actions of thoſe natures which meet together, and are conjoyned in one perſon. Thus are the properties and actions of the humane nature aſcribed to Chriſt, *Phil.* 2. 7, 8. 1 *Pet.* 3. 18. And yet only the humane nature was capable of theſe. So alſo the properties & actions of the divine nature, *Joh.* 8. 58, 59.

(2.) *THE properties and actions of one nature are aſſigned to the other, and that mutually.* And the reaſon is becauſe they both meet in the Perſon; for though there be one nature, and another nature, yet there is not one perſon and another perſon. Only here obſerve that they are attributed in the concrete and not in the abſtract. The abſtract is a nature conſidered in it ſelf nakedly, the concrete denotes the perſon who hath the nature. And we have frequent expreſſions of this ſort. *Mat.* 9. 6. *But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive ſins, (then ſaith he to the ſick of the palſey) Ariſe, take up thy bed and walk.* 1 Cor. 2. 8. *Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.* But we never find it ſaid in the abſtract, that the God-head died, ſhed his blood, or that the manhood is the Lord of Glory. Hence the meaning is, that the ſame Perſon who is God ſhed his blood, though not as God, but as man, &c.

(3.) SUCH

(3.) *SUCH things as properly belong to the whole perſon are attributed to each nature.* And the reaſon is becauſe each hath a relation or title to his Perſon. And what the perſon doth, that each nature may be ſaid to do, ſo far forth as it hath an influence into his perſonal acts. Thus the *Man* Chriſt is called *Mediator*, 1 Tim. 2. 5. whereas, he is not Mediator either as God or as Man, but as *God-man*. Thus, God *purchaſed the Church with his own blood*, Act. 20. 28. which he did as God-man. Now it is very uſeful for us to obſerve theſe attributions, and the reaſons of them, leſt we ſhould otherwiſe miſtake, or not rightly apprehend the way and manner of the carrying on of the work of Redemption by Chriſt for us.

USE I. *LEARN we hence how extreamly miſerable man was who ſtood in need of ſuch a Redeemer.* Doubtleſs it was man's neceſſity which occaſioned Chriſt's Incarnation: & ſurely it muſt be very great, when nothing elſe would do for the remedying of it, but that the Lord of Glory, muſt put on our fleſh; and He who was the eternal God become a man, that ſo he might go through that work on which our Salvation depended. Let us then improve the conſideration of this, to read to our ſelves a Lecture of our great infelicity, that ſo we may be the better fitted to celebrate the riches of that Grace which ſhines forth in our recovery.

USE II. *LEARN hence how compleatly the work of Salvation muſt be carried on by ſuch an one.* And hence what ſtrength faith may have to believe in him for life and Salvation. Well may he who is both God and Man in one, be ſaid to *be mighty to ſave*, Iſai. 63. 1. and to be *able to ſave to the uttermoſt*, Heb. 7. 25. Here is an object on whom we may lean our whole weight without fear or danger. Hence he is capable of doing & dying for us. Hence there is an infinite value and vertue in his obedience. Labour we then to have a real and true faith placed on him, and then let us with the greateſt confidence expect an entire Redemption and Salvation at his hands. And to that end let us be much in the contemplation of the Perſon of Chriſt, and the natures united in his Perſon.

[FEBRUARY 19. 1694.]

SERMON *LXXXII.*

QUESTION XXII.

HOW did CHRIST the Son of GOD become Man?

ANSWER.

CHRIST the Son of GOD became Man, by taking to Himſelf a true Body, and a reaſonable Soul; being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghoſt, in the womb of the Virgin *Mary*, and born of her, yet without Sin.

WE have conſidered the nature of Chriſt's Incarnation under the former Queſtion. It now follows to look into the manner of it. And here we may obſerve, I. The reality and compleatneſs of the individual humanity aſſumed by the Son of God. II. The way in which he aſſumed it in his conception and birth. A few words to each of theſe.

I. *THE reality and compleatneſs of the individual humanity aſſumed by the Son of God.* This is expreſſed in two things, (1.) He aſſumed the two eſſential parts of the humane nature, which conſtitute an entire humanity. (2.) Both of theſe were true and real: they were not imaginary. I ſhall not need to ſeparate theſe, but diſcourſe of them together. And here we come to a more particular view of the nature aſſumed, which was pointed at under the former Queſtion, but referred hither for a more diſtinct conſideration. Here then let it be remarked,

1. *THAT it was a true, real, ſubſtantial humanity which the Son of God took into union with his Perſon.* The *Marcionites*, and the Hereticks, abuſing that in, Phil. 2. 7. *But made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of men*: infer that he took only the ſimilitude, reſemblance, or appearance of our nature on him, and not the thing it ſelf. But the whole current of the Goſpel contradicts ſuch a perverſe interpretation. Joh. 1. 14. *And the Word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us.* Luk. 24. 39. *Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I my ſelf; handle me, and ſee, for a ſpirit hath not fleſh and bones, as ye ſee me have.* 1 Joh. 1. 1. *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have ſeen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life.* And indeed, if his Incarnation were imaginary, then muſt his life and death, and obedience, and ſatisfaction be ſo too, and conſequently all our faith, and hope, and ſalvation muſt be imaginary, for the effect cannot exceed the vertue of the cauſe.

2. *THAT this humane nature of Chriſt, was in all things like unto ours, ſin only excepted, and the ſpecial manner of its ſubſiſting.* Theſe two exceptions muſt be acknowledged; the former is expreſt in, (*Heb.* 4. 15.) and will be farther conſidered in the Sequel; the latter is neceſſarily inferred from all thoſe Scriptures which aſſert this humanity to be of the Perſon of the Son of God, as *Luk.* 1. 35. *Act.* 20. 28. &c. But, as theſe hinder not the entireneſs of the nature, ſo we find that he was

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in it like other men. He is therefore called *the Son of man.* He anſwered the firſt *Adam* in whatſoever belonged eſſentially to humanity. And this may be a principal reaſon, why the firſt *Adam* is ſaid to be a figure of him, *Rom.* 5. 14. In this likeneſs there are two things to be conſidered, viz. the Fabrick of his nature, and the Accidents that befall it by the influence of the Apoſtacy. In the former of theſe he was made like man in innocency, having all the faculties and qualities of an humane nature, and connatural priviledges belonging to a ſtate of integrity. And this belongs to his Incarnation. Hence that, Heb. 7. 26. *For ſuch an high Prieſt became us, who is holy, harmleſs, undefiled, ſeparate from ſinners, and made higher than the heavens.* As to the latter, he was ſubjected to all the infirmities which man was by ſin fallen under, but only thoſe that were ſinful. And this belongs to his Humiliation, of which afterwards. Hence that, Math. 8. 17. *That it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken by Eſaias the prophet, ſaying, himſelf took our infirmities, and bare our ſicknеſſes.* And all this proved him a true man.

3. *HE had all the eſſential and integrating parts of a man.* And if ſo he had an entire humanity.

(1.) *HE had a real humane Body, with all its members.* The body is one eſſential part of the man, and he had one. Heb. 10. 5. *Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he ſaith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldeſt not, but a body haſt thou prepared me.* For though it there intend the whole nature, yet it intends the body and expreſſeth it. We therefore read of *his own body*, Phil. 3. 21. He had all the integral parts of an humane body. We therefore read of his head, his face, his eyes, his hands, his feet, his bones, which interrs the reſt. And this Body of his was endowed with ſuch proper adjuncts, as declared it to be ſo indeed; he might be ſeen and felt, *Luk.* 24. 39, 40. He died, and he roſe again; and they are only corporeal living ſubſtances that are mortal.

(2.) *HE had a real humane rational Soul.* We therefore read of it. Some have fondly thought that he only took a body, from *Heb.* 10. 5. and that the divinity was in the room of a Soul; but that is againſt Scripture; He had *a Soul that was made an offering for ſin*, Iſai. 53. 10. and that could not be the divine nature. He had a Soul that could be *ſorrowful*, Math. 26. 38. A Soul that he reſigned into the hands of God, *Luk.* 23. 39. He had the faculties of an humane Soul; an Underſtanding which was capable of encreaſing in knowledge and wiſdom, *Luk.* 2. 49, *ult.* A Will that was capable of miſſing its cravings, and was in entire ſubordination to the divine will. Mat. 26. 39. *Nevertheleſs, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* And as his Death proves that he had a Body, ſo his Reſurrection proves that he had a Soul; for it conſiſts in the reunion of the Soul to the Body, whoſe union was diſſolved in Death by a ſeparation.

4. *HE had all the conditions in him which are requiſite to an humane nature; whether in common with other beings, or peculiar and proper to humanity.* He had a corporeal finite being: which is eſſential to all bodies. And hence he had dimenſions, and was circumſcribed, Mat. 28. 6. *He is not here: for he is riſen, as he ſaid: come, ſee the place where the Lord lay.* He had a temporary being, there was a time when he was not as man We are therefore told of the very time when he was produced, in the circumſtances of it. He had a principle of humane exiſtence in him; and accordingly had an humane origination. He was therefore conceived, and his mother went out her full time with him. *Luk.* 2. 6. He was a ſubject of augmentation, He grew from a Child to a Man, *Luk.* 2. 40.

5. *HE performed actions truly humane.* The Goſpels give us an account of multitudes of them. He ſpake with his mouth as other men do, *Mat.* 5. 2. He went up and down from place to place; He preached to them, *Mat.* 9. 35. He eat and drank after the faſhion of other men, *Mat.* 11. 19. He ſlept as other men, *Mar.* 4. 38.

6. *HE had humane Senſes.* Theſe are up and down frequently aſcribed to him, ſeeing, hearing, touching.

7. *HE underwent humane Sufferings.* He was capable of bearing ſuch things as the divine nature is not capable of, nor yet a meer imaginary body. He bare all our ſorrows and griefs. Iſai. 53. 4. *Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our ſorrows.* He underwent the contradiction of ſinners, he was buffetted, ſpit upon, crucified; his hands, and feet and ſide were pierced. He ſuffered hunger, and thirſt, and wearineſs, as other men. See *Mat.* 21. 18. *Joh.* 19. 28. *Chap.* 4. 6. He bore affronts, ſtripes, and death it ſelf, which prove his humanity real.

8. *HE had humane Affections.* He had an humane *love.* See *Joh.* 11. 3. *Chap.* 19. 26. Humane *joy. Joh.* 11. 15. *Luk.* 10. 21. *Sorrow*, and his groans and tears were the *index* of it, *Joh.* 11. 33, 35. Humane *deſire*, *Luk.* 22 15. *Fear* and *amazement*, *Heb.* 5. 7. *Pity* & *compaſſion*, Mat. 9. 36. And what more needs to evince the truth, and compleatneſs of his humanity?

II. *THE way in which he aſſumed this nature of ours*; which is ſet forth in his *conception* and *birth.* And here let us obſerve, *That the conception and birth of Chriſt may be conſidered two ways*, viz. either in *themſelves*, as they were the *media* of the production of his humanity, and ſo they relate to the manner of his Incarnation, and belong hither; or with regard to the *circumſtances* of them; and ſo they refer to his Humiliation, and are there to be conſidered. In the former reſpect we may now obſerve them; where we may trace the origination of his humane nature.

1. *TOUCHING his Conception:* I ſhall wave the niceties which are unprofitably handled

about this, and only conſider what is expreſt in the *Catechiſm.* And here is to be obſerved, (1.) The ſubject or paſſive principle of this conception. (2.) The efficient or active principle of it.

(1.) *THE ſubject or paſſive principle.* He was conceived in the womb of the Virgin *Mary.* I ſhall endeavour the making of this plain briefly, in theſe few aſſertions,

1. *THAT the Virgins womb was not a meer receptacle to entertain this Body in it for a while.* This was an old dream, and of late revived, that the Body of Chriſt was formed in Heaven, of heavenly matter, and was only miraculouſly put into the Virgins womb, where it was lodged for a while, without participation of its material principle from her; which is both contrary to Scripture, and tends to the ſubverſion of our faith in Chriſt as our Redeemer; as will appear in the Sequel. And had it been only ſo, *Mary* had very improperly been called, *the Mother of our Lord,* Luk. 1. 43.

2. *THE conception of Chriſt in the womb of the Virgin, was like to other humane conceptions.* The way in which ſhe came to conceive was different, and wonderful, as we ſhall ſee preſently; but the conception it ſelf hath nothing extraordinary aſcribed to it in the word of God; and therefore to believe any ſuch thing is not of divine faith, which relies on the teſtimony of God. Some have taught that the humanity of Chriſt was formed and compleated in the *Virgin* in an inſtant: But why then is ſhe ſaid *to conceive?* Iſai. 7. 14. Luk. 1. 31. Conception in a ſtrict ſenſe intends the firſt beginning towards the young one: but in a large ſenſe it comprizeth all that is from that to the birth, in the formation, animation, and ripening of the thing for its production; thus it was then here. And hence we have an account of the Virgins going out her full time with this conception of hers; and that this was the uſual time with other Women, is evident by the ſtory.

3. *THAT the Body of Chriſt had its material original from his Mother.* And for this we have the evidence of the word of God; and a ſufficient demonſtration of it is thence to be fetcht. We are therefore fully informed that our Redeemer muſt not only be a man; for ſo he might have been, and not related to us; but he was to be of the *ſtock* and *lineage* of mankind. He was not only to be of the ſame nature, but of the ſame original. He muſt be one of *Adam's* Family: to be near of kin to us; to be our brother; to take part of the ſame fleſh and blood that we ſhare in. Heb. 2. 14. *Foraſmuch then as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood; he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame, that through death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil.* He muſt not only be a man, but the Son of man. And hence how often doth he take that title to himſelf? The *Moſaical* law requiring that the next kinſman muſt redeem the Inheritance, had a proper reſpect to this. Now that Chriſt may be thus related to us, he muſt ſome way or other derive his humanity from man, and that could not be by a father, for Chriſt as man had no father. *Heb.* 7. 3. It muſt needs therefore be by his mother. Hence it is not ſaid that he was made *in a woman,* but *of a woman,* Gal. 4. 4. Noting the material principle of his humanity. And hereby God brought the Salvation of mankind into the world, by the ſame ſort of inſtrument that their ruine was introduced, i. e. by *a woman.* Chriſt therefore is called *the Seed of the woman,* Gen. 3. 15. And we are told that he took on him *the Seed of Abraham.* Heb. 2.16. There muſt then of neceſſity be a *ſeminal* deſcent of Chriſt from *Abraham;* and that, not being nextly paternal, muſt be maternal: He is therefore called the fruit of *David's* body, *Pſal.* 132.11. And this could not be true, if he had not the ſubſtance of his Body from the ſubſtance of his Mother.

4. *THAT it was from* Mary *that he derived: and her ſtock and lineage is deſcribed in the Goſpel.* It was needful that his Mother ſhould be particularly and perſonally known; that ſo our faith might thereby be confirmed in this truth, that the Perſon ſo born of her was the true *Meſſiah.* As therefore the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament did make ſome revelation of him to man from the fall, ſo, the longer men had waited, and the nearer the time drew on to the accompliſhment, theſe diſcoveries were more diſtinct and particular, that believers might be able to diſcern the anſwer of their long expectations: and it needed them; elſe the obſcurity of his Humiliation might have occaſioned their doubting and unbelief. Hence, firſt it was revealed that he ſhould be of *our ſtock,* Gen. 3. 15. then to be of *Abraham's* family, *Gal.* 4. 16. then of *Iſaac's,* Gen. 26. 4. then of the Tribe of *Judah,* Gen. 49. 10. finally, of *the family of David,* Pſal. 132. 11. And hence they were to look for him there. Nor was it enough that *Joſeph* his reputed father was of that lineage, for then he could not have been called the fruit of his body.

5. *THAT he was conceived of* Mary *being a Virgin.* So the prediction runs concerning him, *Iſai.* 7. 14. And whatſoever the *Jews* object about the meaning of the word, Providence hath given this interpretation of it; and there was great reaſon why his conception ſhould be ſuch. For,

[1.] *HE was not to have an humane Father.* The humane nature was to be aſſumed into the perſonality of the Son of God, and that one perſon might not have two fathers, he was not propagated as other men are: but the great reaſon was that he might *be without ſin,* which deſcends upon *Adam's* natural poſterity, in the channel of natural generation, *Gen.* 5. 3. whereas he, being conceived after an extraordinary and wonderful manner, came to be, though born of a ſinful woman, yet

yet without sin. 2 Cor. 5. 21. *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin.* For the *Popish* notion, that the Virgin was without *original sin*, is fond and false.

[2.] *HIS generation being to be wonderful, God chose a Virgin to be the subject of this Conception, that it might appear that he was not originated in the same way that other men are.* And this is one reason of that Letter in his Name, Isai. 9. 6. *And his Name shall be called Wonderful.* And belongs to the first Article in the great mystery of godliness, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. He was also to be her first born, noted by the *Mosaical* laws about the first-born Sons, in God's chusing them to be his peculiar, and in the prerogatives he gave them, all of which were *Typical.* Hence that, Mat. 1. ult. *And knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born son, and he called his Name Jesus.* Whether she remained a Virgin afterwards, is not material. The *Papists*, who idolize Virginity, maintain it, and some *Protestants*, in reverence, though I think over-superstitious, stand for it too. But all the ends of her Virginity were attained when Christ was born of her, nor did any law enjoyn her so to remain, nor had she any special precept for it, so far as is revealed. Besides, it could not be more dishonour to Christ to have brethren of the same mother, than kindred of the same family; but might be a farther testimony of his love to mankind.

(2.) *THE efficient or active principle of this Conception:* it was by the Holy Ghost. I shall not commorate here, it is a mystery. We have the most said of it in Luk. 1. 35. *And the Angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.* And that is very obscure to us. There are two passages which declare it,

1. *THE Holy Ghost shall come upon thee.* The meaning whereof is, that by the Almighty power of the Spirit of God, she should receive power to conceive after an extraordinary manner, and wholly above the power of nature.

2. *THE power of the most High shall overshadow thee.* Meaning that there should be an Almighty efficacy in it, and that God himself should do it immediately. It should be an effect wrought by the hand of *Omnipotency.* This is called an *overshadowing*, both to shew that the Holy Ghost should supply the room of a natural father, by causing her to fructify; and is a metaphor from birds that set on their eggs. So should the Holy Ghost cause her to conceive, nourish the conception, form it into an humane body; create and infuse an humane Soul into it. This is the meaning of, Heb. 10. 5. *A body hast thou prepared me.* As also that he did it after a secret, wonderful manner. A shadow intimates secrecy, *Psal.* 91. 1. And from secrecy proceeds admiration, when the effect is seen, and the cause not discerned. And here,

(1.) *THE Spirit wrought this Conception immaterially.* He afforded no material principle of this nature, but only spake the word, and *Mary* believed it, and so conceived, *Luk.* 1. 38. There was *his fiat*, and *her faith.*

(2.) *HE wrought it immediately.* Used no natural instrumental causes, she remained a Virgin, and yet conceived: and it was so secret, that she her self knew not the manner of it, only believed that it should be, because he said it.

(3.) *BY this manner of Conception the Holy Ghost prevented the descent or propagation of original sin to the humane nature of Christ.* Sin comes in the way of natural generation, but this was supernatural; it was the operation of the Holy Ghost, and therefore immaculate. *Luk.* 1. 35. And if we cannot tell how this could be; yet we have reason to believe that both God could do it, being Almighty, and that he did do it, because he hath said he was such an one. *Heb.* 7. 26. Chap. 4. 15. *For we have not an high Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.* 1 Pet. 2. 22. *Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.*

(4.) *THAT yet the Holy Ghost cannot be said to be the Father of the humane nature of Christ.* For though he supplyed the room of a father, yet this operation could not give him that title. For generation, active, which gives that denomination, is the proceeding of the nature derived from like principles to its original, and therefore every thing begets its like; whereas Christ in his humane nature is not of the nature of the Holy Ghost, which is divine.

2. *TOUCHING the Birth of Christ:* All that I have here to take notice of about it, is only as it refers to his Incarnation: what belongs to his Humiliation will follow there. Though the Conception taken in the largest sense comprehends the Incarnation in it, his Humanity being compleated in his Mothers womb; yet this birth was an adjunct to it, and immediately consequent upon it: and the conception was accomplished and issued in the birth. Touching which there is nothing extraordinary to be observed, as there was in the Conception; unless it be the consideration of the subject of whom he was born, viz. *that she was a Virgin, and yet a Mother.* For as touching the miracles, which the *Papists* feign about his birth, and the strange manner of it, as they are not necessary, and supernatural, so many of them are plainly ridiculous, and have neither footing for them in Scripture, nor any usefulness in Divinity. That his mother remained a Virgin, in that respect that she had no carnal knowledge of a man before he was born, is plain, *Mat.* 1. *ult.* For any thing else the Scripture is silent. Only there is that to be remarked in this as well as in the Conception, i. e. *it was without Sin*; so that his Conception and Birth were Holy. The second *Adam* was brought into

the World with as perfect integrity as the first was; and it was meet that he should be so; for if he had had any sin of his own personally he could never have answered the Law for us sinners: although he took upon him the imputation of our sin in and with his Incarnation. Touching the name of his Mother, the time and place, and manner of his birth, and other circumstances attending it, I shall not spend time about them; many of them will be enquired into in their proper place. Only his being born a Child, in a state of Infancy, from which he did by degrees grow up till he arrived at the stature of a man, doth give us a clear and undeniable evidence of his real humanity, that he did truly and properly assume our nature, and that it was not a thing meerly imaginary. And this may suffice for the opening of the mysterious doctrine of the Incarnation of the Son of God, in which there is so much of the divine wisdom exerting it self, as is matter of astonishment to the Angels themselves.

USE. *LEARN we hence how fit the Lord Jesus Christ was to stand in our room, as our Surety and Redeemer.* We observed, that his Incarnation was one thing in which he was fitted to this work. And there are two things in his Conception and Birth which serve to illustrate it.

1. *THAT he was not only a man, for so he might have been, and yet nothing a-kin to us; but he was one of our stock and lineage.* He was our brother, derived from the same original that we did, and so he answered the law of Redemption, yea and being so nearly related to us, he had a *philanthropy* in him, he could not but love us, and have a tender compassion for us. He was flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone; He had the same Blood running in his veins that we have. And what encouragement should this afford poor sinners to go to him, and that with holy boldness, as we are directed, Heb. 4. 16. *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* And let as many as feel their own want take heart by this consideration to come to him.

2. *THAT he was conceived and born in original purity, and with fulness of all habitual grace, with which he was furnished from the first.* He was not conceived after the manner of other men, but by the wonderful efficacy of the Holy Spirit, and so, not only was that original pollution which the Sons and Daughters of *Adam* contract in their conception and birth prevented, but also all that grace which was requisite to the moral perfection of man was put into him, even the image of God; nay such a fulness as was fit for the Second *Adam* as a publick Person standing in our room. He had the Spirit, he had the habits of knowledge, righteousness and holiness; and he had them beyond measure, as Joh. 3. 34. *For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.* And how fit was such an one to undertake our Redemption? Hereby was a foundation laid for his active obedience to the whole law, whereby he might merit for us life and glory; and hereby also was he fitted to take away or answer for the sin which cleaves to us in our conception and birth; yea, indeed to be a pure and spotless Sacrifice, and without blemish, to answer the whole law of God on our account. Let us then contemplate him as such an one, and from thence be encouraged to lean the whole weight of our hope for Salvation upon him, as One that can fully answer the justice of God for us, and save us to the uttermost.

[MARCH 19. 1694.]

SERMON *LXXXIII.*

QUESTION XXIII.

WHAT Offices doth CHRIST execute as our Redeemer?

ANSWER.

CHRIST, as our Redeemer, executes the Offices of a Prophet, of a Priest, and of a King, both in his estate of Humiliation and Exaltation.

WE are yet on the speculation of Christ's preparation or fitness to be a Redeemer. We have taken notice of his Incarnation, without which he could not have gone through the work incumbent on such an one. But that alone was not sufficient to constitute him actually a Redeemer. For though it render'd him capable of doing all that was requisite, yet God's acceptance as well as Christ's performance of the work was here necessary to render it valid. He must therefore be inaugurated in this office by his Father, and thereby authorized to his work, in order to his setting about it. Which though it were ratified to the Son of God in the Covenant of Redemption, yet there was a solemn confirmation of it to Christ, *God man, in the fulness of time*; which we are now to enquire into, under this, and Three more Questions. And this is that which Divines do usually call his *Unction* or *Anointing*. And there are two things that here lie fair for our consideration, 1. The *Office it self* unto which he was anointed. 2. The *Unction* with which he was consecrated in this Office. Our *Catechism* only takes notice of a Threefold Office that Christ bare, but if we will have a distinct view of this affair, we must look back, and see how they stand, and in what way he came

came to be inveſted with them. Now it is certain that all theſe Three Offices are comprized in one, as ſo many branches of it; and his being confirmed in that, eſtabliſhed him in each of them. And this great and comprehenſive Office, is that of a *Mediator*. Which that he might fully diſcharge, he muſt be both *Prophet*, *Prieſt*, and *King*. We may then, 1. Take a general account of his Mediatorſhip. 2. Of his Unction unto it. 3. A particular view of theſe Mediatorial Offices as they are deſcribed in the following Queſtions.

1. *FOR a general account of his Mediatorſhip.* There are ſeveral Inquiries that may here be made. A brief reſolution whereof will give us light into this Office. Premiſing, that Jeſus Chriſt is fully declared in the Goſpel to have this title belonging to him; on the account of an Employment devolved on him, which is anſwerable to that Title. He is therefore expreſly called *the Mediator*, 1 Tim. 2. 5. Heb. 9. 15. Ch. 12. 24. Beſides other parallel terms implying the ſame thing. Here then,

1. *WHAT is implied in the Title and Office of a Mediator?*

A. *THE word it ſelf, which is ſo tranſlated in the fore-cited Texts, properly ſignifies, a* Middler; *or one that ſtands in the middle between two.* And it implies two extreams, or diſtinct parties between whom he ſo ſtands. And in that language it is ſometimes uſed for one that carries letters, or meſſages from one party to another, and back again. And the *Socinians* will allow it no other meaning in the Goſpel; but how untruly and injuriouſly, will appear in the Sequel: for though the word it ſelf be equally applicable to one that hath any thing to do between two parties, whether as a meſſenger, a pleader, an interceſſor, or an undertaker; yet when it is applied to Chriſt it graſps in it all that is applicable to the word among men; for it preſents us with one who ſo ſtands between two diſagreeing parties, as to bring them together into one; and accordingly doing all that is neceſſary to be done by ſuch an one for the accompliſhment of this deſign. In a word, Chriſt is ſet forth, not only as a *Mediator*, but a *Mediator in a Covenant*. Heb. 12. 24. *And to Jeſus the mediator of the new covenant.* And that between God and Man, 1 Tim. 2. 5. *For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Chriſt Jeſus.* Who were enemies; and his buſineſs is to bring them together again. Now if we conſider what belongs to ſuch a Mediator among men, that will do this to effect; it will ſhew us the import of this Title and Office as it is devolved on Chriſt. Here then obſerve,

1. *THAT the uſe of ſuch a Mediator is only in caſe of a difference that is fallen out between two parties.* If they are at one already, there is no need of one to interpoſe to atone them. Nor is it every difference that requires it; lighter debates may be compoſed between the parties themſelves: but it preſumes ſuch a difference as there is no probability of their ever coming to an agreement, without the intervention of a third party to take up and compoſe the Controverſy between them.

2. *THAT the deſign of ſuch a mediation, being to bring thoſe parties into a Covenant of peace, hence all that is requiſite to the eſtabliſhing of ſuch a Covenant belongs to him.* He muſt omit nothing that is needful to that end, unleſs he will fail in his undertaking; if he is reſolved to bring it about, he will do any thing that is neceſſary. And there are ſuch things as theſe *muſt* be.

1. *HE muſt go from one to another, and uſe all arguments to bring them to a treaty.* If there is no treating, there can be no agreeing. As long as they will not ſpeak one to another, there is no hope of an atonement. He muſt therefore perſwade both parties to be willing to make overtures, and debate upon terms of agreement; and to that end muſt travel between one and another, till he hath brought this about. This is to be a days-man, who lays his hand on both parties, *Job* 9. 33. He muſt be willing to ſpend a day in the buſineſs.

2. *HAVING thus prevailed, he muſt now offer terms of agreement to both.* If there ever be a Covenant of peace between ſuch, it muſt be upon *Articles*; and it is the Mediators work to ſtudy and offer them; and if he will do any thing to purpoſe, he muſt be wiſe and prudent in it: he muſt therefore propoſe ſuch as are moſt likely to be accepted; and hence ſuch as are for the advantage of each party, wherein neither ſhall be loſers, but both gainers; to offer other terms is vain.

3. *HE muſt uſe entreaty, and preſs reaſons to perſwade them to the acceptance of theſe terms.* If he ſhould find them backward, he muſt not ſo give over, but purſue his buſineſs, with all manner of ſuitable pleadings, and not reſt till he hath gained them to a compliance: he muſt be reſolute, and not beat out of heart, tho' he ſhould meet with difficulty and reluctance.

4. *IF need require, he muſt become ſurety, either for one or both.* Sometimes differing parties are not willing to truſt one the other. He therefore that interpoſeth muſt not ſtick at that: if there be all the demur, he muſt be ready to bring himſelf under the firmeſt obligation, to ſee that the terms agreed on ſhall be truly and faithfully performed on each hand; and he muſt come under bonds for this; elſe he may loſe all his former labour.

5. *NAY ſometimes he muſt himſelf undertake to perform them, when elſe there can be no credit given, that ever they will be performed.* The one party may have a confidence, that the other neither can nor will of himſelf do what he is obliged to in ſuch a Covenant: Now the Mediator muſt take upon him, and

engage,

engage, that he will do it; there ſhall be no demur there. Thus we have *Paul* mediating in the behalf of *Oneſimus*, Philem. 18, 19.

6. *HE muſt alſo be ever ready to interpoſe and compoſe differences which may take occaſion to ariſe afterwards.* There may be jealouſies remain, and there may be ſuch carriages as nouriſh thoſe jealouſies, and offer at making a breach again: A faithful Mediator is concerned to obſerve theſe, and ſtep in preſently to obviate them, and prevent the ill tendency of them. Theſe are notions common among men; and may be a ſhadow to us of Chriſt's Mediatorſhip: which, how far they are applicable will hereafter be conſidered.

2. *TO what Covenant the relation of Chriſt as a Mediator doth belong?*

A. *THAT it hath a reſpect to ſome Covenant was obſerved under the former.* And it muſt be ſo, becauſe it is the Mediators work to make an agreement between parties at variance, which is by bringing them to ſtrike up a Covenant one with another. Now we are told that it is *the New Covenant*. Heb. 12. 24. Now there are Three Covenants of God, with reſpect to man's Salvation, which are celebrated in Scripture. There is *the Covenant of Redemption*, paſt between the Father and Son; of which not long ſince we have taken the account; but it cannot intend that, for that is the ancienteſt of all; being eternal, and never had a beginning. There is the *Covenant of Works*, which God made with man at firſt, when he created him: nor can it point to that, for that cannot now be called new, there being another brought to light ſince that, which Covenant of works is in that reſpect called the old Covenant. There is then *the Covenant of Grace*, which was revealed upon man's falling ſhort of that of Works, and hither belongs the relation of Mediator as applied to Chriſt. A more particular account whereof, take in four things,

1. *THAT the everlaſting deſignation of the Son of God to become a Mediator, was laid in the Covenant of Redemption.* The terms of that Covenant comprehended all that was requiſite for the compleat recovery of man from miſery to happineſs. Now this was to be wrought out by Chriſt's mediation. And thus the Covenant of Grace it ſelf is a reſult of the Covenant of Redemption; the foundation of it being laid in that, and is therefore called *the Grace given*, &c. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Here then we find the certain futurition of Chriſt's mediatorſhip.

2. *THAT a Mediator is in himſelf a Perſon different and diſtinct from either party in a Covenant.* Though he applies himſelf to both, and may in ſome reſpect be ſaid to be of both, (of which afterwards) Yet as Mediator, he is neither; and the very word infers ſo much; for we heard, it ſignifies a middler or a middlePerſon ſtanding between two. And it is poſſible that a Mediator may be ſo, and yet of neither party, as one that is a meer Mediator of Reconciliation only: For, to bring a Mediator into the compaſs of partyſhip in a Covenant, it is requiſite, that he be alſo a Mediator of ſuretiſhip. But theſe things will be lookt into under the following Inquiry. Nor indeed can a Mediator make himſelf of one party, but by the approbation of the other, without ſpoiling his deſign.

3. *THAT in the Covenant of Redemption, the Son of God is the one party.* He is not only *of* the party, but the *alone* party; there is none that ſtands obliged to the Father but himſelf: and there was no room for a Mediator in that Covenant: there was no difference between the parties in it, being infinitely ſatisfyed each in other, nor was there any ground of jealouſy between them. The everlaſting nearneſs and unity between the parties, admitted not of any to interpoſe; they could entirely truſt one in the other without any elſe to ſtand bound. *Mat.* 3. 17.

4. *THAT the office of a Mediator properly belongs to the Covenant of Grace: or to that Covenant wherein God and fallen man are the parties.* It hath no room in the Covenant of works: for as when that was indented with man, there was no difference between God and him, & ſo there needed none to interpoſe; ſo when man fell from his obedience to it, it was no longer a Covenant of life to him, *Gal.* 3. 21. And that it might alſo ceaſe to be a Covenant of death, which he by his apoſtaſy had made it to be, the new Covenant of Grace was promulgated. For the eſtabliſhing of which, Chriſt was appointed to be a Mediator. And this leads us to the next Inquiry.

3. *WHY there muſt be a Mediator of the New Covenant?*

A. *THE neceſſity of a Mediator is grounded on the firſt Covenant of Works, conſidered with Mans ſtate of Apoſtaſy, or the relation that his Fall hath made him to bear to that Covenant.* We may take a more diſtinct account of it in the following Concluſions.

1. *THAT if Man had abode in his primitive Integrity, and not violated the firſt Covenant, he had not needed a Mediator.* If Man had obeyed, he would thereby have preſerved a perpetual amity between God and him: God had promiſed him life upon his obedience, and would have conferred it upon him: Had there been no ſin, there would have been no offence, no breach between them, and conſequently no need of any to interpoſe and take up the controverſy, becauſe there would have been none.

2. *THAT Man had by his Apoſtaſy ſo broken the firſt Covenant and ſo broken himſelf upon it, that there was no Salvation for him but by a new-Covenant.* See Gal. 3. 21. *Is the law then againſt the promiſes of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given, which could have given life, verily righteouſneſs ſhould have been by the law.* The law could once have given life, while man was no tranſgreſſor; but when once he is guilty, it can in no wiſe

wiſe repair him again. That Covenant had not only a *promiſe*, but a *threatning* too, and theſe equally fixt and immutable: and to each there was a Sacramental ſign of confirmation. The threatning ſentenced man to die for the leaſt tranſgreſſion: the fall therefore made him a man of death; nor can his moſt perfect and conſtant, after obedience, were he able to perform it, make void that ſentence, Gen. 2. 17. *In the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die.* In rigour of Juſtice he muſt die for that tranſgreſſion. Beſide, the firſt part of his puniſhment, or of that death that ſeizeth him, is the loſs of the image of God, or that principle of holineſs & righteouſneſs which enabled him to obey: which loſs being attended with a depravation of his whole nature, he is left under a curſed neceſſity of running himſelf into deeper arrears, by renewed tranſgreſſions. So that in this ſtate the firſt Covenant ſpeaks nothing but death to him. *Eph.* 2. 3.

3. *THAT there is no way opened for a new-Covenant but by a Mediator.* God and fallen man can never come together to agree upon terms of peace, without a middle perſon coming between them, to make up the breach.

For,

(1.) *MAN's ſin had made ſuch a diſtance between God and him, that they will never come to a treaty, without one to mediate betwixt them.* Sin hath ſet up a wall of ſeparation, Iſai. 59. 2. *But your iniquities have ſeparated between you and your God, and your ſins hide his face from you, that he will not hear.* They are become enemies, and up in arms each againſt other, and who ſhall firſt move for a reconcilement, and ask for peace?

1. *NOT God*; and that in point of honour: for he is the party wronged, and he is the ſuperiour. Sin hath robbed him of his glory, and his holineſs ſtands engaged to maintain and recover it. His quarrel is righteous; man hath made him his enemy, and he reſolved that he ſhall know it: hence, though he is willing to be reconciled, yet it is meet that he be interceded with, and there be one to entreat his favour for poor man. Heb. 12. *ult. For our God is a conſuming fire.*

2. *NOT Man:* and that upon a double account.

1. *BECAUSE the Covenant of works diſcovered no hope to him of a poſſibility of reconciliation.* The threatning of death, in caſe of diſobedience, was poſitive, earneſt, and without any expreſt reſerve. Gen. 2. 17. *In the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die.* So that he could diſcern no probability or poſſibility of obtaining any advantage, by begging for peace. He knew that God was holy, juſt, and true; that he had violated the Covenant, and that Juſtice had doomed him to die: nor did he know how it was poſſible that juſtice ſhould be maintained, and he be pardoned; his caſe therefore looked deſperate.

2. *BECAUSE ſin had alienated his heart from God.* He had not only made God his enemy, but himſelf God's enemy too. Sin had put ſuch a malignity into him, that his mind was alienated from any thoughts of ſeeking peace with God. We are told how it is with the natural man in this regard, Rom. 8. 7. *Becauſe the carnal mind is enmity againſt God: for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* Man is grown too high, too proud and ſtout to aſk forgiveneſs at God's hand. He hath in him a rooted prejudice againſt God. *Rom.* 1. 30. How then ſhould theſe come together but by a Mediator?

(2.) *SO pure is God's holineſs, and ſo impure is man by ſin, that they cannot come to treat but by a Mediator.* When God came to give the law on Mount *Sinai*, (Exod. 19.) bounds were ſet, a diſtance to be kept, and it was death for any of the people to come nigh, but *Moſes* muſt interpoſe. Hence that, Gal. 3. 19. *And it was ordained by Angels in the hands of a Mediator.* Should a ſinner immediately approach an holy God, his holineſs would conſume him. The ſinner hath nothing to plead for himſelf, that is of any value; and God muſt plead with him in his wrath. See, Pſal. 5. 4, 5. *For thou art not a God that hath pleaſure in wickedneſs: neither ſhall evil dwell with thee. The fooliſh ſhall not ſtand in thy ſight; thou hateſt all workers of iniquity.* So he expreſſeth himſelf, Job 9. 32, 33. *For he is not a man as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him, & we ſhould come together in judgment. Neither is there any days-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.*

(3.) *SUCH are the jealouſies betwixt God and the ſinner, that they cannot be removed but by a Mediator.* For,

1. *GOD is a jealous God for his great Name.* So he declares himſelf, Exod. 34. 14. *For thou ſhalt worſhip no other god: for the Lord, whoſe name is Jealous, is a jealous God.* Man having once proved falſe in the Covenant, and violated his fidelity to God, there is no reaſon that he ſhould truſt him again, or take his word and promiſe to be of any value: nay, God knows what is in man, and therefore will not truſt him. He hath crackt his credit with God, who looks upon every man to be *a liar*, and his heart to be deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked; ſo that if ever God truſt man again, there muſt be a Mediator to paſs his word for him, and come into bonds with him.

2. *MAN is alſo jealous of God.* And tho' he hath no reaſon to doubt of his truth and fidelity, yet he hath taken prejudices, he thinks God intends nothing but his deſtruction, I mean when awakened. Conſcience chargeth guilt and the curſe upon him. Let God ſpeak never ſo kindly to him, he dares not believe him. He ſuſpects every promiſe. *Job* 9. 16. He therefore needs a Mediator to perſwade him, and to ſtand ſecurity for the performance of all the good that is engaged to him in the new Covenant. Yea, ſo great and awful is God's majeſty, and ſuch a mean and worthleſs thing is the convinced ſinner in his own apprehenſion, that the very tidings of

of peace which are brought to him, and to the acceptance whereof he is invited, out-bid his belief; it is too big for him to conceive of, he demurs about it, and ſaith, Will God in very deed be atoned to ſuch a wretch as I am? How can it be? There needs then a ſpokes-man that may inſinuate the credit of this into the Soul.

(4.) *SUCH are the neceſſary terms of the new Covenant, that they require a mediating Surety for the performance of them.* And if ſuch an one doth not undertake, it is impoſſible that they ſhould ever be performed. There is that to be done for the bringing about of man's Salvation according to the way revealed in the Goſpel, which can never be accompliſhed but by ſuch a Mediator; and that both on God's part, & man's part. I ſhall only give a general glance in reſpect of either.

1. *THAT God might perform the promiſe of mercy and grace unto ſinners, it was neceſſary that there ſhould be a Mediator to make way for it.* There was a bar laid in the way of fallen man's happineſs by the curſe that was fallen on him for ſin. The juſtice of God hath now a controverſy with man, and ſtands obliged to purſue it; it muſt therefore be ſatisfyed, and the promiſe muſt be ſo accompliſhed, that none of God's precious Attributes may ſuffer any wrong by the tranſaction. The rigour of the firſt Covenant entred this caution, that no covenant of mercy could be extended to fallen man, without ſecurity given in, that full ſatisfaction be made for all the injuries which that hath ſuffered by ſin. God's mercy muſt offer no violence to his righteouſneſs, but there muſt be a perfect harmony between them, they muſt *kiſs each other*, Pſal. 85. 10. And his juſtifying the ſinner muſt be an act of juſtice as well as grace. Rom. 3. 26. *To declare, I ſay, at this time his righteouſneſs: that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him which believeth in Jeſus.* Now man himſelf is altogether unable to compoſe this matter, and indeed, if he could ſtill comply with the terms of the Covenant of Works, there were no need of his relief by a Covenant of Grace: ſo that Chriſt's engaging of himſelf to come under the law, that ſo he might fulfil the righteouſneſs of it, which he did in the Covenant of Redemption, rendred him capable of acting the part of a Mediator in the Covenant of Grace.

2. *THAT man may be able to come up to his part in the new Covenant, he muſt have an undertaker.* That in this Covenant there are the things that neceſſarily accompany Salvation, and that they are immutable, and inſeperable, is a Goſpel truth; there are things without which there is no Salvation, no ſeeing of God, but wrath abides on the man; now man is not able by his own power to work theſe in himſelf: *Faith*, the firſt thing required in this Covenant, is above his power; *Obedience* out-doth his ability, he is without ſtrength. *Rom.* 5. 6. Nay, there is no duty that he can do acceptably to God, as it comes out of his hands, there is ſo much of ſinful defilement adhering to it: it muſt then paſs through the hands of a Mediator; and without one, the whole deſign of the new Covenant muſt fall to the ground, and become void.

(5.) *THERE are ſo many occaſions of controverſy between God and his people, that without an interceding Mediator, there would be irreconcilable breaches.* God's own people are many times, by reaſon of their great falls giving him high provocations, incenſing of his anger againſt them, and they would be conſumed by it, did not Chriſt ſtep in, and ſtand up to plead for them: as *Moſes* in the Type. *Pſal.* 106. 23. God's people are often too prone to fall out with him, to quarrel at his Providence, to charge him with forgetfulneſs and forſaking of them. *Iſai.* 49. 14. to impute to him the breach of promiſe and covenant, *Pſal.* 77. 7, 8, 9. And they would loſe their faith, and hope, and deſperately conclude againſt God and their own Souls, did not Chriſt mediate on God's behalf with them. *Iſai.* 49. 15, 16. In all theſe reſpects then it appears how requiſite it was that the new Covenant ſhould have a Mediator concerned in it.

USE. *HOW ought we then to love, admire, adore, and magnify the rich grace of God in Chriſt, in that he hath provided us with ſuch a Mediator.* We ſhould never have thought of him, nor could we ever have obtained him, but God hath found out and ordained One to interpoſe between an offended God, and condemned ſinners, to repair all the breaches which ſin had made between them, and bring them together in the bands of an everlaſting Covenant of peace. Let this encourage awakened ſinners to hope, and point them out the way in and by which to obtain this peace. Eph. 2. 14. *For he is our peace, who hath made both one.* And let this engage all you who were ſometimes enemies, but are now reconciled to God by the death of his Son, to remember this love of his more than wine, and to account his name as an oyntment poured forth, ſweet and precious: and be daily making improvement of him in all your addreſſes of your ſelves before God, for the ſtrengthning of your faith, encouraging your hope, and cheering you up in your whole courſe of new obedience.

[APRIL 16. 1695.]

SERMON *LXXXIV.*

Q. 4. OUR *next Enquiry may be about the Perſon of the Mediator?*

A. CONCERNING which this is to be aſſerted, viz. *THAT Jeſus Chriſt God-man is the one only Mediator between God and man.* And there are two concluſions contained in it, viz.

1. *THAT Chriſt is Mediator with reſpect to both his natures in conjunction.* The *Papiſts*, from

from, 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. and other Scriptures in which mention is particularly made of his *manhood*, do many of them conclude his Mediatorſhip to belong only to his *Humanity*. But we may obſerve, that the manhood is named with its relation to his Perſon, who is the Son of God, and ſo includes both, only giving us to underſtand, that his Humanity alſo is concerned in it. So, Joh. 5. 27. *And hath given him authority to execute judgment alſo, becauſe he is the Son of man.* Here therefore let us obſerve, that the divine nature is to be conſidered under a double reſpect: either eſſentially as it is common to the Three Perſons in the God-head, being one, and undivided; and ſo the divine nature doth not mediate, but is mediated withal, as being one of the differing parties, who are in this work to be reconciled and made one again: or perſonally, as it ſubſiſts in each perſon of the Trinity, and ſo the Son is God equally with the Father, and yet as Son, ſubmitted to the œconomy of divine diſpenſation, according to which he aſſumed the humane nature into union with his Perſon, by vertue of which union, all his Mediatorial actions were the actions of Chriſt God-man: and for this reaſon is the doctrine of his Incarnation put before that of his Office, becauſe by it he was fitted for the diſcharge of that office. There are therefore theſe two reaſons for the neceſſity of referring the work of Mediation to both his Natures.

(1.) *THE ſeveral offices belonging to that of a Mediator cannot be diſcharged by one of theſe natures alone, but require both.* Theſe come afterwards to be particularly diſcuſſed. Here only let us remark, of the *Prieſtly*, in which he is to mediate with God for us; our high Prieſt muſt have a Sacrifice, he muſt therefore take part in our fleſh and blood, he muſt have an Altar, and that could be no other but his divine nature, which alone could ſanctify the gift: there muſt be an offerer, which could be only the Son of God. *Heb.* 9. 14. and his offering muſt be according to the law, therefore it was requiſite for him to be man. And it muſt be of a ſufficient value for an atonement, and ſo no other Humanity but that of him who is God could do: his blood therefore is called the blood of God, *Act.* 20. 28. The like might be inſtanced in his other two Offices; but this may ſuffice.

(2.) IT *is alſo requiſite in regard of the parties between whom he mediates.* When we have conſidered what his buſineſs is in the diſcharge of this function, we ſhall be fully ſatisfyed in this point, which will follow preſently. Here only obſerve that he hath to do with God, and with man, he is to take hold on them both, and therefore is to participate in the nature of both. A Mediator muſt have an intereſt in him, whom he undertakes to mediate withal. A man, an Angel could not challenge ſuch an intereſt in God as to undertake to compoſe the quarrel between him and man. He is not a Mediator of one, Gal. 3. 20. *Now a mediatour is not a mediatour of one, but God is one.* Hence he doth not mediate according to one nature alone.

2. *THAT this Office belongs only to the Perſon of Jeſus Chriſt.* The *Papiſts* have fanſied many Mediators, and hence their prayers to Saints: but the word of God acquaints us with none but Chriſt. 1 Tim. 2. 5. *For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Chriſt Jeſus.* And though he doth not expreſly ſay there is no more but one, yet ſpeaking in the ſame ſenſe that he doth of God, it implies it. Nor indeed is this work performable by any but Jeſus Chriſt, ſince none but one who is both God and man can diſcharge it. It is then no leſs than blaſphemy to aſcribe it to a meer creature; nor will all the diſtinctions which ſome have coined ſalve the matter: ſince it will derogate from his glory to join any other merits to thoſe of his for the impetration of any favour for us from the hands of God.

5. *WE may now take an account of the way in which he came to be Mediator.* Concerning which we may ſay as the Apoſtle about his Prieſthood, which belongs to it, Heb. 5. 5. *So alſo Chriſt glorified not himſelf, to be made an high Prieſt: but he that ſaid unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.* He did not thruſt himſelf upon it, but was called to it by divine Ordination. Hence he is called by ſuch titles as intimate his being authorized hereto: *The Meſſenger of the Covenant*, Mal. 3. 1. *God's Elect Servant*, Iſai. 42. 1. An *Apoſtle*, Heb. 3. 1. And is ſaid to be *anointed to it*, Iſai. 61. 1, 2. Whereupon the Name Chriſt was given him. Here then theſe poſitions,

1. *THE office and commiſſion of Mediatorſhip was conferred on Chriſt by God.* It is the work of the God-head, but particularly aſcribed to God the Father, *Joh.* 6. 27. *Him hath God the Father ſealed.* A *metaphor* from the cuſtom in ratifying conveyances & commiſſions, which is done by ſealing them; and it implies the whole tranſaction denominated from the confirming act. This is a Royalty belonging to none but the ſupreme majeſty of Heaven; He being offended, and man fallen into his hand, who ſhould put any into the office of a Reconciler, or who durſt have undertaken this buſineſs without divine approbation? 1 Sam. 2. 25. *If one man ſin againſt another, the judge ſhall judge him: but if a man ſin againſt the Lord, who ſhall entreat for him?*

2. *THE occaſion of this appointment, was the neceſſitous condition of man by reaſon of ſin and miſery.* God purpoſing man's recovery from this ſtate, and their being no other way in which it could be effected, need ſo requiring that either man muſt for ever periſh, or the Son of God muſt ſtep in and take up the controverſy & compoſe it: there was none found in heaven or earth capable of this undertaking, but the Son of God; God therefore called and conſtituted him Iſai. 63. 5. *And I looked, and there was none to help, and I wondred that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought ſalvation unto me, and my fury*

it upheld me. Hoſ. 13.9. *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf, but in me is thine help.*

3. *THE moving cauſe or that which wrought with God to depute Chriſt Mediator was his own good pleaſure.* And on this account is Chriſt's coming in fleſh ſo celebrated in Luk. 2. 14. *Glory to God in the higheſt, and on earth peace, good will toward men.* This is in Scripture language called love, and ſaid to be the ſpring or original of man's Redemption, which fetch'd the Son out of his Fathers boſome, Joh. 3. 16. *For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son: that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* And truly there was nothing in man that could move him to it: it muſt be either miſery or merit; the one is the object of mercy, the other of juſtice: not man's miſery, becauſe it was the proper reſult of his iniquity. Innocent miſery will move a wiſe man's pity, and prompt him to afford help; but that which is the fruit of wickedneſs, hath Juſtice engaged to execute it; in which execution it is ſatisfyed, and men count pity here undue. Not merit; for in what ſenſe ſoever man may be ſuppoſed to have been once capable of meriting happineſs, he can in no ſenſe merit a Mediator, there being no room for one, till ſin hath put him out of a capacity of meriting any thing but hell. Rom. 5. 6. *For when we were yet without ſtrength, in due time Chriſt died for the ungodly.*

4. *THE great end of Chriſt's Mediatorſhip is the glory of the free grace of God, in accompliſhing man's Salvation in ſuch a way.* Eph. 1.4,5,6. *According as he hath choſen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy before him in love: Having predeſtinated us unto the adoption of children by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will. To the praiſe of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.* Man's Salvation is ſubordinate; the good redounds to the redeemed, but the praiſe belongs to God: and it is that of his grace which is here celebrated, which, that it might be made illuſtrious, it pleaſed God to make his own Son the Mediatorial diſpenſer of it, and for that end put him into this office. And thus we ſee God to be *all* in this great work.

6. *IT may be asked for whom Chriſt was made Mediator?* And the world is full of diſputes about this queſtion; the patrons of univerſal Redemption extending it to all mankind in point of ſatisfaction, and beyond thoſe that are ſaved as to the Treaty of Reconciliation. But I ſhall wave diſputes, and only offer a few aſſertions for the reſolution of this matter.

1. *THAT there are ſome benefits which by way of redundancy flow from Chriſt's Mediatorſhip to the whole world in general; and ſome alſo more particularly to Hypocrites and Reprobates in the viſible Church.* Reſpecting the world in general, among whom God's Elect are diſperſed, and out of whom in all ages to be gathered, it is certain that from this Mediation of Chriſt they do enjoy all the bleſſings and bounties of God in which they ſwim. The world is ordered by Chriſt Mediator, and fares the better for the Elect ſake. Mat. 24.22. *And except thoſe days ſhould be ſhortned, there ſhould no fleſh be ſaved: but for the Elects ſake thoſe days ſhall be ſhortned.* In the world, where tares are mixed with wheat, as it is in the viſible Church, there is a ſpecial Providential care of God which gives them peace and liberties, and they are under the offers of reconciliation, and under a conditional promiſe, in caſe of their acceptance, and God exerciſeth much patience in waiting on his Vineyard for fruit, and this becauſe he hath his choſen there, for whoſe good theſe favours are nextly aimed, and they flow to the other in way of concomitancy. Hence we have ſuch a reaſon rendred in, Act. 18.10. *For I am with thee, and no man ſhall ſet on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.*

2. *THAT the notion of a conditional Mediator is inconſiſtent with the nature of Chriſt's Mediation.* A Condition in a Covenant is the term or caution on which one party is obliged to do ſomething for the other; whereas the work of a Mediator is either to bring ſuch parties to covenanting, or to become engaged for them, or to maintain correſpondence between them, by ſeeing that the Articles be performed. Now in neither of theſe is he conditional but abſolute, otherwiſe the deſign of his Mediatorſhip is loſt, which is properly to give ſecurity for the performance of covenant conditions. It is God the Fathers work to proffer the terms of peace, and Chriſt doth this from him, and in his name, and theſe are conditional; but it is the Mediators work to effect the peace, and this is poſitive, certain, and unfailing. For all thoſe whom he undertakes to be a Mediator for, he doth it abſolutely, and will carry it through: elſe his office were invalid. He therefore ſpeaks on the account of this, Joh. 6. 37. *All that the Father giveth me, ſhall come to me.*

3. *HENCE only the Elect do conſtitute one party in his Mediation.* He is properly and ſtrictly only a Mediator between God & his Elect. This is evident, in that,

1. *THE proper fruits of his Mediatorial Offices are applied effectually to ſuch and no other.* Theſe are ſuch as terminate in the reconciling God and us together, Rom. 5. 10. *For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.* To this end was he to ſatisfy Juſtice and purchaſe Salvation for us. 1 *Theſ.* 5. 9. and having ſo done, by the vertue of it, to bring us finally to the kingdom of Glory. *Heb.* 2.10. Now, though the world enjoy other common benefits, which are the *overplus* and additions of mercy, yet none but the Elect partake in thoſe, which all muſt whoſe Mediator Chriſt is.

2. *BECAUSE Chriſt intended his Mediatorial works for none but theſe.* His Death, Reſurrection, Aſcention, Seſſion, Interceſſion, were for them. Rom. 8.33,34. *Who ſhall lay any thing*

to

to the charge of God's elect? It is God that juſtifyeth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died, yea rather that is riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh interceſſion for us. Yea, though he prayed for his enemies in way of duty, as he was under the law, *Luk.* 25.34. Yet in the prayer which is properly Mediatorial, and which always obtains the thing prayed for, he limits himſelf hither. *Joh.* 17. 9, *with* 19.

3. *BECAUSE his Father appointed him to be Mediator for none but theſe.* As he had his commiſſion from him, ſo the limits of it are ſet down by him: and he gave to Chriſt the names of thoſe for whom he would have been a Mediator. Hence we have ſuch limiting expreſſions, Joh. 17. 2. *As thou haſt given him power over all fleſh, that he ſhould give eternal life to as many as thou haſt given him.* Joh. 6. 37. *All that the Father giveth me, ſhall come to me.* God purpoſing that there ſhould be this article in his great love to his choſen, to raiſe it yet higher in the admiration of thoſe that were the ſubjects of it, viz. that it was a diſtinguiſhing love, not only between men and Angels, but men and men too.

7. *IT may be then askt, When was Chriſt made Mediator?* And in reply to this let it be obſerved,

1. *THAT with relation to the Covenant of Redemption, Chriſt was adeſigned and covenanted Mediator from Eternity.* We have obſerved that in this Covenant he was appointed to all that was neceſſary for the bringing about the Salvation of fallen man; of which the office of a Mediator is the ſum & abſtract: For under it are contained thoſe ſeveral functions, in the execution of which he diſcharged this whole affair. God the Father then propoſed this office to him, and he accepted of it, and promiſed to undertake the work of it. And thus he is ſaid to be *ſet up from everlaſting*, Prov. 8. 23. in as much as the buſineſs was then ſettled and unchangeably eſtabliſhed.

2. *WITH reſpect to his actual inveſtiture with, and initial execution of this province, it hath been ever ſince the Covenant of Grace was revealed to fallen Adam.* We before obſerved, that Chriſt's Mediatorſhip properly belongs to the Covenant of Grace, and is ſo eſſential to it, that there could not have been a Covenant between God and fallen man without one. In this reſpect is that, Gal. 3.19. *Wherefore then ſerveth the law? It was added becauſe of tranſgreſſions, till the ſeed ſhould come, to whom the promiſe was made.* The Son of God then entred upon the purſuance of this office, when there was a treaty of Reconciliation between God and fallen man. Hence called *the Lamb*, &c. Rev. 13.8. For, though he had not yet actually taken our nature upon him, yet upon the vertue of that Obedience which he had engaged in fulneſs of time to perform, and upon the credit of that undertaking of his, he interpoſed and was accepted as God-man Mediator. And it was faith in him as revealed ſo to be, that ſaved the *Patriarchs*. *Abraham* is ſaid *to ſee his day*, Joh. 8. 56. He made their peace with God, and wrought upon their hearts to cloſe with him: it was his blood that ſprinkled them, his ſuretiſhip that ſtood for them, and gave them acceptance with God; his Spirit that ſpake to them by Prophets and holy men; his Scepter that trod down their enemies, and brought them Salvation.

3. *REGARDING his compleat fitneſs, and more ſolemn inauguration in this work, it was in fulneſs of time, when he came to do the work of Redemption in this world.* And this was,

1. *PREPARATORILY at his Incarnation.* For, by taking of our nature into union with his Perſon, he became actually God-man, which was requiſite in him who mediateth between God and man.

2. *COMPLEATLY, when in our nature he received the unction of the Spirit*; i. e. thoſe Mediatorial gifts; which was begun from his conception, and more fully accompliſhed, in the Holy Ghoſt deſcending and reſting upon him, when he received the Spirit of God not in meaſure. Of which afterwards.

3. *DECLARATIVELY, when there was that voice from heaven openly proclaiming, and witneſſing to his authorization, and acceptance in this office:* Which was done at his Baptiſm, immediately before his entrance on his publick work, as *Mat.* 3. 17.

8. *IT remains that we enquire into his Work as Mediator, or what it is in general that belongs to this office of his.* For, as to the particular offices in it, they will follow to be ſpoken of diſtinctly. We have already conſidered the import of the word, and what belongs to ſuch an one among men. We may now obſerve how far they are applicable to this affair. Here then the Mediation of Chriſt may be reduced to three heads. He is a Mediator of Reconciliation, a Mediator of Suretiſhip, and a Mediator of Interceſſion. In the firſt he brings God and man to a treaty, in the ſecond he ſtrikes up an everlaſting covenant between them, in the third he preſerves this Covenant inviolable. We may briefly glance on them ſeverally.

First. *HE is a Mediator of Reconciliation: to bring about the peace between God and man; by bringing them to a treaty.* And here two things may be look'd into, 1. What was the diſtance between God and man? 2. What he doth to bring about the treaty of Peace?

Q. 1. *WHAT is the diſtance between God and Man?* And the ſubſtance of it lies in this: When God had made man he placed him near to himſelf, having put his own image upon him, endowing him with ſuch Graces as fitted him for communion with his maker; and to bind him for ever to love and obey him, he plighted a precious Covenant with him, engaging his love & favour perpetually to him in caſe of his being faithful to his duty; but threatning him with his infinite diſpleaſure in caſe of his diſobedience. Matters

thus ſtanding, Man, by the inſtigation of *Satan* was allured and invited, and by the abuſe of his own free will led away to fall from his obedience, and became a Covenant-breaker; whereby a wall of ſeparation was ſet up between him and God; and the Peace thus broken, War was proclaimed between God and man, which controverſy cannot be compoſed without a Mediator. In ſum, ſin hath armed God's holineſs and juſtice againſt the ſinner, and alienated man's heart from God.

Q. 2. *WHAT Chriſt doth to bring about the treaty of Peace? or to reconcile the heart of God and man one to another?* And here,

1. *THIS Mediator applies himſelf both to God and man, making to both a motion of Reconciliation.* For this the Son of God made that long journey from heaven to earth, and back again that he might tranſact this buſineſs. Deals with his Father immediately, and with man by the means. See, Eph 2. 14. *For he is our peace, who hath made both one.* 2 Cor. 5. 20. *Now then we are ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as tho' God did beſeech you by us; we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled to God.*

2. *TOGETHER with this motion he propoſeth articles of agreement:* And thoſe as are moſt ſuitable for a good accommodation between them. The deſign of the treaty is to bring them into a Covenant of peace and love. Now no Covenant is made without articles or terms on which it is to ſtand: and theſe muſt be ſuch as will give content to each party. For Chriſt is bound both for God's honour, and man's happineſs; ſuch then he makes offer of in the tranſaction; and we may conceive them to be ſome ſuch as theſe.

(1.) *THAT God's righteous dealings with man in proceeding to condemn him for the breach of the firſt Covenant be acknowledged & juſtified.* God ſtands upon his honour, and will be cleared. Pſal. 51. 4. *That thou mighteſt be juſtified when thou ſpeakeſt, & be cleared when thou judgeſt.* Had not man dealt unjuſtly with God, there had been no controverſy. God did not leave man, till he without all reaſon forſook his God. *Jer.* 2. 5. And as God is, ſo he will be confeſſed righteous in all his doings. Pſal. 145. 17. *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.* Chriſt knows that God muſt be acquitted, and he can convince man of his iniquity. This then is one Article.

(2.) *THAT the ſinner ſhall freely and humbly confeſs all the indignities that he hath offered to God's glory.* God hath done him no wrong at all, and ſo hath nothing to acknowledge, all the evil that hath befallen the ſinner is leſs than his deſerving; but the ſinner hath highly offended God, which he muſt be made to ſee, and confeſs, and be aſhamed of. Hence that inſerted in, *Jer.* 3. 12, 13. and exemplified, Pſal. 106. 6. *We have ſinned with our fathers: we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly.*

3. *THAT due recompence and full ſatisfaction ſhall be made to God's juſtice, for all the injury and wrong done to his name by the ſinner.* God's holineſs and juſtice ſtand upon this, he is bound for his own glory, and muſt be ſatisfyed for all the diſhonour that hath been done him by the creature. Juſtice cannot be atoned without a compenſation. Hence he propounds that an effectual courſe ſhall be taken that juſtice and mercy ſhall be agreed. Pſal. 85. 10. *Mercy and truth are met together; righteouſneſs & peace have kiſſed each other.*

(4.) *THAT ſatisfaction being made, God ſhall forgive and forget all the offences the ſinner hath given him.* He ſhall look on them as if they had never been offered him: the ſinner ſhall be reckoned guiltleſs, and reputed as one without ſin. Jer. 31. 34. *I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their ſin no more.* 1 Joh. 3. 9. *Whoſoever is born of God doth not commit ſin: for his ſeed remaineth in him, and he cannot ſin, becauſe he is born of God.* Numb. 23. 21. *He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob.* There ſhall now an act of eternal oblivion paſs.

(5.) *THAT God ſhall of an enemy become a Father to the ſinner, and put on the bowels of a father to him.* He ſhall no longer carry it as a ſtranger, but receive him into the neareſt amity; there ſhall be no remembrance of former differences; this therefore God the Father hath promiſed to his Son in the eternal Covenant with reſpect to his ſpiritual Seed, 2 Sam. 7. 14. *I will be his father, and he ſhall be my ſon.* His Covenant people are therefore to call him ſo. Iſai. 63. 16. *Doubtleſs thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us: and Iſrael acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer, thy Name is from everlaſting.*

(6.) *THAT his people ſhall ſerve him as obedient Children all their days.* They ſhall be for him, and no other; though they have rebelled againſt him, they ſhall do ſo no more, but ſhall be firmly engaged in his ſervice. Hence that, in Iſai. 26. 13. *O Lord our God, other lords beſides thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.* 1 Pet. 1. 17.

(7.) *THAT for the confirmation of all thoſe Articles, there ſhall be a new and everlaſting Covenant plighted between them.* Iſai. 55. 3. *Encline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your ſoul ſhall live, and I will make an everlaſting covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of David.* They ſhall be engaged in the bonds of a firm and inviolable love, a league which ſhall be ratified, and made unchangeable for ever. Col. 1. 21. *And you that were ſometimes alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.* Theſe things ſhall be ſigned, ſealed, delivered, entred and enrolled, for a perpetual Covenant never to be broken.

AND now, let every Sinner that hears of theſe things reflect and conſider with himſelf, What are the Articles on which a reconciliation is to be had between God and you, and then meditate on your abſolute neceſſity of

of this reconciliation, without which you periſh for ever; and now ſay, what have you to except againſt any of them. Bleſs God then for Chriſt the great Mediator, and take heed to your ſelves that you do not neglect or deſpiſe the Salvation which is graciouſly ſet before and offered to you in the Goſpel treaty, leſt you thereby provoke him to put an end to it; and ſo put your ſelves beyond all hopes of peace, which you will certainly rue to all eternity.

[MAY 14. 1695.]

SERMON *LXXXV.*

3. HE *urgeth thoſe Articles with ſtrong and perſuaſive arguments, and ſuch as are ſuited to prevail with either party.* This alſo belongs to a Mediator's work, viz. to plead as well as to propoſe. Here then he makes ſuch offers as theſe.

(1.) *THAT he himſelf will become a mediating Surety for them.* That he will engage his fidelity, and undertake that all the terms, ſhall on each ſide be mutually performed, and fully attended without any fraud. Hence he is called *a Surety*, *Heb.*7.22. This will be conſidered in the next; here only obſerve the proffer of it. When the terms are fair, and good ſecurity is tendred for the performance, this gives a great ſtroke towards the making of a Covenant. Chriſt ſaith, as he in another caſe, Gen.43.9. *I will be ſurety for him.*

(2.) *THAT neither God nor man ſhall ſuffer any loſs by the peace that ſhall be made.* And this is a neceſſary argument. As for God, he is ſo deeply bound for his own Glory, that he will not, cannot comply with the Creature in a loſing bargain. He muſt be glorified whatever becomes of the ſinner. This is his own great end, and he will not part with it. Chriſt therefore promiſeth him as much glory to be paid him, as he could have gotten by the ruin and deſtruction of the Creature. Hence the Apoſtle equals the glory of grace with that of juſtice, *Rom.* 9. 22, 23. And Chriſt ſaith on the accompliſhment of his work, John 17. 4. *I have glorified thee on earth.* And as for man he hath ſo much by the light of nature, as makes him unwilling to be engaged to his detriment. Hence alſo the Mediator engageth that he ſhall be reſtored to as good a condition as ever he was in, 1 Cor. 15.22. *For as in Adam all die, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.* He promiſeth him ſalvation upon believing. Mar. 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized ſhall be ſaved.*

(3.) *THAT both parties ſhall be advantaged by this Covenant.* They ſhall be great gainers by the bargain. God's glory ſhall be more illuſtrated by it, than it would have been by continuing men under the firſt Covenant, and doing execution upon them according to it. In man's ruine, God had been no loſer, he ſhould have had the glory of his holineſs and juſtice; for he is known by the judgments that he executeth: but in this way, as proviſion is made, to give to theſe Attributes their full luſtre, and exalt them triumphantly, ſo beſides, way is made that the glory of his grace may be advanced, for which there was no room in the firſt Covenant, but there had been an everlaſting ſilence about it: but here it ſhall beam out its bright and reſplendent rays, to the admiration of Angels and men, and give occaſion for a new Song to be ſung in eternal *Hallelujah's* to the glory of his grace. Rom.5.20,21: *Moreover, the law entred, that the offence might abound: but where ſin abounded: grace did much more abound. That as ſin hath reigned unto death: even ſo might grace reign through righteouſneſs unto eternal life, by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* Man alſo ſhall in this way find that his firſt fall in *Adam* was in order to make his happineſs more glorious in Jeſus Chriſt; and his condition ſhall be rendred ſo much better than it could be by the firſt Covenant, as heaven is better than earth. Joh.17.24. *Father, I will that they alſo whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou haſt given me.* Where, being made a little lower than the Angels by creation, he ſhall, in his head, Chriſt, be exalted a degree above them.

4. *UPON theſe terms and arguments, the Mediator brings about the buſineſs effectually.* We read, Iſai. 53. 10. *When thou ſhalt make his ſoul an offering for ſin, he ſhall ſee his ſeed, he ſhall prolong his days, and the pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand.* For,

(1.) *HE prevails with God and man to come to a Treaty.* They are now perſwaded to reaſon together; to confer about the buſineſs of Reconciliation. Sin had before kept them off, and put them at a vaſt diſtance one from the other; they had no converſe: but by Chriſt they are brought together, to argue out the caſe and matter of difference between them, to diſcourſe freely about it. Iſai.1. 18. *Come now let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord.*

(2.) *FROM this treaty they are brought to proceed to entreaty.* They mutually ask peace one of the other. God, who in the law had breathed threatnings of wrath and ruine againſt the ſinner, held no correſpondence with him, and had ſentenced him to hell, and deſtruction, now condeſcends to ſollicit, beg, entreat, pray the ſinner to be reconciled, and accept of his peace, which he freely makes tender of to him, and ſends his Ambaſſadors to treat about it. 2 *Cor.*5.20. Yea comes with his Spirit, ſwears that he delights not in his death, begs of him to turn, tells him he is a God of mercy. *Ezek.* 33. 11. *Jer.* 3. 12. And with theſe entreaties the ſinners heart is broken, and he is melted, and falls down at God's foot full of ſhame and confuſion, freely confeſſing the unreaſonable affronts and wrongs he hath offered to God, and begs of him for Chriſt's

Chriſt's ſake to pardon and paſs them by, and accept him in the beloved, and be at peace with him. Dan. 9. 16, 17. *O Lord, according to all thy righteouſneſs, I beſeech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jeruſalem, thy holy mountain: becauſe for our ſins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jeruſalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us. Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy ſervant, and his ſupplications, and cauſe thy face to ſhine upon thy ſanctuary that is deſolate, for the Lords ſake.*

(3.) *NOW they ſtrike hands in an everlaſting Covenant.* All obſtacles being removed, the matter is brought to an upſhot, a Peace is firmly made, a Covenant ſigned and ſealed; wherein God bindeth himſelf in a promiſe, that Eternity, which ſhould have been ſpent in executing his wrath upon them, ſhall be employed in the entertainment of them with the higheſt expreſſions of an infinite love, and nothing ſhall ever make a ſeparation between them, Rom. 8. 38, 39. *For I am perſwaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.* And they on the other hand engage, that by the grace of God, they will live eternally to his praiſe, and glorify him in life, death, and for ever. Pſal. 79. 13. *So we thy people and ſheep of thy paſture, will give thee thanks for ever: we will ſhew forth thy praiſe to all generations.* Thus are God and man atoned, and made one again, all diſtances removed, all differences buried in oblivion. God hath caſt all their ſins behind his back, blotted them out as a cloud; His heart is to them, they are as the ſignet on his hand, as the apple of his eye, his jewels, his peculiar treaſure. *Mal.* 3. 17. And God is precious to them, their hearts are engaged to him, devoted to his praiſe, and ſo fixt in their love to him, that all waters of affliction cannot extinguiſh it. *Cant.* 8. 7. And all this is brought about by Chriſt as Mediator of Reconciliation.

Secondly. *CHRIST is a Mediator of Suretiſhip, for the ratifying of this Covenant between God and them.* Here alſo we may enquire after, 1. The *notion* and *quality* of a Surety among men. 2. The *neceſſity* of a Surety in the Covenant of Grace. 3. The *quality* of Chriſt's Suretiſhip; or for *what* and *how* he ſtands Surety in this Covenant.

1. *THAT we may underſtand the notion and quality of a Surety among men*, We may take up theſe Concluſions,

1. *THAT it is more to be a Mediator of Suretiſhip, than meerly of Reconciliation.* So that this conſideration will help us to further diſcoveries about the buſineſs of Mediation. A man may by the intereſt he hath in two different parties, ſo inſinuate into both, as by propoſals and perſwaſions, to bring them together, and engage them in a Covenant of amity, and ſo become a *Reconciler*, and then his work is at an end: but the work of a Surety there begins, where the other is about to conclude. By the other the man acts under no perſonal obligation, but by this he ſtands firmly obliged. *Prov.* 6. 1, 2. In the former a man may diſengage himſelf at pleaſure, in this he cannot go back, but is held faſt, and muſt ſtand to it.

2. *IT is not eſſential to the being of a Covenant, as ſuch, that there be a Surety in it.* A Covenant may be plighted without one; and ſo was the firſt Covenant between God and man. Two parties are only abſolutely neceſſary to the making of a Covenant; and a mutual engagement between theſe, is the very form of it.

3. *A Surety in a Covenant doth not make a third party in it, but becomes of the party for which he becomes Surety.* The party engaged, and his Surety, are but one in the notion of a Covenant, as is herein evident, becauſe if the Obligation be anſwered by any one of them, the Covenant is fulfilled on that part; and it was never expected that it ſhould be done by both ſeverally, for then one and the ſame condition ſhould be twice fulfilled.

4. *THE proper notion of a Surety is to ſtand bound to reſpond for another, that is firſtly concerned as a party in a Covenant.* He is one that undertakes for another, that what he is obliged to ſhall be performed, and becomes reſponſible for him. And thus is the thing ever underſtood in civil law. And hence, when a man hath once brought himſelf into Suretiſhip, the Creditor, or the other party in the Covenant, hath as ſure hold on him as on the party himſelf: he may come upon him, and he cannot refuſe to anſwer all his Suits, any more than if he were the party firſtly bound. *Prov. 6. begin.*

5. *THE principal grounds or reaſons of taking in, and engaging a Surety in a Covenant are two, viz.*

(1.) *WHEN one party may be ſuppoſed, or ſuſpected, not to be able of himſelf to perform the condition required of him.* For in making of Covenants, performance is expected; and there is no man that will engage thus ſolemnly with another, or take his bond for the doing of that, which he knows or is perſwaded he cannot of himſelf do, except he bring ſome other perſon who is able, unto whom he may apply himſelf in caſe of failure. For ſuch a Covenant would be a vain thing.

(2.) *WHEN there may be ſuſpicions and jealouſies between the parties, one of another; or at leaſt on the one party: when they dare not truſt one another, without ſome one, whom they can better confide in, do mediate, and engage.* Where there is neither of theſe caſes there is no need of Suretiſhip; but the frequent occurrence of ſuch occaſions hath introduced this way of Covenanting, for the ſecuring of intereſts.

6. *A Surety is ſometimes only for one party for whom he is bound.* As when, in caſe of neceſſity,

necessity; a man borrows money of his neighbour, he brings another, who is able, to be bound with and for him. *Sometimes for both parties*, as in Covenants of Reconciliation between parties at variance, when there needs an undertaker that each shall stand to the terms of agreement; or any other Covenant in which each party is under bonds.

7. *A Surety may stand bound for another two manner of ways*,

(1.) *IN conjunction with him for whom he becomes Surety.* As when the party himself is as well bound as the surety, and the other party may come either upon the one or the other, according to his own pleasure, for the performance of the obligation; which is the more ordinary way of Suretiship.

(2.) *BY way of commutation or exchange.* When the surety so undertakes for the party, as to remove his obligation wholly, and take it upon himself, so as to be alone liable to the suit of the Covenant, and legally called to account for the performance of it: and this may be done, either in the making of the Covenant, when the Surety manageth the whole matter, and becomes a representative of the party: or after a Covenant is made, when he takes up the parties bond, & gives his own in the room of it; and these are the more common notions that men have of a Surety.

2. WE may now inquire, *What necessity there is of a Surety in the Covenant of Grace?* And this may be considered in two respects, viz. either respecting the design of the Covenant it self; or in regard of the parties Covenanting.

1. *IN respect of the design of the Covenant it self.* God who is the deviser and author of it, intended it to be, not like the first Covenant made with *Adam*, and mankind in him, a mutable, frail, and short liv'd Covenant, but everlasting. Hence when he speaks of it, he gives it that Attribute, Isai. 55. 3. *An everlasting Covenant.* The mercies of it, were to be *sure mercies*; it was to be like God's Covenant of the day and night, *Jer.* 33. 20, 21. And there was no way for the securing of this but by a Surety. When God first indented with *Adam*, there was all the advantage given him which could be thought requisite for the enabling a mutable creature to stand to, and keep Covenant with God: the terms were fair and rational, nothing was required of him, but what it was his honour and happiness to have performed, and he was fully furnished with concreated abilities, viz. the image of God: the promises had all encouragement in them; and the threatnings were full of awe and terror: but he, standing alone by himself, lost himself, brake the Covenant, and so was undone, and all *his* with him. And if it so fell out in a *green tree*, what can be expected of *a dry one?* If *Adam* in integrity with a full stock in his hand to trade with, yet brake, what can be expected from his bankrupt posterity? God therefore, willing that his grace should be unchangeably assured and secured to his people, by a new Covenant, provided a Surety in whom to ratify it. Rom. 4. 16. *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed.* Hence the promises have their stability in him. 2 Cor. 1. 20. *For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.* The Son of God by undertaking in the Covenant, makes it impossible to fail.

2. *IN regard of the parties in the Covenant.* And here both those forementioned grounds stand as reasons of this necessity.

(1.) *The jealousies which there are between God and man each of the other.* These are such, and so rooted, that they could never comply in any other way; and they are mutual.

1. *GOD is, and that justly, jealous of man.* Since once man proved false in his Covenant with God, there is no more trusting of him. God knows that every man is *a liar*; that his heart is deceitful and desperately wicked: man's single bond is of no value; it is worth nothing at all: man is also weak, and hath many tempters, and strong temptations to draw him away; so that of himself, he would do nothing but break Covenant every day: if then Christ do not pass his word for him, God regards him not, nor any of his promises and vows.

2. *MAN also is jealous of God.* And that by reason of the infinite distance that sin hath set between them, and knowing his own condemned state, and the severity of the law, so that he dares not to trust God's word and promise of peace exhibited to him, but questions the veracity of all, Job 9. 16. *If I had called, and he had answered me; yet would I not believe that he had hearkened unto me.* These jealousies make men afraid of coming to a treaty without a Mediator, and God cannot treat men without one; much more then will they obstruct the plighting of a Covenant without a Surety. But,

(2.) *SUCH are the terms of the Covenant, that they cannot be performed by the parties themselves, without a Surety intervening.* For

1. *MERCY and Grace cannot flow down from God to a sinner, to save him, till security be given that Justice shall be satisfied.* Justice stops up the way of mercy, till it be secured of satisfaction. God is a consuming fire to sinners in himself, he can only be gracious by pardoning sin, and saving the sinner, in a Redeemer.

2. *THERE is no one Article requiring ought of man, which of himself he is able to perform.* As there are some things requisite to his being reconciled, which he cannot be used in at all; but must be wholly done by another, and were therefore put into the Covenant of Redemption; so there are other things which he is concerned in, and must do, and are therefore articles of the Covenant of Grace, viz. *Faith, Repentance, New Obedience*, and these he

he is not able of himſelf to do. As Chriſt muſt work for him in ſome things, ſo muſt he work in him in others, or elſe all would remain in him undone, and the ſecond Covenant would become as deadly to him as the firſt. 2 Cor. 3. 5. *Not that we are ſufficient of our ſelves to think any thing as of our ſelves: but our ſufficiency is of God.* Yea, had we not a Surety to perform in and for us, it were a madneſs for us to engage in it.

3. *NOW let us conſider the quality of Chriſt's Suretiſhip, or for what and how he ſtands Surety in this Covenant?* And here we muſt enquire into, 1. What manner of Suretiſhip this is? 2. The parties for whom he ſtands ſurety. 3. The things which he becomes Surety for. Of which in order.

1. *FOR what manner of Suretiſhip it is, that the Mediator ſtands engaged in.* We may reflect on what was but now obſerved, viz. that there are two ways in which one becomes a Surety, viz. in conjunction, or by way of commutation or exchange. Such as obſerve not the difference between the Covenant of Redemption, and that of Grace, aſcribe both theſe to him in different reſpects under the new Covenant. But the matter is abundantly more clear, when we aſcribe to each Covenant that which belongs to it, and by this means all ſeeming contradiction is taken off. Obſerve then, That Chriſt's Suretiſhip by way of exchange belongs to the Covenant of Redemption, and it is called Suretiſhip *Catachreſtically*; for by it he becomes the debtor, and properly the party. For he that takes up anothers bonds, and gives his own in the room, is the only one obliged, and ſo is not in the propriety of ſpeech, a Surety. Now Chriſt is, in the Covenant of Redemption, a common perſon, repreſenting all the Elect; and hence is called in Scripture, the ſecond *Adam*; being the Head of his people, and Repreſentative of them: and ſo God looks for and expects all the buſineſs of their redemption to be performed by him. So that all ſuch expreſſions in Scripture are applicable to this Covenant. But now in the Covenant of Grace, in which there is a Mediator, and where Suretiſhip properly conſidered, is propounded to us, matters ſtand otherwiſe: for, as we obſerved, this Covenant is between God & man by a Mediator; ſo that we are properly bound, and Chriſt is bound with us: and God not only ſtands engaged to Chriſt for us, but to us in Chriſt. And hence it is that in the Goſpel, new-Covenant duties are required of us, and the promiſe is made to us on condition and performance, and we are threatned if we perform them not. Rom. 8. 13. *For if ye live after the fleſh, ye ſhall die.* Heb. 12. 14. *Follow peace with all men, & holineſs, without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord.* Not that we can of our ſelves do them, but to ſhew us, how much we are concerned to fly to our Surety. And it is God's wiſdom that it ſhould be ſo, that ſo we be not careleſs and negligent in the work of our Salvation. We are not by Chriſt's Suretiſhip, left to live as we liſt, but are in the Goſpel Covenant firmly bound to believe, and ſerve God in newneſs of life, and all holy converſation, as we would maintain a good hope in our ſelves of being made partakers in the good purchaſed by Chriſt, and offered in this Covenant.

2. *CONCERNING the parties for whom he ſtands Surety*; *obſerve, That in the Covenant of Redemption he ſtood Surety no otherwiſe than as our Repreſentative*, and hence was not an interchangeable Surety: but in *the Covenant of Grace* (of which we are now ſpeaking, being a mediating Surety; hence) *his Suretiſhip is of equal latitude with the object of his Mediation*; or he is Surety for thoſe for whom he mediates; and that is for both God and the believer.

(1.) *HE is Surety for God to the believer.* He is the undertaker that all the proffer'd promiſes held out in the Goſpel Covenant ſhall be fulfilled. He gives in his bond for it to his people, that nothing ſhall fail. Man being ſuſpicious of God, and hard to believe that he will ſhew him mercy, when he comes indeed to know his own ſin, the curſe of the law, the holineſs of God, and how odious ſin is to him, hereupon there is need of a Surety. Not becauſe God is unfaithful, but becauſe man is unbelieving. Hence Chriſt is called *the Surety of a better Covenant*, Heb. 7. 22. and *Mediator* of it, Chap. 8. 6. And what is he Mediator and Surety of? See, *ver.* 10. You may read the promiſes in, *Jer.* 31. 34. Ch. 32. 39, 40. Chriſt is called Mediator of theſe, becauſe he engageth to ſee them performed.

(2.) *HE is Surety for the believer unto God.* I mention the term, believer, becauſe we are not ſpeaking of the Covenant of Redemption, where he is Surety for all the *Elect*, but that of Grace, where the Covenant is made with us on our believing, or in the working of faith in us. And we do by believing enter into Covenant with God; whence ariſeth our Relation to him as children, *Gal.* 3. 26. For, whiles, as Mediator of Reconciliation, he is pleading with, and bringing God & man together, and bowing their hearts to Covenant each with other, he puts himſelf in as a Surety; and he is not a Surety for any in the new Covenant till then. I alſo ſay the believer, becauſe Chriſt is not actual Surety for all who are viſibly or externally within the comprehenſion of the Goſpel Covenant. For the notion of a conditional Surety is derogatory to the Goſpel, and contradictory to the nature of Suretiſhip. It were ridiculous for any to give in his bond that ſuch an one ſhall pay ſuch a debt, if he will pay it. Though it is true, that Chriſt in the exhibition of the Goſpel, doth make tenders to them that are under it, on their acceptance of the offers of Grace, and coming up to the terms of the Covenant, to ſtand Surety for them.

3. *THE things for which he becomes a Surety are, either ſuch as on God's part he promiſeth to the believer, or ſuch as on the believers part he undertakes in to his Father.* 1. THE

1. *THE things which on God's part he is Surety for to the believer, are all thoſe things which God hath in the Covenant, promiſed to beſtow on his people.* Hence all the promiſes are ſaid to be made ſure and firm in him. 2 Cor. 1. 20. *For all the promiſes of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.* For, as they were made firſtly to him as the great heir of them, in the Covenant of Redemption, as the reward of that work which he there undertook and engaged in, ſo are they made to us in and through him in the Covenant of Grace. And theſe are,

(1.) *THAT great promiſe of Salvation which is made to believing:* Which is ſo often repeated in the Goſpel. When Chriſt, upon his aſcenſion, ſent forth his Diſciples to preach the Goſpel in the world, he bad them to make that promiſe from him to all ſuch, Mar. 16. 15,16. *And he ſaid unto them; Go ye into all the world, and preach the Goſpel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not ſhall be damned.* And he himſelf hath confirmed the truth of it with a double Amen. Joh. 5. 24. *Verily, verily I ſay unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that ſent me, hath everlaſting life, and ſhall not come into condemnation: but is paſſed from death to life.* And truly, this promiſe, if there were no more doth graſp all in it that is requiſite to the reſtoring of man from miſery to felicity, but there are many others comprehended under it, which are expreſly declared in the word of God. Hence,

(2.) *THE giving of his Holy Spirit:* To guide and comfort them; to direct them in their way, and give them the conſolation they need, to lead them into all truth, and eſtabliſh their hearts on God: to enlighten their minds, incline their hearts, and keep them from falling away. Joh. 16. 7. *Nevertheleſs, I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will ſend him unto you.* ver. 12,13. *I have yet many things to ſay unto you, but ye cannot bear them now: Howbeit, when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he ſhall not ſpeak of himſelf: but whatſoever he ſhall hear that ſhall he ſpeak.* 1 Pet. 1. 5. *Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation, ready to be revealed in the laſt time.*

(3.) *THAT their prayers ſhall be heard:* And anſwers of peace ſhall be returned to them, in all things that are agreable to his will, and ſhall tend to their good and ſalvation. He ſhall hear them when they call. Joh. 14. 13. *And whatſoever ye ſhall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.* Hence that, 1 Joh. 5. 14. *And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will he heareth us.*

(4.) *THAT he will pity their frailties, pardon their follies, and heal their backſlidings.* They are full of ſinful imperfections, but he knows their frame, and will not take advantage againſt them. Hence that, Pſal. 103. 3, 13. *Who forgiveth all thine iniquities: who healeth all thy diſeaſes. Like as a father pitieth his children: ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him.*

(5.) *THAT all the enemies of their ſalvation ſhall be conquered & ſubdued under them.* And none of them ſhall be able to ſtand againſt them. Rom. 16. 20. *And the God of peace ſhall bruiſe Satan under your feet ſhortly.* Joh. 16. *ult. Theſe things I have ſpoken unto you that ye might have peace, in the world ye ſhall have tribulation: but be of good chear, I have overcome the world.* All the united force of earth and hell ſhall never make a breach between God and them; neither *Sin* within, nor *Satan* & *World* without, ſhall diſſolve the Covenant. *Rom.* 8. 38, 39.

(6.) *THAT they ſhall be raiſed up at the laſt day, & being delivered from death and the grave, ſhall inherit the purchaſed poſſeſſion, and live with him in glory for ever.* Joh. 6. 39,40.

IN one word, there is never a promiſe made in the whole book of God, but a believer may take this for his comfort and ſecurity, that he hath Jeſus Chriſt become Surety for and from his Father for the fulfilling of it, according as he ſhall have real occaſion for it. So that, except He who is the truth, can prove falſe and unfaithful, there is no ground for him in the leaſt to queſtion or doubt about the certain accompliſhment of it.

[JULY 9. 1695.]

SERMON *LXXXVI.*

2. *THE things for which, on the believers part, he is Surety to God, are whatſoever is required of us in the Covenant of Grace.* As for all thoſe things that reſpect the ſatisfying of the law for us, and making up all the breaches of the Covenant of Works; they belong to the Covenant of Redemption, and have been there taken notice of: but in relation to the Covenant of Grace, he now becomes Surety for us, that whatſoever is by this Covenant commanded us, and expected at our hands, ſhall be performed *in us*, and *by us*. Now the new Covenant is built upon the Covenant of Redemption going before it, in which God, looking on himſelf as ſatisfied for the offences of his Elect by his Son, proceeds to other terms of capitulation with us. And there are divers things which God requires of us by the Goſpel, for which Chriſt becomes the undertaker.

(1.) *In the making the Covenant he engageth for our believing.* We obſerved, that Chriſt's mediating Suretiſhip appears in the ſtriking up the Covenant between God and us. Now the great term on which the new Covenant benefits are offered to us, is our believing. *Joh.* 3. 16,36. To this the promiſe of life is connected. Now when the awakened Soul hears this propoſal, he is at a loſs, he cannot believe of himſelf; and ſhould he promiſe it, he could never in his own ſtrength per-

form it; and ſo the treaty muſt break off, but that, Chriſt's mediation of Reconciliation, and that of Suretiſhip being interwoven, he is Sponſer on this account. Hence he tells us, Joh. 6. 37. *All that the Father giveth me ſhall come to me.* And Jer. 31.33. *But this ſhall be the covenant that I will make with the houſe of Iſrael, After thoſe days, ſaith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they ſhall be my people.*

(2.) *HE undertakes alſo for our new-obedience.* There is a ſanctification which God requires of all his in the new Covenant. 1 Theſ. 4. 3. *For this is the will of God, even your ſanctification.* For the law ceaſeth to be a Covenant of works to the believer; yet it ceaſeth not to be a rule of life. Though Chriſt's active obedience ſtands for one part of our juſtification before God, yet our real and active conformity to the will of God, is our habitual and practical holineſs, and ſo neceſſary in the new Covenant, that we cannot be happy without it. *Rom.*8.13.*Heb.*12.14. Though God in this Covenant accepts of truth and ſincerity, of the reality and univerſality of our obedience, notwithſtanding our many failings. This alſo Chriſt becomes Surety for. *Ezek.* 11. 19,20.

(3.) *HE becomes bound for their perſeverance and abiding in the faith unto the end.* That they ſhall not depart from God any more with a total backſliding. This alſo is required in the Goſpel Covenant. God hath ſaid, Heb. 10.38. *If any man draw back, my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him.* Jeſus Chriſt engageth that he will keep them, and keep Grace alive in them. Hence that, 1 Pet. 1. 5. *Who are kept by the mighty power of God, through faith unto ſalvation.* And this alſo is part of the meaning of that promiſe, Joh. 6. 39, 40. *And this is the Fathers will which hath ſent me, that of all which he hath given me, I ſhould loſe nothing, but ſhould raiſe it up again at the laſt day. And this is the will of him that ſent me, that every one which ſeeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlaſting life: and I will raiſe him up at the laſt day.* viz. That he ſhall not be loſt by any violation of the Covenant, but be preſerved to a glorious Reſurrection. And on this account it is that he had loſt none of all that had been given him by his Father.

(4.) *HE is Surety for their fidelity to God in their ſpiritual warfare.* They ſhall, as good Soldiers, be true to their Lord and Captain. Every believer, when he enters into Covenant with God, liſteth himſelf in his ſervice againſt *Sin* & *Satan.* His heart is deceitful, and like a warping bow; but Chriſt engageth for his fidelity. Hence *Paul* aſcribes it to him, 1 Cor. 7. 25. *I give my judgment as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord, to be faithful.* And depends upon him for it, 2 *Tim.* 4. 18. In ſum, there is no duty enjoyned us by the Goſpel, but, if we are in this Covenant, we have Chriſt, a Surety with his Father, that we ſhall ſo do it, as ſhall be acceptable to him. So that, whatever we are called to, and find our own ſtrength deficient in, we may repair to him, and humbly challenge his help as engaged for us, and place our reliance thereupon. Thus is he a Mediator of Suretiſhip.

Thirdly. *HE is a Mediator of Interceſſion, to preſerve this Covenant inviolable.* The doctrine of Chriſt's Interceſſion, will come to be diſtinctly treated of under his Prieſtly Office, ſo far as he intercedes with God. I ſhall not therefore here inſiſt on it. Only let us here conſider how he acts the part of a Mediator in this work, by taking notice how he maintains, and continues the Covenant between God and us, ſo that there is no diſſolution made of it; and this he doth by always going between God and us, to prevent or make up breaches. And herein alſo he applies himſelf to both. Of which in particular.

1. *HE applies himſelf to God for us.* For this reaſon he is ſaid to be gone into the heavens to appear for us. *Heb.*9.24. He is our Reſident there. And here obſerve,

1. *THAT the children of God do many ways give him great provocation by their unſuitable carriage.* There are many things which they do, that diſpleaſe God. 2 *Sam.* 11. *ult.* Tho' he is reconciled to their perſons, yet there are the remainders of ſin in them, which through its own deceitfulneſs, and the ſubtlety of the adverſary is very apt to break forth into Act, at which God cannot but be angry, and that juſtly. And how many inſtances of this are there ſtanding on Scripture record?

2. *THAT the ſins and provocations of God's own Children deſerve that his fury ſhould break out upon them, and burn againſt them.* Sin, wherever it is, hath the ſame nature. And we are told what reſentments God hath of it, Hab. 1. 13. *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canſt not look on iniquity.* The beſt and moſt holy of men have therefore made free confeſſion of this demerit, when they have thus defiled themſelves. *Dan.* 9. 5, 8. *Pſal.* 130. 3.

3. *THAT God doth ſometimes manifeſt his diſpleaſure in the fruits of it, upon his children.* There are thoſe diſplays of his anger which are terrible. Did not *David*, did not *Solomon*, did not *Aſa*, and others experience this? He makes a way for his wrath, caſts a frowning look on them, puts them into terrors & ſore amazements, threatens as if he would deſtroy them; brings them very low, and hides his face away from them, as Iſai. 57. 17. *For the iniquity of his covetouſneſs was I wroth, & ſmote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart.*

4. *IF now we had not a Mediator to appear for us, our caſe would be very ſad.* If Chriſt were not in heaven, to ſpeak a good word for us, to ſtand between us, and the burning anger of a jealous God, it would go ill with us. He now therefore interpoſeth, takes up the quarrel, and pleads for us, and in this way,

way God is pleaſed to ſpare us. *Moſes* was an eminent *Type* of this. And we have an excellent deſcription of it, *Numb.* 14. 13, *to* 20. where he pleads every argument in the Covenant, and ceaſeth not till he hears God ſpeak a pardon. Thus Chriſt our Mediator preſents himſelf before God for his people, puts him in mind that they are his people, ſuch whom he hath choſen and redeemed to be his own, in whoſe deliverance from the bondage of Satan, and ſlavery of ſin he hath wonderfully appeared; whom he hath often pardoned hitherto, and to whom he hath made known his glorious Attributes of grace and mercy, and with whom he hath made a Covenant. He preſents his own obedience, and urgeth the Covenant that he made with him; that they are his Spouſe, that he hath ſhed his blood for them, that he hath bought them, and ſaved them with an high hand, and outſtretched arm; that the honour of God's power, truth and goodneſs is here concerned. And he who never was denied in any requeſt, is heard in this, and mercy is obtained for them. As to the glorious manner of Chriſt's doing this, it is above our preſent comprehenſion; but that he doth that which is anſwerable to ſuch a thing as this is, the Scripture gives us to underſtand. And did he not thus plead for us with his Father, all our pleas in our prayers would be invalid, and of no efficacy at all. Our acceſs to God is thro' this Mediator, out of whom he is a conſuming fire.

2. *HE alſo applies himſelf to us from God.* And this alſo is very needful in this part of his mediation: for God's ways of Providence towards his people, are oftentimes abſtruſe and dark; and we, by reaſon of ignorance, are apt to miſinterpret them, and call God's love and fidelity in queſtion, and hereupon to be diſcouraged in our work, and ſtand ſtill in our way. We do not always know God's ends, and are ready to ſuſpect that his purpoſes are for hurt, and not for good. Thus *David* in great perplexity is almoſt overwhelmed with his jealouſies, *Pſal.* 77. 7, &c. Thus *Job* under his affliction, *Job* 19. 6, *to* 12. So *Hezekiah* in his ſickneſs, *Iſai.* 38. 13, 14. And the *Church*, *Iſai.* 49. 14. *Pſal.* 44. 23, 24. Here therefore alſo Chriſt puts in, and takes pains with his people to ſettle their hearts and thoughts, and perſwade them of the grace and good-will of God to them; of his wiſe, holy, and loving ends in all the viſitations which he brings on them. And this he doth,

1. *BY bearing witneſs of the intimate and incomparable love of God to his People.* How he hath imprinted on his heart a perpetual remembrance of them *Iſai.* 49. 15.

2. *BY diſcovering to them the deſign of all ſuch diſpenſations.* He lets them ſee that the aim and end of them is not, as they miſinterpret, their harm, but their good and advantage: that he intends their benefit by all, and that therefore it ſhall certainly be ſo in the iſſue, ſince he was never defeated in bringing about of his purpoſes. *Jer.* 29. 11.

3. *BY making them to know that there is love in afflictions, as well as mercies.* That God ſometimes ſhews his deareſt love to his children in his afflicting them. *Heb* 12. 6. And this, both by ſhewing them the need they ſtood in of them, and cauſing them to experience their gracious operation. *Pſal.* 119. 71, 75.

4. *BY giving them aſſurance that all his hidings of his countenance, and diſplays of his fatherly diſpleaſure, ſhall never ſeparate them from his love, but ſhall end in their good and ſalvation.* *Rom.* 8. 28. And as he gives them to underſtand the truth of theſe things in his word, ſo he ſeals up the belief of it on their Souls by his Spirit, and ſo he quiets them.

9. *WE may in the laſt place inquire, How long Chriſt's Mediatorſhip is to continue?*

A. WE may take a brief and yet full reſolution of this Inquiry in the following aſſertions,

1. *THAT as Chriſt was delegated to this Office before time, ſo the efficacy of it ſhall abide thro' Eternity.* We before obſerved that he was ordained hereto from everlaſting; the matter was appointed and ratified in the Covenant of Redemption. Now he is to have the fruits of this great work, and to rejoyce in them for ever. There ſhall be the endleſs monuments of this, which ſhall be to him for a name and for a praiſe; even all thoſe many Sons whom he ſhall by it bring to glory. He ſhall be admired in them world without end. There are Songs of triumph which ſhall be ſung in acknowledgment of him. *Rev.* 5. 12, 13, 14.

2. *THAT, as there was a time when he entred on the execution of this Office, ſo there will be a time when he will have accompliſhed it, and be diſcharged of it.* We obſerved, that he began this buſineſs, when man's neceſſity called for it, and that was, when upon his violation of the Covenant of Works, there was a new Covenant of Grace exhibited, in which he was to be the undertaker. And we are alſo told that there is a day coming wherein he ſhall make a reſignation of this Mediatorial Kingdom, when he hath put an end to the whole affair of it. So we are aſſured, in 1 *Cor.* 15. 28.

3. *THAT Chriſt will abide in the execution of this Office ſo long as there is any work for him to do in it.* He is a perpetual Mediator; called *a Prieſt for ever*, Pſal. 110. 4. where *for ever* is oppoſed to the *Levitical Prieſthood*, which was to expire in a while, but his was to laſt to the end. And on this account his Goſpel Kingdom is ſaid to be immoveable. *Heb.* 12. 28. So that it cannot ceaſe ſo long as the deſign of it needs him to carry it on. When that is accompliſhed, and not till then, will he lay it by; when the work is finiſhed. And by that we may reſolve when it is like to be. Here then,

(1.) *THE ſpecial deſign of the new Covenant, whereof he is Mediator, is to bring God's Elect to glory.* His Mediatorſhip hath an inſeparable reſpect to that Covenant. *Heb.* 12. 24.

whatſoever acceſs there is to the glory of God's revenging Juſtice from thoſe who have deſpiſed the offers of this Covenant; it is certain that it had never been opened but on the account of God's exalting the glory of his Grace on ſome whom he had appointed to it; and that is in bringing them to Salvation, and inveſting them with eternal life. It is in purſuance of that love which God hath to them in the days of Eternity.

(2.) *HENCE, ſo long as there is any thing to be done for any of theſe on this account, he cannot ceaſe the purſuit of his Office.* The buſineſs lies upon his hands, if he ſhould neglect it, it would fail. And then,

1. *IT muſt laſt as long as there are any of God's Elect to be born.* For they muſt be born in order to his doing this work for them, or at leaſt, conceived; they muſt have an actual being. Now God will have ſome of thoſe as long as the world ſtands in all ages; it is for their ſake that it continues. Chriſt therefore ſo expreſſeth himſelf in his mediatorial prayer, Joh. 17. 20. *Neither pray I for theſe alone, but for them alſo which ſhall believe on me through their word.* And he tells his diſciples, Joh. 10. 16. *And other ſheep I have, which are not of this fold: them alſo I muſt bring, and they ſhall hear my voice; and there ſhall be one fold, and one ſhepherd.* He hath the ſame charge lying upon him for one that he hath for another; the ſame love to them, and the ſame faithfulneſs to his undertaking engageth him.

2. *IT muſt continue till he hath fitted all theſe for the Kingdom, and carried them over all the dangers of miſſing it.* All that is needful to reconcile them and God in one, and to keep them from falling out of that love, and preſerve them from all their enemies who ſeek their ruine, belongs to this charge of his; and ſo long as they are in this world, and have ſin in them, and ſo many ſly and potent adverſaries without them, they are not ſafe any further than he taketh care of them; till that which is perfect is come, and that which is imperfect be done away, he cannot be ſpared from this employment; it muſt therefore laſt till the end, and he hath put down all that oppoſeth. 1 Cor. 15. 25. *For he muſt reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.*

3. *IT muſt continue till the great Judgment be finiſhed.* God hath appointed the great Judgment to be managed by him, and it belongs to him as he is Mediator. And though the Judgment of the ungodly, and ſpecially of thoſe who never heard of the Goſpel Covenant, be an honorary added and conferred upon him; yet the laſt Judgment, as it reſpects his Redeemed, properly belongs to this diſpenſation, in as much as they are not perfectly glorified in all the complements of it, till they receive the bleſſed ſentence from him, and have the crown of righteouſneſs ſet upon their heads by his hands. 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. when he hath delivered them from all their enemies, perfected them in holineſs, & brought them into, and poſſeſſed them of the everlaſting Kingdom; then the work is done, the Covenant compleated; they in full fruition of the love of God, and no more in danger of any breach between them world without end.

USE. THERE are ſeveral worthy Inferences may be drawn from the conſideration of Chriſt's Mediatorſhip.

1. *IS Chriſt the Mediator? What need then of Angels and Saints to mediate for us?* The madneſs of *Popery*, in conſtituting many Mediators, is here diſcovered, and the idolatry of their invoking of them as ſuch. Their practice in this is too well known. Vain is their diſtinction, when they ſay, Chriſt is only Mediator of Redemption, but they alſo of Interceſſion; ſince the one of theſe equally belongs to his Office with the other. Beſides, when they apply themſelves not only to their perſons, but to their merits, do they not therein make them Mediators of Redemption too. *Moſes* indeed extraordinarily, and the *High-Prieſt* ordinarily, were Types of Chriſt the Mediator; and their oblation and interceſſion were typical, but his only ſubſtantial. And for men to direct their prayers to theſe as Interceſſors, is without warrant, and renders them guilty of ſuperſtition, and contempt of Chriſt, ſuppoſing him not ſufficient, or at leaſt dividing his glory, & making others ſharers with him in it. What though we are here bound to pray one with and for another? we are not therefore to pray one to another. One Saint prays for another, not as a Mediator, but as we are brethren joyntly concerned for each others good. We worſhip them not in asking their prayers. But praying to dead Saints is an act of worſhip, and renders contemptible the Mediation of Chriſt, as if he could not, or would not hear us. We are told, Act. 4. 12. *Neither is there ſalvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we muſt be ſaved.*

2. *DOTH fallen man ſtand in abſolute need of a Mediator? How great a diſtance then hath Sin ſet us at from God? and how wonderful was the love of God in providing us with ſuch an One?* The breach made by ſin muſt ſurely be very great, and therefore we may in it diſcover the vile nature of Sin. Time was when God and man could ſpeak familarly one to another, but now there is a wall ſo high raiſed between them, the diſtance is ſo great that there is no intercourſe; & ſuch is the eſtrangedneſs betwixt them, as, had not the Son of God come to pull down the partition wall, and make peace, we could never have had liberty to ſpeak with God or ask mercy of him. *Eph.* 2. 14. Which ſhould teach us to loath all ſin, and abhor our ſelves in duſt and aſhes for it. The conſideration that there is a Mediator between God and man, tells us they are fallen out, & become enemies; which ſhould put us upon inquiring into

into the ground of the controverſy, and humble us for it. And withal it invites us to contemplate God's admirable kindneſs, in thus gratifying our neceſſity, by inveſting his Son with this Office. *Joh.* 3. 16. Neceſſity greatens a benefit. When we remember, that if the Son of God had not come to take up and compoſe the controverſy between God and us, he would have been our enemy for ever; and we muſt have ſuffered the impreſſions of his anger to eternity. And now to ſee God himſelf ſending his own Son out of his boſome, commiſſioned to become *a days-man*, to make peace, and bring about an everlaſting Covenant, well-ordered in all things, and ſure. What an unſpeakable obligation is hereby laid upon us to magnify and praiſe his great Name?

3. *IS Chriſt the Mediator of the new Covenant?* Learn hence,

1. *THE miſerable eſtate of the greater part of mankind.* It herein appears, in that they have no Mediator to ſtand between God & them, to put an end to the controverſy that ſin hath made: And ſuch are all thoſe who are ſtill under the Covenant of Works. Some there be who live out of the reach of the promulgation of the new Covenant, they never heard of this good news; and ſuch are all they who are ſtrangers to the Goſpel. And what multitudes are there of theſe in the world, who are not favoured with the glad tidings of peace? Theſe have no Mediator, and therefore muſt needs periſh. How ſhould we then condole their caſe, and pray earneſtly for them? But others there be who are born under the diſpenſation of the Goſpel Covenant; who have had this great priviledge urged upon them, and been entreated to accept of Chriſt to be a Mediator for them, and poſſibly boaſt of their title to him, but they were never brought over to a cordial cloſure with him, by a true and living faith, but are ſtill unbelievers; and are therefore, as to their natural eſtate, under the firſt Covenant: theſe have no Mediator, none to plead with God for them, none to become their Surety, to ſtand between them and everlaſting burnings. And hence it comes to paſs, that, as Covenant-breakers, they remain under the wrath of God. They ſtand condemned. Without a Mediator, *God is a conſuming fire*; there is no approaching to him. They have none to ſpeak on their behalf, none to make ſatisfaction for their offences, none to become Surety for them. No blood of ſprinkling to be applied to them. And thus they remain without hope, & muſt needs periſh for ever. They muſt anſwer for themſelves; they muſt bear the puniſhment of their own iniquities: they muſt either pleaſe God with their own righteouſneſs, which they can never do, or elſe they muſt ſuffer all the wrath and diſpleaſure of the Almighty, which is, by the ſentence of the firſt Covenant, denounced againſt ſinners. And let all thoſe that are not by faith, gotten into Chriſt, think of it, and look to it. You may think for the preſent to do well enough: but I aſſure you, when God ſhall enkindle his fury into a flame againſt ſinners, and you ſhall come in the way of it, and have no Mediator to interpoſe between it and you, you will rue it for ever.

2. *WHENCE is it that any are won and perſwaded to be at peace with God, and enter into Covenant with him.* Man is not only an enemy to God, but hath an *enmity* againſt God deeply rooted in him, which keeps him from being reconciled. *Rom.* 8. 7. By vertue of this, none of *Adam's* children would ever enquire after God, or ſeek peace with him. So that if at any time, we ſee a ſinner throwing down his arms, confeſſing his ſins, juſtifying God, taking ſhame to himſelf, and imploring pardon and peace, we may truly conclude that the Mediator hath been at work on that Soul. The ſame means are uſed with others, who yet remain obſtinate. And for this reaſon we ſhall obſerve thoſe that are beſt diſpoſed morally, remain in their native rebellion; and the moſt ill diſpoſed, and rough hewn, wro't up to ſuch a compliance; which declares it to be his work on them, & it is to be acknowledged to the praiſe of the great Mediator.

3. *THAT the new Covenant muſt needs be perpetual and unchangeable.* It is called *an Everlaſting Covenant.* And the mercies of it are ſaid to be *ſure*, Iſai. 55. 3. And whence comes it to be ſo, but becauſe it hath a Mediator, and ſuch a Mediator in it? Man is not leſs, but more like to fail under this, than the firſt, having *then* nothing in him, but mutability to expoſe him, whereas *now* he hath a body of death: but Chriſt is the undertaker: both God and the believer refer to him the management of all, and except he can fail, the Covenant muſt ſtand firm. He looks after all parts, and therefore till he can ceaſe to be a Mediator, the Covenant cannot poſſibly be made void.

4. *THAT they muſt needs be in a good & ſafe ſtate that are gotten within the new Covenant.* Whatſoever apprehenſion ſuch may have of ſin and wrath, and juſtice, and ſelf-inſufficiency to do any thing that is required of them, and how ſenſible ſoever they may at ſometimes be of their fathers diſpleaſure, yet ſtill they have this comfort & ſupport, they have a Mediator, who is their Surety & Advocate, who hath undertaken for them in all the Articles of the new Covenant, who will interpoſe when they ſin. 1 Joh. 2. 1. *If any man ſin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous.* Who will perfume their prayers, and make them ſavoury. *Rev.* 8. 2. who will ſecure for them all the good laid up in the promiſe, fulfil in them the condition of the Covenant, and bring them to eternal glory. Let it then be the great care of every one of us, to ſee that we are truly entitled to this Mediator; and reſt not till we have made it ſure. And now let us make improvement of him as ſuch, as for our help in doing the work of our generation, ſo for our confidence and comfort, in expectation to be brought ſafely home to the eternal Kingdom.

[AUGUST 6. 1695.]

SER-

SERMON *LXXXVII.*

WE have conſidered the great Office that Chriſt was Anointed unto; under which there are ſeveral Offices unto the execution whereof he was inaugurated; which will be after conſidered. We may now take a brief account,

II. *OF the Anointing it ſelf:* By which he was more immediately fitted to the diſcharge of the great work of Redemption. This work being, in reſpect of the Subject redeem'd, a work of meer Grace, both in Chriſt's performance, and the Fathers acceptance, there needed ſomething more than his bare Incarnation to fit him for the effectual going thro' that work. There having therefore been an eternal Covenant about it, it was meet that, when the Son of God was incarnate, he ſhould be inaugurated and confirmed in that Office; that ſo he might perform the buſineſs with Authority. And for that end he was to have all ſuch Offices under this as were needful for the accompliſhing of it. This inveſtiture is that which is called his *Unction* or *Anointing*. This was fore-ſpoken of in the Old-Teſtament. Pſal. 2. 6. *Yet have I ſet my King upon my holy hill of Zion.* Pſal. 45.7. *Thy God hath anointed thee with the oyl of gladneſs above thy fellows.* And we have a particular deſcription of it in, *Iſai.* 61. *begin.* which Chriſt applies to himſelf, *Luk.* 4.18. He was therefore pointed at and looked for in the days of the law, under the denomination of the *Meſſiah*, which ſignifies *the Anointed one*; and is, in the days of the Goſpel, called *Chriſt*; which is of the ſame import. Anointing was of frequent uſe under the *Ceremonial* law; they anointed the *High Prieſts:* and there was an Oyntment of Conſecration appointed for the ſame purpoſe. *Lev.* 6. 20. *Ch.* 16. 32. Their *Kings* alſo were anointed; and hence called *the Lord's anointed*, 1 Sam. 24. 10. So in like manner the *Prophets*, 1 Kin. 19. 16. Now Chriſt in his ſeveral functions was typified by theſe things; theſe were ſhadows which pointed to him as the ſubſtance. And there were two things more eſpecially aimed at in the ceremony of anointing, both of which are conſiderable, and applicable to Chriſt, in the preſent caſe.

1. *THIS Unction was a ſolemn & ſacred Rite, whereby the perſon anointed, was ſeparated from other men, and conſecrated to ſome ſpecial office work, by which act he was declared to be called of God to it.* Anointing was a ſignal conſecration; it was a *ritual* ſanctification of the perſon to his employment. Hence all the Veſſels of the Sanctuary were anointed, and ſo ſanctified. *Lev.* 8. 10, 11. Thus all believers are ſaid to be anointed, 1 Joh. 2. 20. *But ye have an unction from the holy One, and ye know all things.* Being all of them made unto God ſpiritual *Kings* & *Prieſts.* 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. *Rev.* 5. 10.

2. *THE ceremonial Anointing was alſo a Type of thoſe ſuitable gifts of the Spirit, which were poured out upon the perſons ſo Anointed.* It ſignified their being furniſhed with abilities for the execution of the ſervice to which they were ſignally ſeparated in their anointing. In this regard, the anointing which believers have, is ſaid *to teach them*, 1 Joh. 2. 27. Beſides, we know that all ſacred Ceremonies had ſome ſpiritual meaning; and the anointing with oyl, typified *the giving of the Spirit.* It muſt therefore denote the fruits of the Spirit, which were eſpecial gifts fitting men for office; which gifts were ſometimes beſtowed where ſaving Grace was not conferred; and ſo intimates *Office Gifts.* We read of *Saul*, that after his anointing, he had *another heart*, 1 Sam. 10. 1, 9. Both of theſe things are to be taken notice of in the explication of the Unction of Chriſt.

THAT Chriſt ever received the Ceremonial Unction we no where read. For he, being the Antitype, was to have the things ſignified accompliſhed in him. And though, ſo far as he was under the ceremonial law, he attended the ceremonies of it: hence he was circumciſed, and there was an offering for him, &c. yet becauſe he was not a *Levitical* Prieſt, nor was his Kingdom of this world. He received no ſuch ceremonies for his inſtalment, but that which was ſignified by them, that he received. There are then two things to be conſidered of in the illuſtration of the Doctrine of Chriſt's Unction. 1. His Vocation to the Office work of Redemption. 2. The Spiritual endowments with which he was furniſhed for the compleat execution of this Office.

(1.) *AS to his Vocation to the Office work of Redemption*, let theſe things be taken notice of.

1. *THAT Jeſus Chriſt did not intrude himſelf into this Office and Work of his own head.* He did not aſſume to himſelf the honour of a Redeeming Mediator without a clear call, and manifeſt introduction into it. The Scripture makes much of this poſition, as of a thing to be well obſerved. The Apoſtle therefore urgeth it in *Heb.* 5. 4. And there is great reaſon for it: for, beſides that the law requiring full ſatisfaction for offence given it by the ſin of man, there muſt be a ſufficient price paid for the buying him out of the hands of the law; there is alſo the grace, or free favour of God appearing in the accepting of an exchange, and being ſatisfied in the obedience and ſufferings of another, upon the account of thoſe who were the tranſgreſſors, and had given the offence. So that meer ſuitableneſs & ſufficiency could not be enough for the making him actually our Redeemer, without a compact or agreement, in which he was deputed by God, and conſented of himſelf, to undertake in this affair. God had elſe been under no obligation, to diſcharge us on his account.

2. *THERE was a deputation or aſſignment of Chriſt to this work from Eternity:* And that by a mutual compact or agreement between the Father

Father and the Son, in which this was ratified and confirmed between them; and the Son was therewithal inveſted with all authority from his Father to this buſineſs; which is that we call the Covenant of Redemption: Of which hath been already treated. Which deputation, though it may in a ſenſe anſwer the notion of Unction in the firſt conſideration; yet it is not *that* we are now looking upon; for this work was not eternal, but in time, and was done when God brought his Son into the world. It was performed in Jeſus Chriſt incarnate, and for that reaſon it preſuppoſeth his Incarnation; but yet here the foundation of it was laid.

3. *THAT there was an actual inſtalment of Chriſt into his Office, when he entred upon the diſcharge of the work of Redemption.* For he could not properly be ſaid to receive the Spirit till then. That required his being man; on which nature it was to be poured; the ſecond Perſon did only improperly receive it before, viz. as it was by Covenant engaged to his humanity, when it ſhould be ſo aſſumed by him. *David* in this was a *Type* of Chriſt, that he was twice anointed, and therein deputed and conſecrated to be King of *Iſrael*: the one was ſecretly by *Samuel*, 1 Sam. 16. anſwering, or repreſenting the deputation of Chriſt in the Covenant of Redemption: The other was by all *Iſrael*, 2 Sam. 5. 3. which was typical of this whereof we are now diſcourſing.

NOW concerning this Unction of Chriſt, if it be inquired, *what it was*, or *when it was done?* It may be replied to the *former*, that we have it ſet forth to us in Act. 10 38. *How God anointed Jeſus of Nazareth, with the holy Ghoſt, & with power.* Where we are to obſerve, The Author of it, who is God; and here eſpecially points us to the Father, by whom he is ſo often in Scripture ſaid to be ſent; which implies his being authorized to what he came about. The thing it ſelf, *is*, *God anointed him*, i.e. He did that to him that anſwered the *Type*, and was ſignified by it. The nature of it is, that he did it *by the Holy Ghoſt and with power.* Some underſtand it to be an *Hebraiſm*, and to ſignify, by the moſt powerful Spirit Others ſuppoſe it to intend the deſcent of the Spirit upon him, & the gift of miracles which he had thereby. But doubtleſs it includes in it, both the vertue which he received for his diſcharging his work, intimated by the Spirit, and the Authority he received to exert that vertue for the ends of it, expreſſed by *power*. As to the *latter*, this anointing was diſcovered in and by all thoſe ſolemn manifeſtations that God was pleaſed to make of himſelf in the confirmation of Chriſt in this work: many whereof are recorded in the Goſpel: but the principal, and moſt obſervable of theſe was at his *Baptiſm*, when the Spirit of God deſcended viſibly upon him, and a voice from Heaven publiſhed the divine approbation of him in the great work he was engaged in, and upon the public purſuance whereof he was now about to enter, recorded in, *Math. 3. latter end.* And in this reſpect the Unction belongs to the perſon of Chriſt, *God-man*, properly; for it was according to both his natures that he was confirmed by his Fathers approbation, *Mat. 3. 17.*

(2.) *AS for the ſpiritual endowments which he was furniſhed with, for the execution of his Office*, we may take up this general concluſion concerning it, *That the Holy Ghoſt took up his dwelling in the aſſumed Humanity of Chriſt, filling him with an unmeaſurable fulneſs of all ſuitable graces for the diſcharge of the work of man's Redemption.* And in this he received all that which was ſignified by the *anointing oyl* which was poured on them of old. For the diſtinct opening of this, let theſe things be obſerved,

1. *THAT it was Chriſt perſonally, or the whole Perſon of Chriſt* God-man, *who was deputed to, and ſolemnly inaugurated in the work of Redemption and Mediation.* And ſo the whole Perſon of Chriſt, may be truly ſaid, as to Ordination, to be anointed to his Office by the Spirit of God. It was not only the Humanity that was engaged, but the Son of God undertook it in the days of Eternity, and he aſſumed our nature to do it in. He undertook it before he took our nature; and then he undertook to take our nature on him. This he did meerly as a divine Perſon, and was therefore conſtituted *of old.* Prov. 8. 23. *I was ſet up from everlaſting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.* The word *ſet up*, uſed there, denotes a ſolemn deputation and inſtalment. And it was the Son in our nature, who was in fulneſs of time thus ordained & proclaimed, Mat. 3. 16, 17. *And lo the heavens were opened unto him, and he ſaw the Spirit of God deſcending like a dove, and lighting upon him. And lo a voice from heaven, ſaying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* And indeed, there is the neceſſary concurrence of both his natures in all the works wherein our Redemption and Salvation are concerned. It was therefore meet that he ſhould be conſecrated to it according to both natures. Nor is this diſagreeing with, but conſonant to the œconomy of the Perſons in the ſacred Trinity. As the Son is from the Father, ſo may he be deputed by him.

2. *THAT the divine nature in Chriſt cannot be ſaid to be Anointed, with reſpect to any qualifications or endowments of gracious influence or aſſiſtance from the Spirit of God.* The want of diſtinguiſhing the Perſon according to the two natures which are in it, and aſſigning to each of theſe natures what is proper to it, was one reaſon why the *Arians* denied the Divinity of Chriſt, becauſe ſuch things are aſcribed to his Perſon which cannot agree to the divine nature, and one of theſe is his receiving the graces of the Spirit. Not conſidering, that whatſoever belongs to either of his two natures, belongs to the Perſon in regard to that nature, though it be not predicable of the other nature. Now it is certain

tain that the divine nature in Chriſt, is the whole Deity in all its eſſential perfections, to which there can be nothing added. He is, as God, *bleſſed for ever*, and poſſeſſeth ſuch a fulneſs, as he thinks it *no robbery to be equal with God*, Phil. 2. 6. As God, he is equally with the Spirit, the Author of all Grace, and his divinity influenceth and repleniſheth his Humanity with all the Grace it is poſſeſſed of, and upon this account is he ſaid to ſanctify himſelf to his work. Joh. 17. 19. *And for their ſakes I ſanctify my ſelf, that they alſo might be ſanctified through the truth.* So that when we ſay, that Chriſt the Son of God was filled with the Spirit, and Grace, we are to underſtand it in reference to the Perſon who is the Son of God, but not with reſpect to the nature which is Divine; but as it is perſonally united to the other nature which is Humane.

3. *IT is the humane nature, which is received into the perſonal union with the Son of God, that is the immediate ſubject of all thoſe gifts and graces, wherewith Chriſt was anointed of the Spirit.* It was the Tabernacle which was filled from end to end with the glory of God, as ſoon as it was reared up by *Moſes*, Exod. 40. 34. And this was to ſignify to us, that it was the humane nature, in which the Son of God tabernacled, which had theſe fillings of the Spirit, Joh. 1. 14. It was the *man-Chriſt* upon whom, when he came out of the Waters, the Holy Ghoſt deſcended in the form of a Dove. *Math.* 3. 16. The Son of God had undertaken to redeem and ſave us; He was not capable of performing this undertaking, but by taking of our nature upon him; He could not be ſubject to the law without it; He could neither *do* nor *ſuffer* in obedience to it but in ſuch a nature. It was a wonderful work which this nature was to be engaged in and carried through. If it had failed in it, the whole contrivance of our Salvation muſt needs have been fruſtrated, and we have been left hopeleſs for ever. It muſt therefore have mighty aids and aſſiſtances to help it in, and carry it through this affair. It was a frail humanity in it ſelf, it needed to be ſupported, influenced, filled with all grace, to keep him from failing in, or ſinking under his work. It could not do this for it ſelf, and therefore it had it all from the eternal Spirit. He is therefore ſaid *to offer himſelf by it*, Heb. 9. 14. This then was it which was the ſubject recipient of this Grace; and for that reaſon is he ſaid *to be filled with the Spirit*, Luk. 4. 1.

4. *WE are not to apprehend that the Holy Ghoſt dwelt perſonally in the humane nature of Chriſt.* It properly belongs to the Sons manner of working, to dwell *perſonally* in that Humanity which was aſſumed. Joh. 1. 14. *And the word was made fleſh, & dwelt among us.* It is true, *there was the fulneſs of the God-head which dwelt in him bodily*, Col. 2. 9. Yet this is to be conſidered as it ſubſiſteth in the Perſon of the Son of God, which, though it be a myſtery above our comprehenſion, is yet to be believed upon divine teſtimony; for though the blood that was ſhed, is called the blood of God; yet as the Father is never ſaid to be Incarnate, ſo neither is the Holy Ghoſt ever ſaid to be man. But he may be ſaid to be in him in two reſpects,

[1.] *BY infuſing all thoſe habits of grace into his humane nature, at his Incarnation, whereby it was habitually prepared for its work.* This Humanity was to be for the eternal Son of God to dwell in, and to be employed by him in his whole mediatorial diſpenſation; it was therefore meet that it ſhould be accordingly ſuited; and that was by filling it from the conception with that habitual holineſs, which might render it every way ſuitable for him. The curious workmanſhip which was beſtowed on the making of the Tabernacle, was typical of this. He is the holy One of *Iſrael*, and cannot lodge in an humanity that is impure; this humanity therefore is called *that holy thing*, Luk. 1. 35. And this was done by the ſanctification of the Spirit. Pſal. 45. 2. *Grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath bleſſed thee for ever.* *Iſai.* 11. 2, 3. As the firſt *Adam* had the image of God on him, when he came out of God's hands, which was nothing elſe but the body of ſanctifying Graces, furniſhing him for obedience; ſo had the *Second Adam*, a fulneſs of this image on his humane nature in the aſſumption of it.

[2.] *BY his conſtant glorious preſence with him, influencing, and aſſiſting of his humane nature in us whole work.* And this appears in two reſpects,

1. *BY maintaining the life & vigour of thoſe habitual principles in him.* Act. 10. 38. *God anointed Jeſus of Nazareth with the holy Ghoſt, and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed of the devil: for God was with him.* The word, *power*, often ſignifies vigour and efficacy; intimating that by the preſence of the Holy Ghoſt in him, that vertue which was at firſt infuſed into his humanity, was upheld and continued in him, ſo that he never failed, but his grace abode in its ſtrength. The humane nature of Chriſt was in it ſelf a frail & mutable thing, it muſt therefore be preſerved by an Almighty power and influence; and this was done by the conſtant abode of the Spirit on him. It was this precious anointing which upheld him. We read that it is the anointing of believers which keeps them *from falling*, 1 Joh. 2. 26, 27. And after a more glorious manner was the man Chriſt ſupported by the glorious *Unction* which he received. He is ſaid to pray for it, and to be heard, *Heb.* 5. 7.

2. *BY aſſiſting his humane nature in all the actings and operation of thoſe principles.* It is a matter of greateſt admiration to conſider what the man Chriſt was called to go thro' in the performance of the buſineſs of man's Redemption. What trials he met with, what ſore temptations aſſaulted him, how he was not only to combat with all the powers of earth and hell, but to ſuſtain the whole weight of God's wrath which was out againſt

ſinners

ſinners in the curſe of the law: and yet that he bare up under all this, and was not broken by it; it could be no leſs than an omnipotent Arm that ſuſtained him; and this was the vertue of the anointing of the Spirit which he received. He is therefore ſaid *to travail in the greatneſs of his ſtrength*, Iſai.63.1. And *his own arm ſuſtained him*, ver.5. And this was not his humane ſtrength, it was no created arm, but *the power of the Spirit*. Iſai.42.1,4.

5. *BY vertue of this anointing the Spirit of God dwelt in him in an unmeaſurable fulneſs of Grace.* He had not only higher and more eminent degrees of the gracious preſence of God in and with him, to carry him through his work, than the reſt of his brethren, i. e. than any other of the children of God have: which is aſſerted in *Heb.*1.9. but he had the Spirit in ſuper-eminent degrees, yea, above all the degrees of compariſon, as Joh. 3. 34. *God giveth not the ſpirit by meaſure unto him.* There are the well-ſprings of Grace ſpringing up in the hearts of all the children of God here, and out of their bellies do flow rivulets of living waters, but there were all the *Oceans* of it which fell upon the man Chriſt, in a wonderful, ineffable, and moſt unconceivable manner. *Luk.*4.22. And this, among many others, was one reaſon why his name was called *Wonderful*, Iſai.9.6. His head wanted for no oyl. His anointing is reſembled to that of *Aarons*, and was typified by it, of which, Pſal. 133. 2. *It is like precious oyntment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aarons beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments.* He had enough for all the ends of his Office, both to carry him through the work of Redemption, and to ſupply all the Elect in the work of Application. All Grace is now fountained in him, and from that fulneſs do *all his* derive all that they have. Joh.1.16. *And of his fulneſs have all we received, and grace for grace.* This is his Unction in general. I ſhall not here deſcend to give any particular account of the ſeveral Graces which he received in it, and which he gave ſo glorious a demonſtration of in the diſcharge of his work; in all of which he ſo demeaned himſelf as one that was to be our redeeming Mediator. The principal of theſe will be taken notice of afterwards, in the conſideration of the ſeveral Offices which he underwent and diſcharged in this affair.

USE. *THE conſideration of Chriſt's Unction, affords all encouragement to ſinners to come to him for Salvation.* Here is abundant relief againſt that diſtreſs of Soul, which awakened ſinners are ready to ſink under the weight of. And let us improve it to this end. Hence conſider,

1. *THAT this was the very work that Chriſt came into the world for.* It was to take away ſin, to ſave the chief of ſinners, to redeem his people from the condemnation of ſin; and but for this deſign he had never come in our nature, and taken upon him to engage for us. This was the reaſon of his name, *Mat.* 1. 21. Sin had turned the world into an hoſpital, where mankind was wounded & dying. He came to be the maſter of it, to be a great Phyſician, to heal the wounds and diſtempers which ſin had procured. *Mat.* 9.12,13.

2. *THAT he came with full authority for this work.* He did not come without a commiſſion, but was authorized to it, by a ſolemn deputation, and inauguration. His Father ſent him on this errand. There was not only his own perſonal love, but his Fathers love ſeen in it. *Joh.*3.16. He appointed him to it from Eternity, and he confirmed him in it, when he appeared to proſecute it in his ſtate of Humiliation. So that whatſoever he doth on this account, muſt needs be acceptable to God. He doth it by vertue of his Office, and therefore can challenge the recompence of it; and the validity of it is indubitable. His commiſſion is to remove our miſeries, to heal our ails, to ſupply our wants; and he is commanded that he ſhall not ſend away one diſtreſſed Soul empty, that cries to him for help. Read his commiſſion, and be encouraged by it, *Iſai.* 61. 1,2,3.

3. *THAT He is every way compleatly furniſhed for the diſcharge of this work.* He did not receive an empty title in his Unction, but he had the Spirit abundantly reſting upon him; He hath every thing given him, that is requiſite to render him a merciful and a powerful Saviour. He hath enough *Grace* to ſupply with the overflowings of it, all that we can ſtand in need of. He had *ſtrength* to undergo all that was requiſite to ſatisfy Juſtice for us, and anſwer the law in all its demands. And now he hath *knowledge* to diſcern our wants, *wiſdom* to judge what is beſt for our relief, *meekneſs* to bear with our follies, *mercy* to ſuccour us in our diſtreſſes, *pity* to have compaſſion on us in our miſeries, and *power* to deliver us from the hands of all our enemies. Hence he is ready to meet the fainting Soul which is making towards him, and is overwhelmed, to take it up in his arms, and and carry it home in his boſome. Be not diſheartned; you ſee here is an Office for ſuch as you are to come to, and all ſupply to be had at it. He wants for nothing to ſave you to the uttermoſt, and his Father hath committed it to him thus to do. And certainly he will be true to his truſt, who hath told us, Joh. 6. 37. *Him that cometh to me I will in no wiſe caſt out.* Adventure then upon it, and you ſhall without doubt be ſafe.

[SEPTEMBER. 3. 1695.]

SERMON *LXXXVIII.*

WE have conſidered Chriſt's Anointing to His Great Office of a Mediator, by which, added to his Incarnation, He was compleatly fitted for the great Work which he undertook, for our Redemption & Salvation.

III. *WE are now to proceed to the conſideration of the parts of this Office, or the ſeveral diſtinct Offices comprehended under it, in the execution whereof he went through this affair.* We have an account of the number and names of them given us in the preſent Anſwer, together with the two ſtates in which he purſues them. The ſpecial work belonging to each of them, is expreſſed in the Three ſubſequent Anſwers. Here then, for an Introduction to that which follows, I ſhall only make ſome brief general remarks. viz.

1. *CONCERNING the number and names of theſe Offices.* There are Three here mentioned, and we are told what they are: intimating to us that he had all theſe Three, and that he had no more belonging to his Mediatorſhip. The *Quakers* find fault and quarrel with us upon this account, charging us with wronging Chriſt, and uſing arbitrarineſs in culling out theſe Three from ſo many *Titles* given him in Scripture, which they pretend equally to point us to a diſtinct Office, with theſe; ſuch as *Light*, *Lamb*, &c. but the charge is injurious. Let us then obſerve,

(1.) *THAT all theſe Three Offices are expreſly mentioned in the word of God.* Theſe therefore cannot be denied to belong to him. His *Prieſthood*, beſides that it was typified in the Levitical order, who were ſhadows of him that was to come, is mentioned, in *Pſal.* 110. 4. And is abundantly repeated in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*; the main drift of which *Epiſtle* is to clear it up, and to ſet forth the excellency and tranſcendency of it. For his *Prophetical*, it was predicted by *Moſes*, Deut. 18.15. *The Lord thy God will raiſe up unto thee a Prophet from the midſt of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye ſhall hearken.* Which Prophecy is by *Stephen* applied to him, as fulfilled in him, *Act.*7.37,38. And by *Peter*, Acts 3. 22. And for his *Kingly*, the *Pſalmiſt* gives us the account of it in Pſal. 2. 6. *Yet have I ſet my King upon my holy hill of Sion.* And *Nathaniel* acknowledged it to him. *Joh.*1.49.

(2.) *THAT all the other titles and names given to Chriſt in Scripture, are reducible either to his general Office of Mediator, or to one of theſe Three in particular.* Every name and title is not an indigitation of an Office, much leſs of a diſtinct Office. And therefore we are not from each of theſe to aſſign a ſeveral Office to him. There are ſome titles which are given him that are only *metaphorical*; and it would be improper to make a peculiar Office out of them; He muſt then have the Office of *a Lamb*, and the Office of *a Lion*, &c. which how ſtrange would it be? There are other titles put upon him which expreſs either the gifts and graces, which he eminently received, or the efficacy of the operation of theſe in the work of Redemption, and ſo were the furniture of his Offices: and it would be impertinent to denominate theſe Offices. How unintelligible would it be, to ſay, that he hath the Office of, *Light*, the Office of *Truth*, of *Wiſdom*, of *Righteouſneſs*, of *Meekneſs*, &c. A diligent obſervation, will point us eaſily how to reduce theſe to the Offices we have mentioned; which would take up too much time to enumerate in particular. He is a *Lamb* in his *Prieſtly*, a *Lion* in his *Kingly*, *Light* in his *Prophetical*, &c. So that the imputation is injurious; and will further appear to be ſo in the next thing, viz.

2. *TOUCHING the neceſſity & ſufficiency of theſe Three Offices.* It was requiſite that our Mediator ſhould be fully furniſhed for the great buſineſs that he came about. He muſt therefore have every Office requiſite to enable him thereto; and more he needed not. Now fewer than theſe Three would not have done; and under theſe is comprized all that is needful. He needed theſe, and no more but theſe to be a compleat Saviour. And there are three reſpects in which this will be evident,

(1.) *IN reſpect of their neceſſary mutual dependance each on the other, in order to their reaching of their great end.* The deſign of them is to bring about the Salvation of ſinful men. When this is accompliſhed, they obtain; if this be fruſtrate, they are defeated. Now neither of theſe ſeparately can bring about this deſign: the fruit and benefit of one would ceaſe, if the other did not concur to render it beneficial: but the one attains its end by the concomitancy of the other; and there needs no more but the co-operation of theſe Three for the compleating of it. Chriſt could not have purchaſed Salvation for us, unleſs he had been a *Prieſt*, nor have revealed the myſteries of it to us, except he had been a *Prophet*; nor advanced us to the glory purchaſed, unleſs he had been a *King*. He could not have communicated his royal vertues to us, had he not been a Prieſt firſt to purchaſe them. His Prieſtly & Kingly Offices could not have been revealed to us, but that he was a Prophet. His Prieſtly and Prophetical Offices could not have been ſuſtained, but by his being a King. Had he not been a Royal Prophet, he could not have taught with authority; and had he not been a Kingly Prieſt, he could not have made ſuch near approaches to the majeſty of Heaven in our behalf. But theſe Three together render him compleat.

(2.) *IN regard to the condition of thoſe for whom he bare theſe Offices.* It is certain that he took them all upon him to do us good by them. He had therefore an eye to our neceſſity, that ſo he might accommodate himſelf thereto. His buſineſs was to ſave us, but there were three things in our natural ſtate which were obſtructive of this Salvation, and in which the ground of our miſery was comprized, 1. Our alienation from God, who is our objective happineſs, and in the fruition of whom only can we be made truly bleſſed. 2. Our ignorance of the way of peace; by the knowledge whereof we can only be led into and guided in it. 3. Our utter impotency to return again; which can be in no other way, but

but by our compliance with the terms of the new Covenant, unto which we have no ſtrength. Now theſe Offices of his do anſwer to all theſe neceſſities of ours. By vertue of his *Prieſthood* he takes away that alienation, and opens the way of peace which ſin had ſhut up. He is ſaid *to pull down the partition wall*, Eph. 2. 14. And to have *conſecrated a new way*, Heb. 10. 20. By vertue of his *Prophetical* Office, he enlightens our underſtandings, and directs us in the right way to obtain this peace, not only preſcribing to us the rules, and telling us of them, but alſo *opening our eyes*, and cauſing us to diſcern them. *Act.* 26. 18. And by his *Kingly*, he carries us into, and leads us in this way, and gives us power to follow him. In him therefore we are ſaid to *have our ſtrength*, Iſai. 45. 24. Yea the accompliſhment of our Salvation is aſcribed to this Office. Iſai. 33. 22. *For the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Law-giver, the Lord is our King, he will ſave us.* By his Prieſthood he hath aboliſhed death: He hath brought life and immortality to light by his Prophecy; and as King he hath brought us into fellowſhip with himſelf. 2 *Tim.* 1. 9, 10. We are ſaid to be poor, and blind, and naked, *Rev.* 3. 17. Here is a a three-fold miſery, and theſe Offices afford a remedy to them all. To ſalve our poverty he is a King; and hath an infinite treaſure to beſtow. As a Prophet he hath eye-ſalve to anoint our eyes with; to take away our blindneſs, and reſtore our ſight. And as a Prieſt he is provided with a precious robe of righteouſneſs to cover our nakedneſs, and array us glorioully. But theſe things will come into more particular conſideration afterwards.

(3.) *RELATING to the Negociation or buſineſs which he hath to deal in, and conſequently the parties whom he hath to treat with in it.* And this comes under a double obſervation,

[1.] *HE hath to deal with God for us.* We have obſerved that there is a treaty of Reconciliation he is engaged in. Now God is the one party in it, whom he is to atone to ſinners, whom ſin had made their enemy, and againſt whom, for ſin, his Juſtice was armed with revenge for their deſtruction; which Juſtice he muſt ſatisfy in order to God's being at peace with them. And for this was his Prieſthood to be employed, in offering up ſuch an oblation as might be acceptable for them. Col. 1. 20. *And (having made peace through the blood of his croſs) by him to reconcile all things unto himſelf, by him I ſay, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven.*

[2.] *HE is alſo concerned with man, to reconcile him unto God.* And there are two faculties which he hath mainly to do withal in man, in order to the bringing of this about.

1. *HE hath to do with his Underſtanding.* It is a rational treaty; man muſt be perſwaded to comply with the terms of peace, and for that end they muſt be opened to him, and he muſt be made to underſtand them, and diſcern the rationality, and deſireableneſs of them. And to this refers his Prophetical Office, by which he reveals himſelf to us.

2. *HE hath work alſo with our wills, which are naturally perverſe, and full of enmity and oppoſition to all that is good.* He muſt therefore frame us to a willingneſs to comply with his terms, and ſubdue our rebellious hearts, and make them obedient; powerfully to bring them into, and lead them in the way of peace; unto which his Kingly Office is accommodated.

3. *TOUCHING the extent of the application of theſe Offices:* We may alſo in general obſerve,

(1.) *THAT they go together, and run through the whole work that he is concerned in.* Tho' they are diſtinct Offices, yet they do co-work in the buſineſs; and though there be an order and concatenation of them, as will preſently be obſerved; yet in their influence they run through all. He acts as a Royal Prieſt, as a Kingly Prophet; and when he was more peculiarly engaged in the execution of one, he exerciſed the other. And hence, when here he was making ſatisfaction, and purchaſing life for us as a Prieſt; yet he gave us a *ſpecimen* both of his *Prophetical* & *Kingly* Offices. And now when he ſits on his Throne, he continues in the vertue of his *Prieſthood*, and *Propheſy*. Hence,

(2.) *THAT all theſe Offices diſplay themſelves in both parts of his mediation.* Theſe are his *Humiliation*, and his *Exaltation*, and we are here told that he executes them in both. He began it when he entred on his Office, and he continues in it till his mediatorial buſineſs be compleated, and he comes to make a reſignation. 1 *Cor.* 15. 25, 28. Pſal. 110. 4. *The Lord hath ſworn, and will not repent, thou art a Prieſt for ever after the order of Melchiſedeck.* i.e. to the conſummation of this affair. In his Humiliation, he ſubmitted himſelf to the law, and ſuffered for us as a Prieſt, he taught as a Prophet, and he ſubdued our enemies for us as a King; and in his Exaltation, he makes interceſſion for us as a Prieſt; He reveals the will of God to our minds as a Propher, and he governs and protects us as a King.

4. *IN reference to the order of theſe Offices, though it may ſeem of little moment, yet it is worthy our obſervation; and it may help our faith to more diſtinctneſs.* The generality of *Catechiſts*, and *Syſtematical* Divines, put them in the ſame order with our *Catechiſm*, putting his *Prophetical* Office in the firſt place, then his *Prieſtly*, then his *Kingly*. And the reaſon of this method is, *partly*, with reſpect to the order of the application of them to us by the Spirit of God; who firſt enlightens us by vertue of his Prophetical Office, and then his Righteouſneſs is imputed to us, which was wrought out for us in his Prieſtly; and then we are led in the way of truth and holineſs by his Kingly. *Partly*, becauſe Chriſt ſeems to have exerciſed them moſt illuſtriouſly in this order: firſt, teaching men in his public miniſtry in this world, and then ſuffering

the wrath of God, in his offering himſelf a Sacrifice for us, at his Death; and then entring into Glory, where he ſits enthroned at his Fathers right hand, after he had appeared here in the form of a Servant.

BUT there is a greater reaſon why his *Prieſtly Office* ſhould be put in the *firſt* place. Let us then conſider, that all theſe Offices were *Mediatorial*, and belong to the buſineſs of Reconciliation, in which he had to do both with God and man. Now in order of nature, the firſt addreſs muſt be to God, for he is juſtly offended, and muſt be ſatisfied, and it is vain to go about to reconcile man to God, till he be reconciled, and willing to entertain him upon his return. Beſides, all the buſineſs of Chriſt's *Prophetical* and *Kingly* Offices, are built upon his *Prieſtly*, they have nothing to work upon, but what is prepared for them by that. Here the foundation of the peace between God and man is laid; here is the ground work of all the Goſpel; here is that Salvation procured for us, which Chriſt, as a Prophet makes known to us, and as a King brings us unto the enjoyment of. But I ſhall purſue the method before me; having thus premiſed. Here then,

Question XXIV.

HOW doth CHRIST execute the Office of a Prophet?

Answer.

CHRIST executes the Office of a Prophet, by revealing to us, by His Word and Spirit, the Will of GOD for our Salvation.

WE have already obſerved, that Chriſt as a *Prophet* and *King*, hath to do with man, and his buſineſs by them is to reconcile them to God, and bring them to the everlaſting enjoyment of him. Having ſatisfyed God's Juſtice, and appeaſed his anger, by his *Prieſthood*, there is now way made to hold a treaty with man, for the bringing of him to participate in the benefit hereof. In this treaty he will deal with man as a reaſonable creature, and muſt therefore firſt apply himſelf to his Underſtanding. The underſtanding in fallen man is dreadfully ignorant of God, and his ways, and filled with erroneous principles, and wants a *Prophet* to teach it. The revelation of God's will to it, is neceſſary in order to the bringing of the will into ſubjection thereunto. The firſt ſtep towards the removing of the obſtinacy in the one is by taking away the ignorance and miſtakes which the other labours of. This Chriſt doth as a *Prophet*. Before I proceed to open the Office it ſelf, let us obſerve, That it is a diſtinct Office in it ſelf from the other. There are ſome who deny this, and will have it referred to his *Prieſtly*, as an *Appendix* belonging thereto: but there is no reaſon for it. For, though ſome of the *Prieſts* were alſo *Prophets* of old; yet teaching, was no *peculiar* work of the Prieſts of old, belonging to them as Prieſts, who were of the houſe of *Aaron*, but was common to the Tribe of *Levi*. Beſides that there were Prophets from time to time raiſed and ſent by God, who were of the other Tribes. *Iſaiah* was of the Tribe of *Judah*; *Amos* was no Prophet, i. e. by Education; nor Son of a Prophet, i. e. by birth. Now all thoſe ancient Prophets were Types of Chriſt in regard of this Office. And there is a manifeſt difference between theſe two Offices, in reſpect of the different object which they apply themſelves to. In his *Prieſthood* Chriſt applies himſelf to God, to appear before him for us, but in his *Prophecy* he deals with men. Information or teaching, is the great deſign of Prophecy, but he cannot teach God any thing; but we are the ſubjects of teaching, whoſe darkneſs ſtands in need of being enlightned. In the diſplaying of this Office of Chriſt there are three things may come under our conſideration. 1. The nature of it. 2. The neceſſity of it. 3. Its excellency.

I. *TOUCHING the nature of this Office, we may gather it from the way wherein we are told that he executes it.* For when we know what belongs to him by vertue of this Office, we may thence diſcover what is the Office it ſelf. Here then three things are to be taken notice of, 1. The great deſign of this Office, and that is revelation to us. 2. The ſubject matter about which it is employed, the will of God for our Salvation. 3. The way or manner in which it doth this, by his Word and Spirit.

1. *THE great deſign of this Office, which is Revelation to us.* I need not here inſiſt; the two following things will give light to it. Only let us obſerve; The Underſtandings of men are the ſubjects treated with *in* and *by* this Office. Now that which the faculty is concerned about is, information, enlightning. Truth is its proper object, and it is applied to, by the making known of truth to and in it: and this is done by *Revelation*. Revelation *is properly a diſcovering or declaring to perſons ſomething which before they did not know.* And this is aſſerted concerning Chriſt, in Joh. 1. 18. *No man hath ſeen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the boſom of the Father, he hath declared him.* This was the great buſineſs of the Prophets of old; what God revealed to them, and ſent them to publiſh, they declared as from him; to thoſe whom they were directed unto: whether it were the prædiction of future events, or the diſcovery of ſome poſitive commands, or the revival of ſome neglected or forgotten duties, or the interpretation of the mind of God in things which were obſcure, or wherein they had gone out of the way; in all of which they were Types of Chriſt the great Prophet. But this will be more plain in that which follows. Obſerve then,

2. *THE*

2. *THE ſubject matter about which it is employed*, viz. *the will of God for our Salvation.* Or, as the larger *Catechiſm* expreſſeth it, *the whole will of God in things that concern our edification, and ſalvation.* The will of God, though it be but one and undivided in itſelf, yet, it comes under a diverſe conſideration in our manner of conception and expreſſion. In ſum, there is his decreeing will, and his perceptive will. This latter is not another from the former, nor contradictory to it, but indeed an effect flowing from it; or a diſcovery in part of it. God, among other things which he purpoſed from eternity, decreed what ſhould be man's duty, and in what way he ſhould be brought to the enjoyment of God; and hence in that reſpect he is ſaid to will it. As 1 Theſ. 4. 3. *For this is the will of God, even your ſanctification.* Though poſſibly he hath not purpoſed that the man ſhall be wrought to a compliance therewith. Hence all the truths which concern the way in which fallen man is to be brought to obtain Salvation through Jeſus Chriſt, belong to this will, and are the ſubject of that revelation which Chriſt as a Prophet doth make unto us. And this *Paul* intends in that, Act. 20. 27. *For I have not ſhunned to declare unto you all the counſel of God.* For as to all God's counſels about his works of efficiency, they were not revealed to *Paul*, how then ſhould he acquaint them with them? See *ver.* 22. There is a way of Salvation; this no *natural man* knows, Rom. 3 17. *And the way of peace have they not known.* Nor can any know it but ſuch to whom God reveals it. This therefore Chriſt as a Prophet makes manifeſt; this is that *all truth* that he promiſed *his Spirit to guide us in*, Joh. 16. 14. There are thoſe counſels of God which he keeps ſecret, they belong not to us to know, nor are needful to be known by us. We may obtain Salvation altho' we never know them. There are other things which if we know them not, we cannot be ſaved. And the more diſtinct knowledge we have of them, the better ſhall we be directed to find and keep the way of life. And there is a knowledge, the want whereof expoſeth to deſtruction, Hoſ. 4. 6. *My people are deſtroyed for lack of knowlege.* Theſe then are the truths, in the revelation whereof this Office is employed, and theſe are thoſe truths, which are to open to us the treaty of Reconciliation, and direct us in thoſe ways which are ſuited thereunto. And they may be reduced to theſe few heads,

(1.) *THE vaſt diſtance which ſin hath made between God and us, and the great miſery ariſing therefrom, in which the whole race of fallen man, and we in particular are involved.* That ſtate of provocation, alienation, & ſeparation from God, in which mankind are by reaſon of the apoſtaſy. This is one thing that the Spirit comes to convince men of, viz. Sin, in its nature, and woful effects. Joh. 16. 8. *And when he is come, he will reprove the world of ſin.* Which he doth by revelation. This in particular was done in and by the new Edition of the law, which was given *to* and *by Moſes*, after mankind had by cuſtom in ſin, almoſt obliterated the relicks of the law of nature in their conſciences. The law was not revived by *Moſes*, with a direct and ultimate intention to condemn men, but to be a *medium* of their peace; and that by diſcovering in this glaſs, what was the woful depravation of the nature of man, and pollution of his life, to convince him of his dreadful miſery, and what abſolute need he had of a Saviour. *Gal.* 3. 19. *Moſes* therefore was in this reſpect a Type of Chriſt.

(2.) *THE great myſtery of himſelf, and that work of Redemption which was wrought out by him.* The world cannot receive him. Joh. 14. 17. *Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, becauſe it ſeeth him not, neither knoweth him.* But to his own he makes the diſcovery of the great things which he hath done for the bringing about a Reconciliation between God and ſinners. The everlaſting deſignation of him to this work in the Covenant of Redemption; the deep things of his Incarnation and Unction, the great value of his Blood and Sufferings, and the mighty power of his Reſurrection. Theſe are things which ſeem to be fooliſhneſs to the wiſe *Greek*, and contradictions to the ſcrupulous *Jew*; neither of them can tell what to make of all ſuch dark, and aliene ſpeeches, that *God was manifeſted in the fleſh, juſtified in the Spirit*, &c. and how all theſe ſhould lay a foundation for the procuring, and applying of reſtitution and peace to fallen man; but Chriſt tells his Diſciples that to them it is given, Mat. 13. 11. *He anſwered and ſaid unto them, Becauſe it is given unto you to know the myſtery of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.* i.e. He, by his Prophetical Office would enlighten them in the knowledge of theſe myſteries of Redemption.

(3.) *THE great readineſs in God to receive and entertain poor returning ſinners, that come to him by Jeſus Chriſt.* Theſe inviting and engaging Attributes, whereby God is laid open to be taken hold of by an hand of faith, manifeſting how readily he receives ſuch as come to him repenting, and believing in his Son. Theſe Chriſt proclaims, *Exod.* 34. 6, 7. The mercy, grace, goodneſs, pardon, that there is with God, to extend to miſerable men, which they ſtand in ſo much need of, and but for which they muſt needs be left to periſh for ever.

(4.) *THE terms of the new Covenant, or thoſe merciful Articles, upon which God is willing to embrace miſerable ſinners in the arms of everlaſting mercy.* Such as, Mat. 11. 28, 29. *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye ſhall find reſt unto your ſouls.* Mar. 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved.* The way how we come to have a good right, a ſure title to all the Salvation

wrought

wrought out by Chriſt; the good pleaſure of God the Father, that all that come within the ſound of the Goſpel, and the hearing of a crucified Chriſt, ſhould come to him, and believe on him, that ſo they may have everlaſting life. *Joh.* 3. 16. The whole new and living way, by which we may have acceſs to God, and obtain peace, and pardon, and ſalvation at his hands. *Mich.* 6. 8.

(5.) *THE way in and by which we may obtain the Grace to comply with the Goſpel terms of Salvation.* We have no ſtrength of our own to do it, but he tells us where our help is to be had; who it is that applies this Grace, and brings the ſinner to a free and willing ſubjection to the demands made in the Goſpel, by a powerful operation, in pulling down ſtrong holds, and ſubduing all that is in us, to the obedience of faith. Who works all our works in us; helps our infirmities, and keeps us through faith unto Salvation, and directs us how to ſeek it of God, that ſo we may obtain it. Hence ſaid to bring life and immortality to light, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9, 10.

[OCTOBER 1. 1695.]

SERMON *LXXXIX.*

3. *THE way in which he doth this*, viz. *by His Word and Spirit.* Of which we may take this brief account.

(1.) *THE Scriptures, wherein this will of God is revealed, were given by him.* The great truths pointing us to Salvation are recorded in the Scripture, and thither we are directed to ſeek for them. Joh. 5. 39. *Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which teſtifie of me.* Now, though holy men were the writers of theſe books, yet his Spirit was the inditer of them. It was he who inſpired theſe men; and this was an eminent inſtance of Chriſt's *Prophetical Office.* Hence we read in, 2 Tim. 3. 16. *All Scripture is given by inſpiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs.* 2 Pet. 1. 21. *For the prophecie came not in old time by the will of man? but holy men of God ſpake as they were moved by the holy Ghoſt.* The Goſpel is therefore called *his*, Rom. 1. 16. Not only becauſe he is the great *Subject* of it, but alſo becauſe he is the *Author* of it.

(2.) *THE miniſtry of the Word is of his inſtitution and miſſion.* Chriſt as a Prophet, having to deal with men's underſtandings, treats them in their own way. Hence there is an outward teaching he affords them. We are therefore told, Rom. 10 17. *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* And for this he imploys men like themſelves to preach to them, which that they may do with authority, he ſends them forth commiſſioned to their work, *ver.* 15. Mat. 28. 18, 19. *And Jeſus came, and ſpake unto them, ſaying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore & teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, & of the Son, and of the holy Ghoſt.* They are therefore called his *Aſcention Gifts*, Eph. 4. 10, 11. They come in his Name, and by vertue of his Prophetical Office; and are wholly to follow his direction in it. Their principal buſineſs is to inform us in the way of peace. Jer. 3. 15. *And I will give you paſtors according to mine heart, which ſhall feed you with knowledge and underſtanding.* Their charge is from him. 2 *Tim.* 4. 1. He is the great or chief Shepherd, and they his *Ambaſſadors*, by whom he pleads with us, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. They are his Miniſters and Stewards, 1 *Cor.* 5. 20. And they work together with him, 2 *Cor.* 6. 1.

(3.) *ALL miniſterial Gifts are of his beſtowing.* He doth not ſend out his Ambaſſadors unfurniſhed; but takes a portion of his Spirit of Prophecy, and beſtows upon them. Theſe gifts indeed are diverſly beſtowed; and that both as to the different manner & meaſure; however they all come from him, and his own Spirit. 1 *Cor.* 12. *begin.* Some were more immediately and extraordinarily inſpired by him, as the *Apoſtles*, *Prophets*, and *Evangeliſts* of the primitive Church; others attain to theſe gifts more mediately, by ſtudy, reading, induſtry, being trained up in the *Schools* of the Prophets; but it is by his bleſſing that they are prepared for his work. And the promiſe of his preſence with them in all ages of the Church is their encouragement in their work. Math. 28. 20. *And lo I am with you always even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

(4.) *IT is his Spirit influencing the Word and Ordinances, who enlightens the minds of men to a ſaving knowledge of theſe truths.* There is a *literal*, and there is a *ſpiritual* knowledge of Goſpel truths; and Chriſt as a *Prophet*, not only reveals the truths themſelves in his Word, for the literal information of men, but he doth alſo by his Spirit *apply* himſelf to the minds of men for their ſpiritual illumination. In which he doth theſe things,

[1.] *HE opens the eyes of their Underſtandings, which were before darkned, and enableth them to entertain theſe precious truths.* The natural man cannot diſcern ſpiritual things, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. We not only want light, but eyes too. And though a natural man may underſtand the *Gramatical* and *Logical* meaning of Goſpel *Theorems*, yet they are fooliſh things to him, and he cannot ſee into the *myſtery* of them; but He unſcales our underſtandings, and cauſeth the ſcales to fall off from them. This belongs to his Office, *Luk.* 4. 18. Thus he prepares our minds to give attention to, and receive the glorious things of the Kingdom with profit. Act. 16. 14. *And a certain woman named Lydia, a ſeller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worſhipped God, heard us: whoſe heart the Lord opened, that ſhe attended unto the things which were ſpoken of Paul.* This is called opening the eyes, boring the ears, and renewing his image on us in knowledge.

[2.] NOW

[2.] *NOW he opens the Scriptures to them, and gives them the true ſenſe and meaning of the word of God.* He imprints theſe truths upon their underſtandings, cauſing the glorious light thereof to beam in and ſhine upon them, ſo that they are truly illuminated, and made to ſee the great things of himſelf, and his word, Luk.1.79. *To give light to them that ſit in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of death, to guide our feet in the way of peace.* So that he maketh his word *to dwell in them*, as, *Col.* 3.16. Thus we find that he did by his diſciples, Luk.24.45. *Then opened he their underſtanding, that they might underſtand the Scriptures.* And this is that which *David* prays to him for, Pſal.119.18. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.*

[3.] *HEREUPON he makes them to diſcern the Truth in its native oriency & excellency.* He cauſeth the glory & majeſty of theſe things to be acted upon the underſtanding. 2Cor.4.6. *For God who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.* He cauſeth the divine glory of the truth to appear to us; and now we do not know it after ſuch a manner as we did before, which was meerly *Hiſtorically*, but we ſee God in it; a divine beauty ſending its rays from it. We in it ſee the divine Perfections; Sin now appears very ſinful, and the Satisfaction of Chriſt infinitely precious, and the way of Salvation by faith in him, wonderfully glorious, and the terms of the Goſpel excellent; ſo that we can heartily ſubſcribe to the truth of that aſſertion, 1Tim. 1. 15. *This is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Chriſt Jeſus came into the world to ſave ſinners, of whom I am chief.*

[4.] *HE thus brings the Underſtanding to a belief, or infallibility of aſſurance of the truth of thoſe Truths, ſo revealed.* He cauſeth us to diſcern that it is he himſelf that ſpeaks to us, and theſe ſayings are His, who is the great Prophet of the Church. So he did by *the woman of Samaria*, Joh.4. They hear the voice of the Son of God in theſe things, and diſcern him from a ſtranger. Joh 10.5.27. *And a ſtranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of ſtrangers. My ſheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.* And now, thoſe myſterious truths, which concern God, and Chriſt, and man's Salvation by him, that are too great for our underſtandings to comprehend, are yet fully aſſented unto as being atteſted by him. We now receive his Teſtimony, and make no more doubt of it. It is true, we know but in part, and in many things are in the dark; hence many differences and diſputes among the godly: but Chriſt ſatisfies his people in what is neceſſary to Salvation. So that they have not only an opinion of the probability of theſe truths, but *the practical underſtanding* concludes them to be infallibly the word of Chriſt, the teſtimony of him who was ſent from the Father, which is the influence of faith on the underſtanding, viz. when the judgment being ſavingly informed, receives, and embraceth the truth of theſe propoſitions, and ſets its Seal to the truth of them. Divine faith acts not upon uncertainty, but is built upon the foundation, and knows indubitably that theſe are the true ſayings of God. 1 *Joh.*5.18,19,20.

II. *WE proceed to conſider the neceſſity of the Prophetical Office of Chriſt.* Which will be evidenced in theſe Concluſions,

1. *THE knowledge of God is neceſſary to man's Salvation.* Chriſt declares it to be life eternal, *Joh.* 17. 3. Man was made to ſerve God, but without knowing him there is no ſerving of him. Man cannot without this make God his laſt end. Man was made for communion with God, without which he cannot be happy: but without acquaintance there can be no fellowſhip. God is the object of our faith, and thoſe only who know him, can place their reliance upon him by believing on him, Pſal. 9. 10. *And they that know thy name will put their truſt in thee.*

2. *FALLEN man is eſtranged from the knowledge of God.* Man's apoſtaſy hath left darkneſs upon his underſtanding. This is part of the deſcription of a natural ſtate, Eph.4. 18. *Having the underſtanding darkned.* It is a ſad *periphraſis* by which the Heathen are deſcribed, they that know not God, Pſal. 79.6. *Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known thee.* The Apoſtle ſetting forth the ruined eſtate of fallen man in all his faculties, gives that as one piece of it, in Rom.3. 17. *And the way of peace have they not known.* This is the exorbitancy that is on the underſtanding, that it is become a ſtranger to God, and doth neither know him, nor the way how to come by the enjoyment of him.

3. *WITHOUT the illumination of man's underſtanding there is no reconciling him to God.* Man, being a reaſonable creature, muſt be treated in a rational way. Now ſin hath turned him away from God to the creature, on which he leans his truſt, and from which he expects his happineſs; and as long as he calls evil good, he will do ſo. There are many things of which a ſinner muſt be perſwaded, or elſe he will never hearken to the treaty of Reconciliation, whiles his ignorant and depraved mind leads him aſide. There are theſe things in particular, which he believes not nor reſents in himſelf, which muſt be effectually imprinted on his underſtanding, or he will deſpiſe all the offers of a treaty made to him, viz.

(1.) *THAT there is a diſtance between God and him.* That God and he are enemies. For till then he will ſee no need of being reconciled to him. Men naturally are ſecure, and cry peace to themſelves, not believing that there is any breach between God and them, and while they are ſo perſwaded, the Articles of the new Covenant are ſtrange and ridiculous things to them.

(2.) *THAT the way he is in is highly provoking to God.* That he is greatly diſpleaſed with

with the ſinful courſe the Sinner is following. Natural men think that God is ſuch an one as they, approves of, and takes content in their ways: and eſpecially if they live at eaſe, and are under the connivance of God's patience, which holds back the hand of vengeance from falling upon them. Pſal. 50. 21. *Theſe things haſt thou done, and I kept ſilence: thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch an one as thy ſelf.*

(3.) *THAT hereupon he daily goes in danger of eternal ruine.* Alas, the ſinner thinks all is ſafe and ſecure; he dreams of no peril that he lies expoſed to; to morrow ſhall be as this day, and more abundant. He knows of no evil day that is coming upon him, and as long as he is thus fearleſs of the wrath of God, he will be upon it regardleſs of making his peace with him.

(4.) *THAT there is nothing in this world, that will either ſecure him from wrath, or procure him bleſſedneſs.* The natural man hath fortified himſelf in his Covenant with hell and death, and promiſeth himſelf ſafety therein. *Iſai.* 28. 15. He makes his worldly intereſt his ſtrong city, and calls himſelf happy in the enjoyment of it, which makes him to deſpiſe God, and nothing care for his favour. Job 21. 13, 14. *They ſpend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down into the grave. Therefore they ſay unto God, Depart from us: for we deſire not the knowledge of thy ways.*

(5.) *THAT he is utterly unable by his own endeavour to reconcile himſelf to God.* Fallen man hath a legal ſpirit prevailing in him, which makes him to place much confidence in his own righteouſneſs; whereupon, when convinced of God's diſpleaſure at him for ſin, he hopes, by prayers, and tears, and good works, to get into God's favour again, and ſo he deceives himſelf; and muſt be perſwaded of his own utter impotency, before he will go out of himſelf to Chriſt.

(6.) *THAT God is reconcilable only in & by Jeſus Chriſt.* That he is our peace, and thro' him alone can we obtain favour with God, by the vertue of his active, and paſſive obedience; that there is Salvation in no other. *Act.* 4. 12. Till in all theſe things he be informed, and made to apprehend, and believe the truth of them, he will never hearken to the Covenant. Sinners that are at eaſe, deſpiſe the Goſpel, and till they are thus enlightened, they will be ſo.

4. *THAT none but Chriſt the great Prophet, is ſufficient to afford this Illumination.* There is no *Teacher* but he, who can effectually inform, convince, and open the underſtanding, ſo as to cauſe it to receive the abiding impreſſions of theſe truths. And the reaſon is, becauſe not only men have not the knowledge of theſe truths in their natural underſtandings, and muſt therefore have them ſhewn to them, as a man, who though he knows not, yet hath a principle in his underſtanding to learn a Trade, and needs only to be inſtructed in, and ſhewn the rules of it; but becauſe the natural man needs not only to have the object preſented, but the ſubject to be renewed: he is blind, yea he is born ſo, and his eyes muſt be opened, and his ſight reſtored; which requires a miraculous power to the doing of it; and none can do this for him, but he that hath a divine power. It is therefore a work belonging to Chriſt, by vertue of his Unction. Luk. 4. 18. *The ſpirit of the Lord is upon me, becauſe he hath anointed me to preach the goſpel to the poor, he hath ſend me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of ſight to the blind.*

5. *FURTHERMORE, the terms of the Covenant of Peace need to be opened, and the way of Covenant-keeping manifeſted to him.* He wants teaching from the firſt moment of his Converſion, till he hath gone through his courſe, and none but Chriſt can do it. All the outward teaching in the world will ſignify nothing, without the inward teaching of the Spirit accompanying it. It is God himſelf who muſt ſhew us his Covenant. Pſal. 25 14. *The ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him: and he will ſhew them his covenant.* And this he doth by JeſusChriſt the great Prophet. And had not he come upon this great work, we had all, like loſt ſheep gone aſtray, and never been brought into the way of peace, but had finally wandred in paths of deſtruction.

III. *NOW let us take a view of the excellency of Chriſt's Prophetical Office.* He is the beſt teacher: He exceeds all the Prophets that ever were in the Church. He is an incomparable Prophet. And this will be evident in theſe reſpects,

1. *HE had a tranſcendently more plentiful effuſion of the Spirit of Propheſy upon him than any other, yea than all other.* The Spirit with which he was anointed, was *a Spirit of Propheſy*, as appears by the fruit of it mentioned, *Iſai.* 61. *begin.* And he received the Spirit *without meaſure*, Joh. 3. 34. Whereas all other, whether extraordinary Prophets, or ordinary Miniſters receive it *in meaſure.* They had but ſome of the Oyl that ran off from our *Aarons* head, to the skirts of his garments. There are various Prophetical Gifts, and theſe he ſcattered among others, 1 *Cor.* 12. 4, &c. but they all met eminently in him.

2. *HE is the head of all the Prophets, & they all derive their Commiſſion from him.* He hath authority in himſelf, but they are authorized by him. He ſends them forth on their errand, and gives them their Charge. He bids them go into all the world, and tells them their work, *Mat.* 28. 18, 19. And thoſe that go without his authority are Uſurpers, and muſt anſwer for it. They are on this account called *his gifts to his Church*, Eph. 4. 9, 10. And they muſt give an account to Him how they have managed their work.

3. *ALL other derive not only authority, but ability too from him.* He is the head of all ſpiritual influences to his Church. They are the

the ſtreams of Grace which derive from the fulneſs that is fountained in him, that they do receive. Joh. 1. 16. *And of his fulneſs have all we received, and grace for grace.* So that, without him they can do nothing; they can no further diſcharge their function right then he aſſiſts them in the performance of it.

4. *OTHERS can only ſpeak to the ear, but it is his prerogative that he can ſpeak to the heart.* They can hold the candle to us, but none but he can open our eyes, and make us to diſcern the light of it. They may ſpeak the myſteries of the kingdom to us, but he alone can make way for them to enter into our Souls. It is therefore his work, and there is none but he by his Spirit, that can open the eyes of the blind, and anoint them with eye ſalve, and ſo cauſe them to ſee; and he can do it to effect. So that where he comes with efficacy, the vail upon men's minds is taken off, and they are made to diſcern the great things of the Kingdom; and they that are taught of him are taught to purpoſe.

5. *HENCE the whole efficacy of doctrine and prophecy depends upon him.* If he comes with power, in and with the Word and Ordinances, the kingdom of darkneſs is removed, and the light of the ſaving knowledge of God ſhines into the minds of men: but if he withholds and comes not, others may ſpend their life, burn and waſte their candle, to give light to a company of blind creatures, who ſtill remain in the ſhades of death; and they may preach themſelves into their graves, and not one blind eye be opened all the while. But when he comes with power, he comes irreſiſtibly; and tho' men ſat before in the ſhades of death, they ſhall ſee a marvellous light.

6. *OTHER Prophets die; but he is an abiding Prophet.* Let them be never ſo eminent, and uſeful to the Church of God in their generation, yet they have but their generation to ſerve, and then their work is at an end, and they muſt be gone. It is the demand in Zech. 1. 5. *Your fathers where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?* And the Apoſtle *Peter* gives that hint to them, 2 Pet. 1. 13, 14. *Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to ſtir you up, by putting you in remembrance. Knowing that ſhortly I muſt put off this tabernacle, even as our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath ſhewed me.* Whereas this great Prophet of his Church, continues to the worlds end in the execution of this *function*. Hence that promiſe, Mat. 28. 20. *And lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world. Amen.* There was indeed a miniſtry, which the man Chriſt was engaged in, in the days of his fleſh, which he ceaſed to purſue in his Perſon after his Aſcenſion, and committed it to his Goſpel Miniſtry in ſucceſſion, who are his repreſentatives in this work; but yet he continues, in his exalted ſtate, *to influence his Word & Ordinances with his Spirit*; whom therefore he hath ſent to *lead us into all truth*, Joh. 16. 13. And this influence ſhall never ceaſe, ſo long as he hath a Church, on the face of the earth. So that we may at all times go to him with our Supplication, and ask of him his teaching, and obtain it, in as much as it is his Office.

7. *HE is a wonderfully patient and compaſſionate Prophet.* We find of others, that they had their paſſions; and the untractableneſs of thoſe whom they were ſent unto, wearied them, and they could not bear the affronts that were offered them in their work. *Elijah* is tired, and begs that he may be diſmiſſed, and his life ended. *Jeremiah* reſolves that he will ſpeak no more to an unteachable people. But *JESUS CHRIST* knows our dulneſs, our ſtupidity, and is both able and willing to bear with it. Look but upon his diſcourſes with *Nicodemus*, (Joh. 3. *begin.*) and ſee if it be not ſo. Others are ready to upbraid us, if they cannot *beat* it into us; but we are told this is one piece of his character, Heb. 5. 2. *Who can have compaſſion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way.* He is willing to take pains with us, wait upon us, and follow us with line upon line, and precept upon precept; to teach us a little at one time, and a little at another, according to our bearing. He is willing to ſpeak to us in our own language, and accommodate his doctrine to our capacities, and not to upbraid us. That is the encouragement to go to him, Jam. 1. 5. *If any man lack wiſdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it ſhall be given him.*

USE. I. *WE may from the conſideration of this Office of Chriſt gather, what horrible blindneſs hath poſſeſſed the minds of the children of men, when we ſee that they ſtand in need of ſuch a Prophet to enlighten them.* If man had been only out of the way, ſome other guide might have ſerved his turn, to have directed him into it again: ſome *Angel*, or ſome eminent *Saint* might have done for this. But in as much as none but Chriſt can ſerve for this, it declares that ſin had made an horrible havock upon the underſtanding of man. If man were only under ſome miſtakes, the word, which is a light would be ſufficient to rectify and lead him, and moral means might avail to bring him into, and keep him in the way of peace. But now this tells us that there is a loſs of the image of God on the underſtanding; that there is not only *external* darkneſs before him, but *internal* blindneſs in him. This alſo tells us how wonderful was the kindneſs of God to poor fallen man, that he was pleaſed to provide for him ſuch a Saviour; One that was fitted & furniſhed to do for him according to our wants; One, who being God as well as man, can a-new create the image of God in him, and reſtore to him the ſaving principles of true knowledge. One who both knows God himſelf, and is able to make us know him too. And God hath put it into his commiſſion, and made it part of his Office work, to be *Iſraels Teacher*. This then calls for our thankful acknowledgment.

USE. II. *LET this then be to invite us all, both Young and Old to come to Chriſt for his Teaching.* Is He the great Prophet of his Church? Would we then be acquainted with the things of our peace? Let us all addreſs our ſelves to, and wait upon him for his inſtruction. Why ſhould any of us live without ſaving acquaintance with God, who are told of ſuch a Prophet? Beware then of deſpiſing him, it will be at your peril. Act. 3. 23. *And it ſhall come to paſs, that every ſoul which will not hear that Prophet, ſhall be deſtroyed from among the people.* It is true, there are means to be uſed by us. We muſt run *to* and *fro*, if we would get and increaſe knowledge. We muſt wait at the poſts of wiſdoms door, if we would find life to our Souls, *Prov.* 8. 35. If we would know, *we muſt follow on to know the Lord*, Hoſ. 6. 3. Children muſt attend on *Catechiſing*, and ſet themſelves to mind it; Grown perſons muſt frequent the Ordinances, & make it their buſineſs to acquaint themſelves with the truths of the word of God. But this is not enough; you muſt pray alſo to Chriſt for his illuminating Spirit, and importunately ask him, for it. Be then deeply ſenſible of your native ignorance, and want of teaching. The firſt ſtep to divine wiſdom is a feeling our own folly. Think how you were born. Job 11. 12. *For vain man would be wiſe, though man be born like a wild aſſes colt.* You came into the world wholly eſtranged from the knowledge of the way of Salvation. The light of nature is meer darkneſs to this. You are not only ignorant, but blind too: and all the doctrinal teaching in the world will not do, except you have eyes given you to ſee, which none can beſtow on you but He. To know God and Chriſt ſo as is eternal life, is beyond man's teaching, and requires this Prophet to beſtow it. Think what are the things which he will acquaint you with; it is *the counſel of God for your Salvation*; it is the way in which you, who are the children of wrath by nature, and going blindfold to eternal deſtruction, may be directed how to be ſaved, and obtain everlaſting life; how you may eſcape wrath and hell, and enjoy God in Heaven for ever. Think how able he is to teach you. Though you are very indocile, and hard to learn any thing that is good, He can cure your natural folly, enlighten your darkneſs, and ſhine into your Souls with his marvellous light, ſo that all that ſee you ſhall know that you have been with Jeſus. Think how willing He is to be your Prophet; He invites you to come and learn of him. You Children, what a melting call doth he give to you? Pſal. 34. 11. *Come ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord.* And what a promiſe hath he made concerning the Children of his people? Iſai. 54. 13. *And all thy children ſhall be taught of the Lord, and great ſhall be the peace of thy children.* Yea how earneſtly doth he invite all of us to hearken to him? *Prov.* 8. *begin.* Yea, how doth he expoſtulate with ignorant ſinners for their neglect & contempt of his invitation? Prov. 1. 22. *How long, ye ſimple ones, will ye love ſimplicity? and the ſcorners delight in their ſcorning, and fools hate knowledge?* And what an encouragement is that to come to him for this? *Jam.* 1. 5. And think how inexcuſable you will be, if you ſhould at laſt die without knowledge, unto whom this Prophet hath ſo often and ſo urgency offered his help? He himſelf hath told us where the ſtreſs will lie upon ſuch in the day of Judgment, Joh. 3. 19. *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkneſs rather than light, becauſe their deeds are evil.* Come away then every one to his School. *Children*, beware of ſaying you are *too young* for this. You are old enough to be damned, if you now deſpiſe Chriſt and his teaching. You that are *in Years*, and yet ſtrangers to the knowledge of Chriſt, ſay not you are *too old* to learn; but as you love your Souls, be ſpeedy and earneſt, ſeeking to him to enlighten your eyes, before the ſleep of death. Engage Him to be your Teacher, by entertaining Him as your great Propher; and he will guide your feet into the paths of life.

[OCTOBER 25. 1695.]

SERMON XC.

QUESTION XXV.

HOW doth CHRIST execute the Office of a Prieſt?

ANSWER.

CHRIST executeth the Office of a Prieſt in his once Offering up of Himſelf a Sacrifice to ſatisfy Divine Juſtice, and reconcile us to GOD, and in making continual Interceſſion for us.

THE Doctrine of Chriſt's *Prieſthood* is of great neceſſity to be well underſtood by us, in as much as in it was laid the foundation of our Reconciliation to God; the Price of our Redemption was paid to divine Juſtice; and way was made for our diſcharge from the guilt and puniſhment which Sin had expoſed us to. We may then here, as under the former, conſider the *Nature*, *Neceſſity*, and *Eminency* of this Office of Chriſt.

I. *TOUCHING the Nature of this Office, we may gather it out of the Deſcription here given of the way in which he executes it.* We have before obſerved, that the buſineſs of Chriſt's *Prieſtly*

Priestly Office is to treat with God on the account of Sinners, in order to the bringing about a Reconciliation between them. And hence, He by it made way for the execution of his other two Offices. And this was typified by the Levitical *Priesthood* of old, and more eminently by the High Priest. These Priests indeed were, *ex abundanti*; and not as Priests, but as Civil Rulers, or Judges, appointed to hear Causes, and give Judgment to the people; they were also to *teach them*, Mal. 2 7. But that was as they were ordinary Prophets too: so that in those Priests, especially the High Priest, there was a shadow of all the Three Offices of Christ. But the Priestly Office in its proper function, had to do with God for Reconciliation, and in that it tipified this Office of Christ. We may therefore find matter of Illustration from thence. We have before us a twofold business about which this Office of Christ is concerned; the one whereof he accomplished in his state of Humiliation, and pursues the other in his Exalted state, viz. *Satisfaction*, and *Intercession*: in both of which he makes and maintains the Reconciliation with respect unto God. There were two Attributes in God, which Christ had to deal with as our Priest, for the atoning of God to us, viz. his Justice and his Mercy; the former of these he applyed himself to by way of Satisfaction, the latter he addresseth by Intercession; and in both he compleats this function. We may take a brief account of them severally.

1. *THE Satisfaction of Christ is the first part of his Priesthood, and by it he made way for his Intercession.* Justice must first be appeased, before mercy can be obtained for the sinner: for there must be no clashing between these two Attributes. *Psal.* 85. 10. And this can be done in no other way, but by answering all its demands. For this therefore we observed, that Christ undertook in the Covenant of Redemption: and here he pursues it to effect. Which, how he accomplished, may be observed from the account of it, that is here offered us. Observe then,

(1.) *THAT the design or end of Christ's Satisfaction is to reconcile us to God*; or rather, *to reconcile God to us.* For it is certain, that in it Christ hath not to do with us immediately, but with God. Or we may say, that there are two things in our being reconciled to God, viz. *When he is perswaded to be at peace with us, and we are won to be at peace with him.* The former of these only, belongs to his Priesthood, the latter is done by his other two Offices. This necessarily supposeth that there is a breach between God and man; that God hath a controversy with the creature, and is become his enemy; which must needs be on the account of sin: for God and man, were once friends; and if they were not fallen out, there would need no Reconciler. And if man had not sinned, God would never have pickt a quarrel with him. The Priest's Office ever supposed man's sin, and the wrath of God, righteously kindled against him for it; upon which the Priest was to put in between God and Sinners, to prevent, or give a stop to the execution of that wrath, by appeasing God's anger. Heb. 5. 1. *For every high Priest taken from among men, is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts & sacrifices for sins.* He was to make an atonement, for the turning away of divine displeasure, and obtaining of favour. On this account, the *Offerings* they presented, were said *to make Reconciliation for them*, 2 Chron. 29. 24. And this is applied to Christ, Heb. 2. 17. *Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high Priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.*

(2.) *THE Satisfaction by which Christ made this Reconciliation, was given to the Justice of God.* And that we may rightly take up this matter, we must observe, that it is the *Relative Justice* of God, which is here concerned: which bears a proper respect to that Rule of proceeding, between God and Man, in his special Government, which was established in the first Covenant. In which Covenant, God gave Man a Law, according to which he was to order himself; and added Sanctions to it, by promising Life to Man upon his perfect Obedience, and threatning him with Death on his Disobedience, assuring him that he must stand or fall on these Terms: as hath been already made evident, under the Doctrine of God's special Government, and of the Covenant of Works. Now this was the Justice which Christ applied himself to, and made it his business to satisfy it, as a Priest. And this is well to be observed, He did it not as a private Person, for himself, but as he was our Priest; and his Priesthood belongs to his mediatorship, in which his business with God is not on his own account, but for his People. Hence the satisfaction which he gives to Divine Justice, must be such as answers the condition of those for whom it is given; and that is such who by sin have forfeited the promised blessing, and incurred the threatned curse. Hence, not only was he *made under the Law* because we were so, (*Gal.* 4. 4.) but was also *made sin for us*, because we were become Sinners, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. He was for this reason necessitated to answer the Covenant in both parts of it, or comply with each function. Which will be manifest in the sequel.

3. *THE way in which he made this satisfaction, was by once offering himself up a Sacrifice.* And in all this he acted as a *Priest*, and fully answered the Types of him. For the clearing of this, two things may be inquired into. 1. *What Christ did for the making of this Satisfaction?* 2. *The compleat Satisfaction that was given to the Justice of God hereby?*

Q. 1. *WHAT Christ did for the making of this Satisfaction?*

A. THERE is a *two fold Obedience* ascribed

to Chriſt in the Scripture, viz. *active and paſſive*, and both of theſe refer *to the work of Redemption*, for they were done by him as he was under the Law, all of which was to redeem us. Now, though our Catechiſm mentions only his *paſſive Obedience*, yet we are to ſuppoſe that it includes his *active*. Whatever Chriſt did as our Redeemer, he did it by vertue of one of his three Offices; now that his *active Obedience* was for us, as well as his *paſſive*, is certain. He did not do for himſelf, and ſuffer for us; for he took our nature on him on our account, and he tells us, that *it becomes* him in it *to fulfil all Righteouſneſs*, Mat. 3. 15. And we are told that he *is the end of the Law for it*, Rom. 10. 4. And we are aſſured that he hath *purchaſed* the *Inheritance* for us, *Eph.* 1. 14. And it muſt be done by complying with the terms on which it was to be had, and that was by perfect Obedience, which he therefore performed, as he purchaſed us for that by his ſufferings. This then muſt be referred to one of his Three Mediatorial Offices; but it cannot belong either to his Prophetical or Kingly: becauſe in it he treats not with us, but with God, in which his *Prieſtly* only is concerned: and the Juſtice which he had to do with in it, is either rewarding or revenging. Now rewarding Juſtice refers to the beſtowing of life and happineſs upon man, on account of his perfect active obedience, unto which this reward was accordingly promiſed. Chriſt then as a Prieſt conformed himſelf to the rule. Hence we have him declaring, *Pſal.* 40. 8. Heb. 10. 7. *Then ſaid I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God.* And for this reaſon his holineſs and being without ſin is ſo remarked, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 22. *Who did no ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth.* Heb. 7. 26. *For ſuch an high Prieſt became us, who is holy, harmleſs, undefiled, ſeparate from ſinners.* Nor was this meerly to fit him to ſuffer, and anſwer the Type, which required the Sacrifices to be without blemiſh, but to ſignify, that by doing as well as ſuffering, he wro't out a righteouſneſs for us, which might anſwer the juſtice of the law on our account, and ſtand for us, upon God's gracious imputing of it to us. However the greatly celebrated buſineſs of this *Satisfaction* is ſet forth in Chriſt's *paſſive Obedience*, wherein he made himſelf a *Sacriſice* for Sin. Of which we have this account in the Anſwer,

1. *THAT Jeſus Chriſt was the Prieſt offering.* The Ceremonial law required an order of *Prieſthood* for the offering of Sacrifices. They were not accepted at every man's hand. No other man might come near to the holy Place leſt he die. So that the acceptance of the oblation depended on the perſon that offered it. He muſt be a deputed *Prieſt*. *Now a* Prieſt *is a ſacred Perſon ſeparated from the common people, and conſecrated to God, to miniſter before him in holy things.* All of this deſcription is ſet forth, in *Heb.* 5. *begin.* And this tipified Chriſt, as one appointed by his Father, and ordained to his work by him, ſignifying that it was impoſſible that ſatisfaction could be made, and Salvation be procured for us by any other but him, according to *Acts* 4. 12. Now Chriſt was a *Prieſt* according to both natures; this Office reſpected him as God-man. *Heb.* 5. 5,6,7. Not only his *divine*, but his *humane* Will alſo was active in this affair; God called him to this, and ſanctified him to it; for he was called even as *Aaron*, Heb. 5. 4, 5. *And no man taketh this honour unto himſelf, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So alſo Chriſt glorified not himſelf, to be made an high Prieſt: but he that ſaid unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.* And therefore our high Prieſt is ſet forth, as he is man as well as God. Heb. 4. 15. *For we have not an high Prieſt which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without ſin.* God himſelf ſeparated and conſecrated him. Pſal. 110. 4. *The Lord hath ſworn, and will not repent, thou art a Prieſt for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*

2. *THAT Jeſus Chriſt alſo, was the Sacrifice offered.* What is a Prieſt without a Sacrifice? This is his buſineſs. *Heb.* 5. 1. For, being to expiate the wrath of God for ſin, which the Levitical Prieſts did Ceremonially; and that by making ſatisfaction to juſtice: he muſt have ſomething to give in exchange for the life of the ſinner, which was forfeited, and whoſe blood was a due debt to divine revenge. When therefore, upon the day of atonement, he went into the moſt holy, he muſt not go *without blood*, Heb. 9. 7. So had the Son of God his Sacrifice, with which he made an exchange for ſinners, and an atonement for them. The *legal Sacrifices* were of two ſorts, *Expiatory*, for the appeaſing of God's wrath, and taking away of the guilt of ſin, and ſo upon the offering them God promiſed to *forgive them*, Lev. 4. 20. And *Euchariſtical*, or teſtimonies of thankfulneſs to God for his great favour to his people, which alſo they muſt not offer immediately, but the Prieſt muſt do it for them. The former of theſe had reſpect to Chriſt's Satisfaction, the latter to his Interceſſion.

NOW this Sacrifice was no other but Chriſt according to his humane nature. It is true, the Perſon of Chriſt is here conſidered, but it is according to this nature, which is properly of his Perſon, by vertue of the hypoſtatical union, into which he aſſumed it. For, though the divine nature gave value to his Sacrifice, and his Sufferings were therefore ſufficient to anſwer the law for all his People, becauſe they were the Suffering of Him who was the Son of God; yet the divine nature could not of it ſelf ſuffer or be ſacrificed, being incapable of ſuffering. The Scripture entitles his humane nature to the conſideration of a Sacrifice. Hence called his *Body*, Col. 1. 22. His *Blood*, ver. 20. His *Soul*, Iſai. 53. 10. And indeed he was fitted with an humanity for

for this end. Heb. 10. 5. *A body haſt thou prepared me.* And it was his whole humane nature conſiſting of Body & Soul, which made the offering. And how it was offered, will come to be particularly conſidered, under his Humiliation.

3. *THAT Chriſt alſo was the Altar on which he offered himſelf.* The law provided directly, that there ſhould be an *Altar* prepared, and the Sacrifice was to be offered upon it; and ſuch was the uſefulneſs of it, that the offering was to be *ſanctified by it*, Mat. 23.19. God appointed an Altar to be built, and commanded that all Oblations ſhould be brought to it; and he rejected all Sacrifices elſewhere offered, unleſs by ſpecial direction, he bad them on extraordinary occaſions to erect an Altar elſewhere. And Chriſt is properly the Altar, according to his divine nature. It was that which put the dignity & worth upon his Oblation. It was his divine nature that ſanctifyed his humane to the work of Redemption, Joh. 17. 19. *And for their ſakes I ſanctifie my ſelf, that they alſo might be ſanctified through the truth.* The value of his blood aroſe from hence, becauſe it was the *blood of God*, Act. 20. 28.

4. *THAT Chriſt's ſufferings and death, were deſignedly expiatory.* He did not ſuffer, only to ſet us an example, though we have an excellent pattern of paſſive Obedience in it; nor was he only a metaphorical Sacrifice, to glut the rage of Men & Devils; but he was the antetype of the Sacrifices Levitical, which were to pacify God to Sinners; which they could not do in themſelves, but as they were ſhadows of, and helps to Faith to believe in him, who was the ſubſtance. For this reaſon, he is ſaid to *give himſelf a Ranſom for us*, in 1 Tim. 2. 6. And what is a ranſom, but a full price paid for the redemption of that for which it is paid? As therefore the Prieſt was to lay the Sins of the People on the head of the Sacrifice, ſo did God *lay* our Sins *upon him*, Iſai. 53.6. And on this account he is ſaid to be *made ſin for us*, 2 Cor. 5.21. In alluſion to the ſin-offering, which was wont to be called in the abſtract. He is for this ſaid to *die for our ſins*, 1 Cor. 15. 3. and *to give himſelf for our ſins*, Gal. 1.4. and *to bear our ſins*, Heb. 9. 28. which, and many other expreſſions, muſt needs intend that he aimed at the ſatisfying the juſtice of the law hereby, on the account of thoſe whom he ſuffered for; and to deny this, is highly to derogate from the honour of Chriſt's ſufferings.

5. *THAT Chriſt once, and but once, offered himſelf on this account.* This article hath Emphaſis in the anſwer, and hath a particular remark put upon it more than once in the New Teſtament, *Heb.* 7. 27. *For Chriſt alſo hath once ſuffered for ſins*, 1 Pet. 3.18. The typical Sacrifices, of old, being commemorative of the promiſe, and to refreſh their Faith in expectation of the antetype, who was the ſubſtance, whereof theſe were but ſhadows, were on that account often repeated; wherein alſo their imperfection was intimated, as will after be obſerved. But Chriſt who was the Sacrifice to which they all pointed, in fulneſs of time *once offered himſelf*, & thereby expiated ſin, and perfected all that was requiſite on that account, according to, Heb. 10. 14. *For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified.* And now there needs no more Sacrifice. Which leads us to the next thing.

2. *THE compleat Satisfaction that was given to the Juſtice of God hereby.* For we muſt make this an article of our Faith, elſe we can receive no true conſolation from the Prieſthood of Chriſt. And there are four concluſions on which the fulneſs of this is built.

(1.) *THERE was room left, notwithſtanding the ſeverity of the Covenant of works, for the intervention of a Surety.* It is true, that Covenant had no ſuch expreſs reſerve, nor can there be a Surety in it, but it did not exclude the bringing in of a better Covenant. It is ſaid that *the Soul that ſins ſhall die*, but it did not ſay that God would not, or might not take another to die for him in exchange. Nay, in that Covenant, man was treated with in one common head, or repreſentative, in whom he was to ſtand or fall; which is anſwered by a parallel in the new Covenant, in Chriſt the ſecond Adam, who alſo was ſet to repreſent God's elect. Hence they are compared by antitheſis, 1 Cor. 15. 22. *For as in Adam all die, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.* To puniſh ſin according to the threatning, is an act of Juſtice, to puniſh it in another that is put in his room is an act of Sovereignty, and is not repugnant to Juſtice; and that it was ſo here, the Scripture aſſures us; hence he is called *a Surety*, *Heb.* 7. 22. and ſaid to bear our iniquities, *and to make his ſoul an offering for ſin*, Iſai. 53. 10. Which leads to,

(2.) *THAT the Son of God did become Surety for his elect, and his Father accepted him as ſo.* Suretiſhip in a criminal caſe, is not a thing that the law requires acceptance of, but it belongs entirely to Prerogative. So that it is not enough to the conſtitution of ſuch an one, that a Perſon offers himſelf to be exchanged, but the Judge muſt conſent to, and receive the offer; upon which the party ſtands related. Thus Chriſt is ſaid, not only to be, but to be *made a Surety*, Heb. 7. 22. And how he was thus made hath been obſerved under the general conſideration of his mediatorſhip: but it is certain, that his Father did accept him as ſo in the everlaſting Covenant, and it was for this reaſon, and meerly on this account that he came to be under the law, and ſeized by juſtice, and brought to ſuffering, to which he elſe had not been liable.

(3.) *THAT his active and paſſive obedience were on the account of this Suretiſhip, or in purſuit of it.* That he did obey in both theſe reſpects is certain, yea, he came in our nature to this end that he might obey, and there muſt be ſome reaſon why the eternal Son of God

God ſhould, in our nature, put himſelf under the law: it could not be for himſelf, for being a divine Perſon he was above law, and owed no perſonal obedience to it, nor could it ever have required actual obedience of him on his perſonal account; but it muſt be with reſpect to ſome relation he bare, and that muſt be as he ſtood in mans place to whom the law was given; much leſs could he owe paſſive obedience to it for himſelf, ſince having fully complyed with the precept, he came under the promiſe of life, and was not obnoxious to the threatning of death. So that if he die for ſin, it muſt not be his own, but ſome other which he bare. Hence that, 1 Pet. 2, 24. *Who his own ſelf bare our ſins in his own body on the tree.* Gal. 2. 20.

(4.) *THAT this obedience of his was ſufficient to anſwer the Juſtice of the Law, for us, and make full ſatisfaction to it.* Chriſt ſaith of himſelf, Mat. 5. 17. *Think not that I am come to deſtroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to deſtroy, but to fulfil.* And he did ſo. And there is no unrighteouſneſs in diſcharging the ſinner on account of it. As will appear if we conſider,

[1.] *The obedience it ſelf.* It was no ways defective. In his active obedience, he was without any ſpot; he never ſinned by omiſſion or commiſſion, but fulfilled the law in all its commands. In his paſſive obedience, he underwent all that was eſſential to the curſe which man was fallen under; even the whole weight of God's wrath which was out againſt ſinners. His one Sacrifice was perfect; how elſe could it perfect the partakers in it? as *Heb.* 10 14. Which will be ſeen when we come particularly to conſider it.

[2.] *THE Perſon obeying.* He was both God and Man. Now, being Man, he anſwered the law. He was our Brother, and the right of redemption belongs to him. He was Man, and ſo could as a Man anſwer that law which was made for man; and being God, he thereby put an infinite worth into his obedience. There is an emphaſis in calling *his blood* the *blood of God*, Acts 20. 28. Such a ſacrifice could not but be unconceiveably precious. Hence that, 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. *Foraſmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as ſilver and gold, from your vain converſation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Chriſt, as of a lamb without blemiſh and without ſpot.*

[3.] *THE reception which this Obedience of his had with the Father.* This abundantly proves, that Juſtice was ſatisfyed with it.

For,

1. *HIS Father gave him a full acquittance as a Surety.* The law had him under an arreſt, being engaged to pay our debts, but it could not hold him, but gave him a diſcharge. He was dead and buried, but the Grave had no power over him, becauſe the curſe of death which he took on him for us was expiated, He was delivered out of the hands of Juſtice, *raiſed again* from the Grave. And we are told, it was *for our Juſtification*, Rom. 4. 25. Why it was not poſſible, &c. *Acts.* 2. 24. but becauſe he had compleated the ſatisfaction?

2. *GOD hath advanced him to the higheſt honour and dignity.* And this is not only after he had done and ſuffered, but as a recompence of it. Phil. 2. 7,8,9. *But made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of men. And being found in faſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs. Wherefore God alſo hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.* If he had not paid all our debts he had not been diſcharged, much leſs exalted: as we now ſee him to be by an eye of faith. *Heb.* 1. 3. And it was for this, Heb. 2. 9. *But we ſee Jeſus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the ſuffering of death, crowned with glory & honour, that he by the grace of God ſhould taſte death for every man.* He hath received this as a recompence of his Obedience, which he had not done, if it had not been ſatisfactory.

3. *HE hath the diſpenſation of Eternal life committed to him.* The Salvation of Sinners depended on his Prieſthood If his Sacrifice had not been ſufficient, they could not be ſaved. But now he hath Authority to give *Eternal Life*, to as many as he will. *Joh.* 5. 24,25. And he hath this *Authority* as *he is the Son of man*, ver. 27. He can therefore *forgive Sins*, Mat. 9. 6. Which evidenceth, that he hath ſatisfyed for them.

USE. *THIS teacheth us, that our Righteouſneſs or Juſtification muſt needs be by imputation.* They that deny the Juſtification of a Sinner to be by imputation, wholly make void the Prieſtly Office of Chriſt, in the main, and eſſential part of it, viz. Satisfaction. In Juſtification the man is declared *rectus in curia*; the law abſolves him from guilt, and declares him righteous. Now the perſon muſt firſt be tried by the law in order to ſuch a proceſs. Now the law curſeth the delinquent, *Gal.* 3. 10. And ſuch will every man be found on his perſonal account. So that Inquiry muſt be further made, whether the law hath been anſwered for him, and a reparation made for his tranſgreſſion? And if no ſuch be found, he cannot be juſtified. The ground of Chriſt's Prieſthood was to offer up an expiatory Sacrifice, to appeaſe the juſtly incenſed anger of God againſt the ſinner; becauſe man had offended, and could not of himſelf make ſatisfaction. It is to be obſerved, that the ſubject of Juſtification is a ſinner. Rom. 4. 5. *But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteouſneſs.* They have no perſonal righteouſneſs of their own, being fallen *ſhort of the glory of God*, Rom. 3. 23. Should they be tried on their own account, they could not be juſtified, *Pſal.* 143. 2. Hence in order to their acquittance, there

there muſt be found a righteouſneſs equally extenſive with the command, and anſwerable to the ſentence of the law; and not being found in the man, it muſt be in ſome other perſon for him. Now God's being willing to accept of this at the hand of Chriſt our Mediator, introduced his *Prieſtly Office*. So that the Satisfaction which he made is our Juſtification. Iſai. 53. 11. *He ſhall ſee of the travel of his ſoul, and ſhall be ſatisfied: by his knowledge ſhall my righteous ſervant juſtifie many; for he ſhall bear their iniquities.* 2 Cor. 5. 21. *For he hath made him to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* Nor is it poſſible that it ſhould be ours any other way, but by *Imputation*. Would we then have the comfort of this hope, let us be often viewing this glorious Satisfaction of our High Prieſt, and fetch our encouragement from it.

[NOVEMBER 26. 1695.]

SERMON XCI.

2. THE *Interceſſion of Chriſt is the ſecond part of his Prieſthood, in which he purſues his Satisfaction to effect.* Divines do uſually treat of this Subject under the doctrine of Chriſt's Exaltation; it being one main part of the employment, which he is engaged in at his Fathers right Hand. But, in as much as it properly belongs to his Prieſthood, (as will preſently be evidenced,) it will very methodically be conſidered here, where our Catechiſm placeth it. And we may diſcover ſomething of the nature of this glorious Work, by the following deſcription of it. *Chriſt's Interceſſion is that part of his Prieſtly Office, which he principally executes in his Exalted ſtate, wherein he appears before his Father in the vertue of all his merits, to make claim of all the good for his People, which was promiſed to him.* In which deſcription we may obſerve ſomething of the general nature of it, and ſomething of the ſpecial.

1. *IN the general nature of it.* There are two things obſervable,

(1.) *THAT it belongs to his Prieſtly Office.* And this it hath in common with his Satisfaction, which is the other part; & in the execution of both whereof, it is compleated. That there are but Three Offices belonging to his Mediatorſhip, hath been before made evident. In one whereof he hath to do with God, in the other two with men. Now Chriſt in his Interceſſion hath to do immediately with God; and it muſt be reſerved to that Office wherein this is concerned, which is only his Prieſthood. The High Prieſt of old, who was eminently a type of Chriſt, did repreſent both theſe parts, in the diſcharge of his function; and more ſpecially on the day of atonement. We have an ample deſcription of this, in that law about it, recorded in *Levit.* 16. the ſubſtance whereof amounts to thus much; He was firſt to offer up the burnt-offering and ſin-offering on the brazen Altar, which was without in the Court of the Sanctuary: and that repreſented Chriſt's Satisfaction. And then he was to go into the moſt holy Place, which was a repreſentation of Heaven; where he was to ſprinkle the memorial of that blood upon the mercy-ſeat: which ſignified Chriſt's Interceſſion. And this was appropriated to the High Prieſt; and no other but he might do it. And unto this doth the Apoſtle allude in that, Heb. 6. 19, 20. *For when Moſes had ſpoken every precept to all the people, according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water & ſcarlet wool, and hyſſop, and ſprinkled both the book and all the people. Saying, This is the blood of the Teſtament which God hath enjoyned unto you.*

(2.) *IT is that part of it which he more eſpecially executes in his Exalted ſtate.* It hath been before remarked, that he continues in the purſuance of every of his Offices now he is glorified. Nor will he ceaſe from any of them till the whole work of mediation is compleated. Now with reſpect to his Prieſtly it is remarkable, that the former part of it, viz. *Satisfaction*, was wholly accompliſhed in his ſtate of Humiliation, in that low condition of his; whereof we may have the account afterwards. The Sin-offering was offered up by the high Prieſt, in his ordinary robes, without the tabernacle. Chriſt left none of this work to do afterwards. When therefore he was juſt expiring upon the Croſs, he declared, *It is finiſhed*, Joh. 19. 30. Which was with reſpect to his expiatory Sacrifice. But his Interceſſion is made in Heaven, in his glorified ſtate. The high Prieſt ſprinkled the blood in the moſt holy Place, attired in thoſe majeſtical robes of glory and beauty, which were made for him on purpoſe. And though Chriſt gave a ſpecimen of this upon Earth, in that Interceſſion-Prayer, recorded *Joh.* 17. yet he reſerved the full accompliſhment of it, till in our nature, he appeared in his Fathers preſence, and ſat down at his right Hand. His Prieſthood, in the former, was executed in humility, meanneſs, and obſcurity: but in this it is diſcharged in eminency & glory. That employment he performed in the form of a Servant, but this in the ſtate of Majeſty, and from an exalted Throne. In the former he made prayers & ſupplications, on bended knees: in this he makes his demands with confidence. *Father, I will,* &c. Joh. 17. 24.

2. *THE ſpecial nature of it is expreſs'd in the remainder of the deſcription.* In which theſe things are obſervable,

(1.) *THAT God the Father did by Covenant ſtand engaged to his Son in very great promiſes, with regard to his People.* That there was a Covenant that paſt between them from Eternity, in which was laid the foundation of man's Redemption, hath been already before taken notice of. So that Chriſt ſet himſelf

about

about the work of Satisfaction upon terms, which paſt betwixt his Father and him, and to which his Father obliged himſelf, upon the diſcharge of that work. There are a great many of them which the Scripture gives us the account of. And beſides the honour and glory which was promiſed to him perſonally, with regard to his humane nature; there were alſo thoſe which had a proper reſpect to his Redeemed. We have one of theſe, Iſai. 53. 10. *See his Seed:* i. e. a new generation proceeding from him by a ſpiritual regeneration. That he ſhould be the ſecond Adam, and have a numerous progeny of his own; and that all his People ſhould be *juſtified* by him, *ver.* 11. i.e. that he ſhould obtain the favour for them, whereby they ſhould be for ever ſet free from condemnation; and entitled to peace and happineſs: That this *Seed ſhould ſerve him for ever*, Pſal. 22. 30. That they ſhould be his everlaſting *poſſeſſion*, Pſal. 2. 8. That though he ſhould be angry at them, and chaſten them, yet he would never reject them. *Pſal.* 89. 30, &c. with many the like. All of which were to have their accompliſhment upon his Satisfaction. And this belongs to that *Joy* which is ſaid to be *ſet before him*, Heb. 12. 2.

(2.) *THAT Chriſt having fulfilled the condition of the Covenant on his part, muſt now make claim of all this good at his Fathers hand.* When he had done his work, it was meet that he ſhould ask for his recompence. When *Solomon* had built an Houſe for God, he then calls upon him for the fulfilling of the promiſes made to him, 1 Kin. 8. 26. *And now, O God of Iſrael, let thy word (I pray thee) be verified, which thou ſpakeſt unto thy ſervant David my father.* And herein he was a type of Chriſt. God the Father will have his Son to *ask*, Pſal. 2. 8. It is indeed no more but ask, and have. His Father never did, nor will deny him any thing. Joh. 11. 42. *And I knew that thou beareſt me always.* But yet he muſt ask in order to receiving. A due debt muſt be claimed. Chriſt is called God's Servant; and it is meet that the Servant ſhould go to him who employed him, for his wages, when his work is done. And we have an exemplification of that, in *Job.* 17.

(3.) *THAT, as God by Covenant obliged himſelf to his Son; ſo he is exceeding ready to fulfill all his engagements to him upon his demand.* The work that Chriſt did was exceedingly pleaſing to his Father. He took great delight in it. He is repreſented to us in the œconomy of the divine Perſons, as the propoſer of it, and the terms were of his own offering; His heart therefore as well as his word is in it. And as the Son delighted to do his Fathers will, ſo the Father no leſs delighted in performing his promiſe to him. So that all theſe bleſſings and bleſſednеſſes do but wait for his challenging of them.

(4.) *THAT Chriſt in Perſon preſents himſelf and all his merits to his Father, and in the vertue of them, He asks the fulfilment of the promiſe.* Here let us obſerve,

1. *THAT he appears in Perſon before God.* And that not meerly in his divine nature, for ſo he is God; and ſo alſo the Three Perſons are but One and undivided in the Eſſence, and conſequently inſeparable: but in his humane nature, in, and with which he made Satisfaction. Heb. 9. 24. *For Chriſt is not entred into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven it ſelf, now to appear in the preſence of God for us.* And this belongs to his Exaltation; as will be hereafter conſidered. He is gone to Heaven as our Attorney, there to be ever Reſident for us, aud manage all our buſineſs in that Court. He takes our Cauſe along with him, and there he continues to be a conſtant Advocate, before the great Judge and Lord, to anſwer for all that can be alledged againſt us; and ſtand between us and harm. Hence he is ſo called, 1 Joh. 2. 1. *If any man ſin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous.* Which word is frequently uſed for one who is improved to plead anothers cauſe. And the *Interceſſion* which is applyed to him, *Iſai.* 53. 12. ſignifies to meet another; and intimates, that if divine Juſtice have any thing to lay to our charge, He is ready at hand to obviate it, and prevents its farther proceedure againſt us.

2. *HE appears with all his merits.* For theſe are the evidence which he carries with him, for his title to all that good which he asks. He brings theſe, ſhews them to his Father, and therein repreſents to him, how he hath fully done his part in the Covenant.

(1.) *HE repreſents the merits of his paſſive Obedience:* The Satisfaction that he hath made to the Juſtice of God for our offences, by his Suffering and Death. He is therefore ſaid to be *brought from the dead*, by *the blood of the Everlaſting Covenant*, Heb. 13. 20. The meaning of which is, that Chriſt is ſo riſen from the dead, that the vertue of his death is not aboliſhed, but holds its perpetual vigour. This is called *the blood of ſprinkling*, Heb. 12. 24. Alluding to the blood with which the high Prieſt beſprinkled the mercy-ſeat. And in *Heb.* 9. 12. Chriſt is ſaid to *enter into the Holy Place, by, or with his blood.* For it alludes to the high Prieſts carrying the blood within the veil. The mercy-ſeat of God, is beſprinkled with the blood of Chriſt: i.e. He perpetually preſents his own Sufferings, as the meritorious cauſe of good for us.

(2.) *HE preſents the merits of his active Obedience.* There was his righteouſneſs before God, by which he merited favour for us, and made purchaſe of Heaven and Glory, and all the good things which belong to the promiſe made to active Obedience, which are no leſs than life it ſelf. We read, Heb. 10. 14. *For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified.* And we know that the high Prieſt carried his Incenſe into the moſt holy Place, as well as Blood. And Chriſt in his Interceſſion is repreſented to us, by that Angel, in *Rev.* 8. 3.

(3.) *WITH*

3. *WITH his thus preſenting himſelf, and his merits, he lays claim to all the good which he hath thus earned, and his Father promiſed.* We here conſider, 1. *What it is that he claims?* 2. *After what manner he claims it?*

1. *THAT which he lays claim to, is all that which his Redeemed do, or can want.* Our wants cannot extend beyond, or beſides his merits. His abilities therefore to do for us, are moſt extenſive. Eph. 3. 20. *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.* It is then, the application of all the good which he hath purchaſed for thoſe whom he hath redeemed, which is needful for the bringing of them to eternal glory, which he intercedes for; and the reaſon of it is, becauſe, the work of application in the œconomy of divine diſpenſation, belongs to the Holy Spirit, who is in order, the Third Perſon in the bleſſed Trinity, and is ſent by the Father and the Son. He therefore promiſed, as to ſend himſelf, ſo to interpoſe with his Father for his ſending of him. Joh. 14. 16,17. *And I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. Even the Spirit of truth.* There are then theſe things in particular, which he more eſpecially Intercedes for,

(1.) *HE Intercedes for the Calling and Converſion of his Redeemed.* Having paid the price for them, and ſo bought them to be his own, He muſt bring them to glory; in order to which they muſt be converted, and new born. For in their natural ſtate they are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins. And except they are born again, Chriſt's Redemption will not profit them. Now this is the Spirits work. Hence ſaid to be *born of the Spirit*, Joh. 3. 6. And though he hath promiſed *the Spirit to thoſe that ask him*, Luk. 11. 13. yet if he did not firſt ask him for them, they would never ask him for themſelves. *Iſai.* 65. 1. They would live and die in their ſins, as well as the reſt of the world, if he did not look after them. And when at any time, a Sinner is Converted unto God, it is by the vertue and efficacy of his Interceſſion. Hence that, *Joh.* 17. 9, 20.

(2.) *HE Intercedes for the Pardon and Peace of his People.* When *Solomon* (1 *Kin.* 8. 31, &c.) prayed ſo earneſtly for forgiveneſs and reconciliation in all caſes, he did it as a type of Chriſt. When a penitent ſinner returns to God, and lies proſtrate at the footſtool of the Throne, Chriſt in Heaven ſaith, Father forgive him, and be atoned to him. And for that reaſon is he ſaid to be *our Peace*, Eph 2. 14. Yea, the Children of God do many times provoke their Father, and there is a breach made between him & them; but their Interceſſor ſteps in, and makes up all again. On this account he is called a Days-man, or one who takes upon him to make up the breaches between two that are at variance. When God is angry, he appeaſeth him, puts himſelf to interpoſe, to take their part, to excuſe them, to impetrate mercy for them. *Moſes* was in this regard a type of Chriſt, who ever put himſelf between God and a ſinful people, when he ſaw there was wrath ready to break out upon them. And we may read what is ſaid of him, Pſal. 106. 23. *Therefore he ſaid that he would deſtroy them, had not Moſes his choſen ſtood before him in the breach; to turn away his wrath leſt he ſhould deſtroy them.* And it may be truly ſaid of Chriſt as Moſes ſaith of himſelf, *Deut.* 4. 22, *&c.*

(2.) *HE is an Interceſſor to receive their Petitions, and preſent their Prayers to the Father, for a gracious acceptance and anſwer.* He is the Angel ſpoken of, *Rev.* 8. 3. Our prayers are ſo ſinful and fooliſh, that they would never come up to the Throne of Grace, but be rejected as dung, did not he appear to preſent them. It is by him that we *have acceſs* to the *Father*, Eph. 3. 12. He covers the defects of our prayers, and adds to them whatſoever may be uſeful to ſtrengthen our pleas, and enforce our petitions, that they may obtain a good iſſue. God's Children have daily occaſion to offer their Supplications to God; they need his help at all times. But how ſhall they come near that God who is a conſuming fire? but that Chriſt is there for them; He receiveth their Prayers: and whatſoever weakneſs, infirmity, defect is in them, he ſupplies and fills up all; and ſo they receive an anſwer of peace. And for that reaſon we are bid to *ask all in his Name.*

(4.) *HE is their Interceſſor to ſtop all accuſations, that are at any time brought in againſt them.* Satan is called the *accuſer of the brethren*, Rev. 12. 10. And what accuſations he is offering we know not. We find that he would have fain rendred *Job* an hypocrite, *Job* 1. 9, 10. Yea, how often may they be impeached of that which is bad enough? But Chriſt in Heaven is careful that no accuſation ſhall take place againſt his people, that none ſhall undermine them, or render them odious to the Father. We have on this account that challenge, *Rom.* 8. 33, &c.

(5.) *HE Intercedes that they may be guided in the Truth, preſerved in Grace, and kept from Sin.* There is a perſeverance requiſite in order to eternal Salvation. There is a way which they muſt be put into, kept in, and not depart from, if ever they reach to the kingdom; which they cannot do for themſelves, but muſt have the conduct of the holy Spirit for it. This therefore he manageth for them effectually. He hath ſaid that he *would pray the Father to ſend the Comforter*, Joh. 14. 16. And what is he to do for them when he comes? See Joh. 16. 13. *Howbeit, when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he ſhall not ſpeak of himſelf: but whatſoever he ſhall hear, that ſhall he ſpeak, and he will ſhew you things to come.* Their grace is weak, their corruptions ſtrong. They live in a world where there are many ſnares laid for them, and are every day open to the aſſaults of forcible temptations; their adverſary lying always in wait to devour them. But it is

by the care of their Interceſſor that they are kept. What ſaid Chriſt to *Peter?* Luk. 22. 31, 32. *Satan hath deſired to have you, that he may ſift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.* And how pathetically doth he expreſs himſelf on this account on their behalf? *Joh.* 17. 11.

(6.) *HE Intercedes for them, that they may be brought ſafe home to, and poſſeſſed of the kingdom of Glory.* We find that to be the priviledge of all the children of God, 1 Pet. 1. 5. *Who are kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto ſalvation, ready to be revealed in the laſt time.* And they enjoy it unfailingly, by vertue of his Interceſſion he is purſuing that great demand, that when this life comes to an end, and they have been conducted thro' all the ſtages of it, their Grace may be perfected, and they obtain a ſtate of Glory in Heaven, and inherit eternal Life, in the preſence of God for ever, *Joh.* 17. 24. His work is not done till he hath brought them to Glory, *Heb.* 2. 10. And therefore his Interceſſion ceaſeth not in this behalf, till all this be accompliſhed for them.

THESE then are ſome of the main and principal things, which this part of his Prieſthood is employed about, and for which he improves his great Intereſt in his Father, whiles he is exalted to ſit, at his right Hand.

2. TO the Inquiry, *After what manner he lays claim to all this?* I reply, *That we need not, nor ought to be curiouſly and critically inquiſitive, where the Spirit of God hath not ſeen good in Scripture to declare.* Our preſent conceptions are not competent, to receive a full apprehenſion of the management of Heavenly affairs: it is enough to ſatisfy us, that we are aſſured that He doth it effectually. He is ſometimes ſaid to *pray* for it, *Joh.* 14. 16. Which refers to his Interceſſion, for he is there ſpeaking of what he will do when he is gone. And he is bidden to *ask* for it, *Pſal.* 2. 8. But how he asks and prays we know not. To be ſure, not with *ſtrong cries* and *tears*, as he did in the days of his fleſh. But after another, and a glorified manner. And whether the Man Chriſt uſeth any words or no, in this his Interceſſion, is not material. We know that his Blood ſpeaks, his Obedience pleads; and the conſtant preſentation of that, is ſufficiently ſignificant. Only theſe two things we may be ſure of for our abundant conſolation,

(1.) *THAT he doth not plead Mercy but Juſtice.* He doth not manage this affair after the manner of a Suppliant, but of an Advocate, who there preſents himſelf to make it good by Law and Covenant, that all the good which he there asks for us, is his and our due in a way of righteouſneſs. For though we of our ſelves deſerve it not, but it is made over to us of meer Grace; yet as we are in him, who hath purchaſed it for, ſo it is ours in juſtice. 1 Joh. 1. 9. *If we confeſs our ſins, he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins, and to cleanſe us from all our ſins.* And to implead all that can be ſaid againſt us to debar us from the enjoyment thereof, and to make it appear that it cannot be righteouſly with-holden from us. And on this account he hath the attribute of Righteouſneſs given him, as he is our Interceſſor, 1 Joh. 2. 1. *And if any man ſin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous.*

(2.) *THAT this plea being made with a righteous Father, cannot but always obtain the good that he asks.* He therefore pleads God's holineſs, Joh. 17. 11. *Holy Father, keep through thy Name, thoſe whom thou haſt given me, that they may be one, as we are.* Becauſe the glory of God is intereſſed in his fulfilling that Covenant promiſe to his own Son. So that he is full of holy boldneſs, knowing that he hath the right on his ſide, and that his Father both loves Juſtice, and cannot deny his claim, which is built upon an eternal and unchangeable compact. And hence there is an utter impoſſibility, that Chriſt's Interceſſion ſhould ever fail, or miſs the obtaining, in any one of thoſe Articles that he preſents to his Father in the behalf of any one of his Redeemed.

USE. I. *HENCE the Church and People of God, are not loſers but gainers by Chriſt's being gone from them, in regard of his bodily preſence.* There was a time when he tabernacled among them, they ſaw, and heard, and felt the Word of Life. And we are ſometimes thinking, how happy had we been, had we lived in thoſe times? When we might have come to him, and told him all our wants, and heard thoſe gracious words that came from his lips. But let every Child of God know, that it is beſt as it is. Jeſus Chriſt is there, where he hath higheſt advantage to be beneficial to his People, and He improves it without ceaſing. He did all that was needful for him to do, before he went away. He finiſhed his work, before he asked for his reward. Joh. 17. 4, 5. *I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finiſhed the work which thou gaveſt me to do. And now, O Father, glorifie thou me with thine own ſelf, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.* And he is now in Heaven, engaged in a work, which will be neceſſary for his people, as long as the world ſtands. As he came into this lower World for us, ſo he is gone to his Father on our account. Our great concerns now lie in Heaven, & our weightieſt buſineſſes are to be managed there. He therefore tells us, that *it was expedient for him to go*, Joh. 16. 7. Our bleſſedneſs depends upon the Regeneration he is there procuring to be beſtowed upon us, upon the Pardon he is taking out for us, on the Peace he is there making & maintaining between God & us. Our Life is in God's favour, which he continues to us. Our Grace and Comfort ariſe from the influence of his Spirit, whom he is ever ſending into us. Our Glory is there to be enjoyed: and he is now making preparation for it. Let this then be the Conſolation of God's Children at all times.

USE.

Use. II. *WHAT Encouragement is here to us, to be in Faith carrying all our wants to God continually.* This is drawn from our High Prieſt's being gone to Heaven. *Heb.* 4. 14, 16. You are always in want, and your wants are ſuch that none but God can help you in. But alas! you are afraid; your ſin, your unworthineſs, and the terrible majeſty of God make you afraid. Well, now let this put life into you, and help you to come with humble boldneſs, and confidence, remembring that your Redeemer is his Fathers darling, and your Advocate is Heaven's King. Jeſus Chriſt is employed for you, and waits to be employed by you to his Father; and do not you let him want work. He waits to hear whether you have no Meſſage to ſend by him to God, no Petition for him to preſent for you, no Want to be relieved, no help from Heaven to be afforded, no Luſts to be mortified, no Enemies to be ſubdued, no Conſolations to be communicated. And the more you employ him, the better pleaſed is he. Uſe him then, and let not God's terrors affright you, your unworthineſs diſcourage you, your infirmity aſhame you, fears of Satan's accuſations deter you, having ſuch an Interceſſor ready to manage all in your behalf, who can never fail in his buſineſs.

[December 24. 1695.]

SERMON *XCII.*

II. WE proceed to conſider *of the Neceſſity of Chriſt's Prieſtly Office.* And this will be ſeen by obſerving *the dependance that fallen man's Salvation hath upon it.* And the ground of this neceſſity is laid *in the Relation which man bears to the Law or Covenant of Works*, and *the exactneſs or ſeverity of that Covenant.* A brief account whereof may be taken in the following Concluſions,

1. *THERE was a rule of Juſtice fixed by God in that Covenant, according to which man was to be happy or miſerable.* That is to be accounted a *rule of Juſtice*, when there are righteous precepts given, and thoſe are ratified, with the promiſe of reward to thoſe that obſerve them, and threatning of puniſhment to ſuch as violate them; by one that hath authority ſo to command, and appoint ſuch Sanctions. And when the Superiour is bound to fulfil theſe ſanctions, according to the tenor of them; and the Inferiour ſtands engaged to obedience on theſe terms: it now amounts to a Covenant, in which the proceedure of Juſtice is ſtated or determined. For here is a mutual obligation between theſe two parties. Now ſuch a Rule was conſtituted in the firſt Covenant between God and man. For God both told man what he ought to do, gave him a law, wherein he was made to underſtand what was expected of him; ſignified what he ſhould receive if he thus did. Rom. 10. 5. *That the man which doth theſe things, ſhall live by them.* And what he muſt ſuffer, if he neglected or did otherwiſe, Gen. 2. 17. *For in the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die.*

2. *MAN is by ſin fallen ſhort of this rule of Juſtice.* And here begun the *neceſſity* of an High Prieſt. The Law indeed was the *occaſion* of man's apoſtacy and miſery, but it was not the *cauſe* of it. Neither the rule, nor the threatning of it, would have hurt man in the leſt, if he had not run againſt it, and broken himſelf upon it, by his ſin; but contrarily, if he had kept cloſe to it, it would have made him happy. The law *was ordained for life*, but ſin made it become *death*, Rom. 7. 10. The law was given as a medium of commerce between God and man. In obeying it he would have pleaſed God, and ſo God would have held communion with him, and made him bleſſed in that communion; nor could there any thing have interpoſed to ſeparate him from the Fountain of bleſſedneſs. *Iſai.* 56. 2.

3. *GOD ſtands freely and yet firmly obliged to his own Law.* He not only bound man to his duty, but with it he engaged himſelf, either to reward or puniſh man, according as he ſhould behave himſelf with relation to his duty. The conſequents of the conditions of the firſt Covenant were not left arbitrary by God, but were ratifyed and made ſure, by God's aſſerting both to the promiſe and threatning. God poſitively threatned diſobedience with death, Gen. 2. 17. *For in the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die.* The words carry the form of a vehement aſſeveration in them. *Socinians* that they may with the more ſeeming reaſon deny Chriſt's Satisfaction, have left the conditional threatning in the firſt Covenant arbitrary; and ſay, tho' ſin expoſed man to it, yet God was not obliged by it. And ſome Orthodox in oppoſition to them, have ſought to make the puniſhment of ſin, natural & neceſſary to God. But both theſe are extreams. God's holineſs indeed naturally loaths ſin. *Hab.* 1. 13. But to puniſh or pardon ſinners are the reſults of his free Will, and both conſiſtent with his holineſs. But, having in a Covenant bound himſelf to puniſh ſin, and in that way to manifeſt his relative Juſtice, He cannot now go back, becauſe he is not a man that he ſhould lie.

4. *GOD is reſolved upon the Salvation of ſome Sinners.* And this alſo goes in to make it *neceſſary*, that there ſhould be an High Prieſt. For the neceſſity is not abſolute but hypothetical. If God had ſeen meet to have left all *Adam's* poſterity, under the ſentence of the Law, which they had procured to themſelves, to have ſuffered in their own perſons the penalty of the breach of it for ever, there had been no occaſion for the Prieſthood of Chriſt. Execution might have paſſed from God immediately, as a Lawgiver, and a Judge; nor was there any neceſſity for him to do otherwiſe. His happineſs had no dependance on man's Salvation. But in his free good will to men, he is reſolved that he will not leave

all that miſerable company to lie and dye in their ſins, and to ſuffer the vengeance of hell, but purpoſeth to bring back a number of them to be made partakers in eternal Glory. This purpoſe of his is therefore here to be ſuppoſed, 1 Theſ. 5.9. *For God hath not appointed us to wrath; but to obtain ſalvation by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

5. *IN man's Salvation a diſcovery is to be made of a glorious harmony between the Juſtice and Mercy of God.* Theſe are the two Attributes which God deſigned a peculiar advancement of upon man; and he will have both of theſe be exalted and admired in thoſe that are ſaved. Had he only intended the revelation of his Mercy, in the Salvation of the ſinner, he might have ſaved him without a Mediator; a free pardon, beſtowed upon a creature ſo highly offending, would have been a wonderful illuſtration of that. But becauſe he had firſt eſtabliſhed a rule of relative Juſtice; this Juſtice now ſteps in, and makes a demand of its right, before the Mercy which ſaves the ſinner may be proceeded unto. It was God's pleaſure, that his juſt hatred of ſin ſhould be made known, as well as his undeſerved love to the ſinner. And hence though he will be merciful, yet he will manifeſt or declare it, in a way of equity. *He* will *be both juſt*, &c. *Rom.* 3.26. Hence ſuch an expreſſion is uſed, 1 Joh. 1.9. *He is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins.* To be *juſt*, and yet *forgive*; yea to be *juſt* to *forgive*, or in forgiving, this is the myſtery of Redemption; the not regarding of which hath made Chriſt's Satisfaction, ſo little ſet by in the world.

6. *THAT Mercy may appear in glory, without offering any violence to the Juſtice of God, it is requiſite that all the demands of the rule of Juſtice be fully anſwered for all thoſe who are partakers in this mercy.* If the firſt Covenant be not ſatisfied for fallen man, it is impoſſible that his Salvation ſhould conſiſt with the relative Juſtice of God. That Covenant was a reſultancy of infinite Wiſdom; and hence the rule of it was ſo accommodated to the nature of man, that it was equal in its demands, and juſt in his threatnings. And for that reaſon it is not to be turned out of doors with diſgrace; but to be highly honoured in man's Salvation. And that it may ſo be it muſt be accompliſhed. And therefore Chriſt tells us, Mat. 5.17. *Think not that I am come to deſtroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to deſtroy, but to fulfil.* To the fulfilment whereof two things are neceſſary,

(1.) *THAT the condition of happineſs be performed.* In that Covenant perfect obedience, & a conſtant life of bleſſedneſs were connected. *Rom.* 10.5. Man cannot be conducted to eternal life, according to the tenor of that Covenant, but on the account of perfect obedience to the law of it; for the leaſt failure in any article of it, at any time, brings him under the curſe, *Gal.* 3.10. This was the rule of Juſtice at the firſt; and it was never diſanulled or repealed.

(2.) *THAT, in caſe of diſobedience, the penalty of it be fully ſuffered.* True, had man retained his primitive ingegrity, this part had been altogether needleſs. The threatning could hurt none, but thoſe that brought themſelves under it. But becauſe man is become guilty of ſin and diſobedience, he is now fallen under the ſentence. The curſe hath faſtned upon him, the law demands its ſatisfaction of him, and it muſt have it, or the rule of Juſtice would be violated. The Law ſaith, the Sinner muſt *die*. And it is juſt that it ſhould be ſo. And therefore death muſt be ſuffered, for the law muſt be fulfilled in every article of it. *Mat.* 5. 18.

7. *HENCE he that will ask mercy of God for the Sinner, and ſucceed in his petition, muſt be able to preſent him with ſuch a Righteouſneſs as this is, which muſt be the Sinners Righteouſneſs by imputation at leaſt, if not really.* It muſt be either that which he hath done himſelf, or that which is done for him. And this is truly and properly the Sacrifice which is offered up for Sinners. On this account it is that Chriſt is ſaid to be *made ſin for us*, 2 Cor. 5.21. And to bear *our Chaſtiſements*. Iſai. 53.7. For till a fair way be opened, that Mercy may ſhew it ſelf in a righteous way, there is no room or place for Mercy at all. For God will not glorify one Attribute to the diſhonour of another.

8. *SINFUL man is utterly unable to do this for himſelf.* He can do neither the one, nor the other to God's Satisfaction, and his own Salvation. He hath no perſonal righteouſneſs left him, nor can he obey the Law perfectly, nor yet ſo ſuffer the penalty of Sin, as to be able to take out an acquittance from it; but it would be forever taking this Satisfaction on him: which is the very reaſon of the eternity of the torments of the damned. Hence the riches of Grace is heightned by the expreſſing of its coming at ſuch a ſeaſon, Rom. 5.6. *For when we were yet without ſtrength, in due time Chriſt died for the ungodly.* So that if there can no way be found to remove the guilt of ſin from the Sinner, and impute it to another who is able to bear it, and to expiate it, and ſo to take the obedience of another, and impute it to the Sinner, there is no room left for his Salvation. And he that is ſuch a Perſon, ſtanding for Sinners under ſuch a relation, is properly a *Prieſt* for them.

9. *HE only that hath done all this is fit to appear before God for Sinners, to demand that the benefit of it be applied to them.* He only that can ſatisfy, yea that hath done it, is fit to intercede. None elſe can carry that Blood, and Incenſe into the moſt holy Place, that can make the atonement for them. How ſhould he make the challenge, who hath nothing to ground it upon? And it can have no other foundation but this. And if there be none to beſpeak this, and ſo procure the application of it to us, what hope were there for us, to go to that God, who is a conſuming fire to all thoſe who have no Prieſt to interpoſe for them. This is our encouragement, that *we have* ſuch *an Advocate*, 1 Joh. 2.1.

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10. *NONE but Chriſt, who is God and man, could do all this for us, and therefore if he had not engaged in, and performed it, all mankind muſt have periſhed for ever.* It was when none did appear to be a Saviour, that he ſtept in and undertook the work. *Iſai.*63.16. So that the ſubſtance of the *neceſſity of Chriſt's Prieſthood*, amounts to thus much, viz. If God be not reconciled to fallen man, there is no Salvation can be expected for him. If Juſtice be not appeaſed, there is no reconciling him, or moving of his Mercy to look towards the Sinner with a propitious eye. If there be not one who can by his active and paſſive obedience, anſwer the Law to the full of its demands, it cannot be ſatisfied, but remains in its fury againſt the Sinner. Now there was none but the Son of God in our nature, that was able to offer ſuch a Sacrifice, and thereupon to be able powerfully to intercede for us. So that, had not he been our HighPrieſt, we muſt have been loſt, and periſhed for ever, by abiding under the wrath of God, which would have wrought our eternal ruin.

III. NOW let us obſerve *the great Excellency of Chriſt's Prieſthood, or wherein he exceeded all the Types that ever were of it.* We read, Pſal. 110. 4. that *he* is ſaid to be *Prieſt for ever after the order of Melchiſedeck.* And the Apoſtle inſiſts upon it, *Heb.* 7. *begin.* And it is uſed to expreſs ſomething in his Prieſthood more eminent, than that of *Aaron.* Touching the Perſon of *Melchiſedeck*, we have no other account than what is given, *Gen.* 14. 18, 19, 20. And touching the order, we had known nothing at all, had not the Apoſtle in that Chapter explained it to us: which I ſhall no farther comment upon than to ſet forth the excellency of Chriſt's Prieſtly Office. Here let us obſerve, That *Aaron* was a Type of Chriſt, and whatſoever did truly belong to a Prieſt in him, was truly accompliſhed by Chriſt as the Antitype: and wherein any thing was more excellent in *Melchiſedeck*'s Prieſthood, therein was Chriſt after the order of him. And there are more eſpecially theſe things to be obſerved in it.

1. *THE legal Prieſthood was confirmed, by the intervention of an humane ordination, a bodily unction, and other ceremonies attending on it.* We have a particular account of them in the law of *Moſes.* Whereas Chriſt's Prieſthood was conferred on him after an extraordinary manner, by an immediate call or confirmation, being anointed to it by the Spirit; as hath been before obſerved. We read of no ceremonies in the call and inſtalment of *Melchiſedeck*, but only that he was a *Prieſt of the moſt high God.* We have therefore this account of him in the illuſtration of the Type, Heb. 7. 15, 16. *And it is yet far more evident: for that after the ſimilitude of Melchiſedec there ariſeth another Prieſt. Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endleſs life.* In which he is oppoſed to the other.

2. *THE legal Prieſthood was changeable.* It was capable of being altered; *whereas the Prieſthood of Chriſt, was unchangeable.* And there were two ways in which the Prieſthood might be altered, which His is not touched withal.

(1.) *ONE was capable of being diſplaced, and another being put in his room.* For the Aaronical Prieſts were in ſubjection to the civil powers, and might be ſo criminal as to forfeit their place; thus we find that *Solomon* put by *Abiathar*, and ſubſtituted *Zadock* in his room; 1 *Kings* 2. 27, with 35. But Chriſt hath no Subſtitute, can never forfeit his Office, being *a Prieſt forever.*

(2.) *THE high Prieſt by his death was diſplaced, and left his Office to another.* *Aaron* dies, and the Prieſts robes are put upon *Eleazer.* Death unavoidably put an end to the high Prieſts Service, and ſo, as many generations as there were, ſo many changes there came; but Chriſt is a continuing Prieſt, he dies not to give place to another, but as by his death he accompliſhed one part of his Office, viz. *Satisfaction*: ſo in an endleſs life he purſues the deſigns of the other, viz *Interceſſion: Heb.* 7 23,24,25. And this was darkly ſhadowed in *Melchiſedeck*, *ver.* 3 It was a myſterious Providence, that neither his extract, birth, nor death, ſhould be mentioned in Scripture, that the ſilence that is there about it, might be typical of the extraordinary and *endleſs* Prieſthood of Chriſt.

3. *THE legal Prieſts were imperfect ſinful men, and ſo they ſtood in need themſelves of being purified.* On this account they were to offer up Sacrifices for their own Sins, as well as for the ſins of the people; yea, there were offerings to be ſacrificed for them at their conſecration to their Office, to ſignify that they themſelves were impure, & needed cleanſing: whereas Chriſt was pure, ſpotleſs, undefiled, he needed no Sacrifice for himſelf, no offering to preſent on his account, to ſatisfy for his offences, ſpotleſs and rigorous juſtice could lay nothing to his charge, he never did harm, or offended either God or man; Heb 7. 26, 27. *For ſuch an high Prieſt became us, who is holy, harmleſs, undefiled, ſeparate from ſinners, and made higher than the heavens. Who needeth not daily as thoſe high prieſts, to offer up ſacrifice firſt for his own ſins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himſelf.* He was a *Lamb without blemiſh*, and thereupon was capable of being the Sacrifice as well as the Prieſt.

4. *THE legal Prieſts ſerved in a periſhable houſe, an earthly tabernacle and temple; but he in an unperiſhable and heavenly.* Now that was periſhable on a double account.

(1.) *IT was liable to decay & ruin.* Hence we read how often there was coſt laid out to repair it. And at length the temple and ordinances, & Prieſts Services were all broken up, and laid waſte by the Babylonians, at the ſacking of Jeruſalem, the Houſe of God was burnt with fire, and ſome of the Prieſts ſlain, and the other led captive. But Chriſt

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is entred into the Heavens, after he had done his work here, and that is an eternal Houſe, a Temple that is liable to no caſualty.

(2.) *THAT Houſe & Prieſthood, and Services were all to be aboliſhed.* They were but temporary and tranſient: the Tabernacle was to be taken down, the Prieſthood to be antiquated, and the whole method of external inſtituted worſhip to be changed, by the introduction of another. Heb. 7, 12. *For the Prieſthood being changed, there is made of neceſſity a change alſo of the law.* But Chriſt's *Prieſthood is unchangeable*, v. 24. Becauſe he ſhall never give place to another. *Aaron*'s was typical and ſhadowy, and ſo when the antitype and ſubſtance came, the ſhades fled away; He therefore *abides a Prieſt*, v. 3.

5. *THE legal Prieſts had their many Sacrifices.* They were fain to be often reiterating their oblations, and once every year there was a return of the great expiation, and ſin-offerings were daily preſented & ſacrificed; But Chriſt's excellency as a Prieſt lies in this, *that at once he offered one Sacrifice, which anſwered the Law compleatly*; and was entirely ſufficient for the expiation of the guilt of his whole Church in general, and every Soul in particular for whom he undertook, *Heb.* 9. 25, &c.

6. *AS the legal Prieſthood was imperfect in itſelf; ſo it made nothing perfect, but left all things under imperfection.* What could ſhadows do? And this was the reaſon of bringing in the Melchiſedeckian. Heb. 7. 11. *If therefore perfection were by the Levitical Prieſthood (for under it the people received the law) what further need was there that another Prieſt ſhould riſe after the order of Melchiſedeck, and not called after the order of Aaron?* That Prieſthood might have ſtood if it could have given perfection to what it ſhadowed, and not been altered: but it could not. The end of Prieſthood is to take away ſin; but there was nothing in that order that could do it. The Prieſts were ſinful men, the Sacrifices inferiour things. *Heb.* 10. *begin.* But Chriſt's is a perfect Prieſthood, & brings perfect Sanctification with it, *ver.* 10, 11. and compleat Salvation. *Heb.* 7. 25.

7. *THE legal Prieſts were confirmed without an Oath, but Chriſt with an Oath. Heb.* 7. 20, 21, 22. The Solemnity of Chriſt's Inauguration, is a ſtrong Argument to prove the *Excellency* of his Office. We do not uſe great Solemnities about trifling matters. It ſhews therefore that his Office was of infinitely more concernment than theirs. The buſineſs of his, and the benefits flowing to his People from it, were thus ratified with the moſt glorious and infallible confirmation that could be, viz. An Oath of God Himſelf. And thus Chriſt appears to be every way, a moſt excellent and incomparable High Prieſt.

USE I. *LEARN we hence, how miſerable our condition is by nature.* Chriſt's Prieſthood is a clear glaſs, in which fallen man may diſcover his woful miſery. A text from which he may read to himſelf a Lecture of his undone eſtate. That man ſtands in need of a Prieſt to interpoſe between God and him, to ſatisfy for him, and plead his cauſe, ſaith, that there is a fearful Controverſy between God and him; elſe there would be no occaſion for a Prieſt. We read of no ſuch Office before man's apoſtaſy. A Prieſt is to make atonement, and if ſo, then God is certainly angry with us, and if ſo, we are in a forlorn ſtate; for as His love is our felicity, ſo His wrath is our undoing. *Pſal.* 76 7. It alſo tells us that we are not able of our ſelves to make up the breach, and remove the controverſy, for if we could, there would not have needed another to do it for us. God is angry indeed, when without a Sacrifice & Satisfaction, He will not be reconciled to man, but there muſt be a Third Perſon, an High Prieſt to ſtep in, and ſatisfy for him: and that man wants ſuch Prieſt, that none elſe can be ſufficient to anſwer for him. Had it been a ſmall breach, why might not ſome Angel have ſtept in, and gotten an act of oblivion for him? Or why might not Man have ſatisfied for himſelf? Mich. 6. 6, 7. *Wherewith ſhall I come before the Lord, and bow myſelf before th moſt high God? ſhall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleaſed with thouſands of rams, or with ten thouſands of rivers of oyl? ſhall I give my firſt-born for my tranſgreſſion, the fruit of my body for the ſin of my ſoul.* That none would ſuffice but the Lord from Heaven, the Prince of Glory, that he muſt put on our nature, and take on him to be our Prieſt, or elſe no Redemption: And that there muſt be ſuch a Sacrifice of atonement offered: that the *blood of bulls and goats* will not do; That *ſilver and gold* are contemptible things: That *the Blood of Chriſt* could only expiate. 1 *Pet.* 1. 18, 19. How dreadfully miſerable! &c.

USE II. *BE we all Exhorted to ſeek & ſecure an intereſt in this High Prieſt, and his Oblation.* This is our great Concern. We muſt all ere long appear before God's Tribunal of Juſtice. As our ſtate ſhall then be found, ſo muſt it go with us to all Eternity. The Law will then be magnified, and if that hath any thing to lay to our charge, we muſt needs be condemned to ſuffer everlaſting miſeries, and there will be no eſcaping. And we are every one of us tranſgreſſors of that Law, in our natural ſtate, and held faſt under the curſe of it. Except then we have a Prieſt and a Sacrifice to ſatisfy this Juſtice, we ſhall not ſtand in that day. And there is no other Prieſt but Chriſt, no other Sacrifice but his Obedience, that can anſwer for us. But He is Alſufficient for this, and can do all for us that we want on the account. His Perſon, his Sacrifice, &c. His Entertainment as an Interceſſor, &c. and He is exceeding ready. He invites, &c. Come then away to Him, make haſte, uſe no delays. Juſtice is the avenger of blood, that is purſuing us to death; Get into this City of refuge, and all ſhall be well for ever.

[JANUARY 21. 1695.]

QUEST.

SERMON *XCIII.*

QUESTION XXVI.

HOW doth CHRIST execute the Office of a King?

ANSWER.

CHRIST executeth the Office of a King, in Subduing us to Himſelf, in Ruling and Defending us, and in Reſtraining and Conquering all His and our Enemies.

WE before obſerved, that Chriſt in the execution of His Mediatorſhip hath to do with God and man. In his tranſacting with God for us, he diſchargeth the Office of a *Prieſt*. In his treating with us, to bring us to the enjoyment of God, he bears the Offices of a *Prophet* and a *King*. Of his Prophetical wherein he deals with our Underſtandings, we have formerly conſidered. That of a King now follows to be look'd into; *in which he applies himſelf to our Wills by giving efficacy to the things of our Peace and Salvation.* I ſhall follow the ſame Method in opening this Office which I did in the former, by ſhewing, 1. The *Nature*. 2. The *Neceſſity*. 3. The *Excellency of it above all in the World.*

I. *TOUCHING the Nature of the Kingly Office of Chriſt, we have it expreſs'd in the Anſwer by the Effects of it.* But before we come to a particular view of that, way may be made to it by a brief glance at the *Quality of his Kingdom, His Inveſtiture in it,* and *the ſpecial End or Deſign of it.*

1. *AS to the Quality of his Kingdom it is Spiritual.* It is indeed reſembled by the Kingdoms of this World, as having ſome Analogy with them; but it is quite of another nature. When Pilate heard of Chriſt's being a King, he was diſturbed, ſuſpecting there might be ſome detriment in it to the Roman Empire; but Chriſt would not have him take any thought about that; His Kingdom was of another nature, and could be managed although that remained. Joh. 18.36. *Jeſus anſwered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my ſervants fight, that I ſhould not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.* His Kingdom is not attended with external pomp and ſtate; He doth not ſit upon a worldly Throne: but His is a divine Kingdom; its Adminiſtrations are Spiritual. The not underſtanding of this was that which led the Jews into ſo foul a miſtake, as, though they had all the convictions neceſſary, that he was the Meſſiah; they might ſee him a glorious One, and the Prophecies of Him that was to come, convincingly fulfilled in him, yet becauſe he came not with outward Splendor, and ſat not on a Terreſtial Throne, they could not believe him to be the King they looked for. However, as there is now a mighty efficacy of his Kingly Power in the World, there is alſo a time coming wherein He ſhall appear in His glorious Majeſty, and all the World *ſhall ſee* it, and know Him to be King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, *Rev.* 1. 7. And mean while his People know it, and the efficacy of it in their Souls.

2. *WITH reſpect to his Inveſtiture, or the way how he came to be King*, we may obſerve, *There is a natural Kingdom of Chriſt which belongs to him as God.* For, being one in eſſence with his Father, He hath thereupon an everlaſting Kingdom, and abſolute Sovereignty belonging to Him. But this is not that we are now conſidering of. There is therefore beſides this, *a Mediatorial Kingdom which Chriſt received from his Father:* And when the Affairs of it are finiſhed, He will reſign it up again to Him that gave it him. 1 *Cor.* 15. 24. And this is that which he holds by Office. Obſerve then, That Jeſus Chriſt God-Man-Mediator, received Power and Authority from his Father, to adminiſter all the Affairs of the Kingdom of his Church, and of the whole World for the good of his Church. Here conſider two things,

(1.) *THAT God hath the right of Dominion over his Creatures.* And there needs no more to evince this, but the relation that they bear to him of his Creatures. Pſal. 100. 2, 3. *Serve the Lord with gladneſs; come before his preſence with ſinging. Know ye that the Lord he is God, it is he that hath made us, and not we our ſelves; we are his people, and the ſheep of his paſture.* Hence they muſt needs owe to Him ſuch homage as is due from the thing made, to him who is the maker of it. That we have our being from him, and for that reaſon we ought to acknowledge our ſelves to be entirely under him; nor can He who gave the Creature its being, relinquiſh his dominion; that were to *give* away his *Glory*, which he hath ſaid he *will not.* Iſai. 42. 8.

(2.) *THAT God hath by a free & voluntary donation, made over the diſpenſation of this Dominion to Jeſus Chriſt the Mediator; to Chriſt God-Man.* And there are ſeveral expreſſions in the Word of God, which ſet forth his Donation, and Chriſt's Inauguration. He made choice of him to this Office. He did it upon mature deliberation; and on that account he is called his choſen, *Pſal.* 89. 3, 19. *Iſai.* 43. 10. He anointed him to this Office; giving him both fulneſs of Authority and of Grace to diſcharge it. Hence he is called his *Anointed*, Pſal. 2. 6. *Iſai.* 11. 2, 3, 4. He hath put all Power and Authority into his hands, with a full liberty of Adminiſtration of this Kingdom, *Joh.* 5. 22, 27. *Mat.* 28. 18. And he hath proclaimed him his King, and requires all the

the World to pay homage to him as ſo. *The decree is publiſhed*, Pſal. 2. 7. and that *by a Voice from Heaven*, Mat. 3. 17. And warning is given to all ranks of men, *Pſal.* 2.10,11,12. His dominion deſcribed, *Pſal.* 78.8,&c. *Angels* are required to *worſhip him*, Heb. 1. 6. and *every knee to bow*, Phil. 2. 9, 10.

3. *AS to the ſpecial deſign of this Kingly Office, it is to beſtow ſpiritual Peace and eternal Salvation upon his Redeemed.* Having by his Prieſthood wrought out their Redemption, and reconciled God to them, he applies this benefit to them by his Prophetical and Kingly Offices, and by this latter he brings them into, and keeps them in perfect peace, and leaves not till he hath inveſted them with compleat Salvation. And all that he doth in purſuance of this Office, hath a reſpect hereunto. Man, by his Apoſtaſy was fallen under the curſe of the firſt Covenant, & there was no peace for him by that Covenant. The new Covenant which is made in Chriſt, and the diſpenſation whereof is committed to him, is properly a Covenant of *Peace*. And he was made *King*, that he might lead men to the enjoyment of this *Peace*; and this includes both the way and the end. He muſt guide them in the one, and ſo bring them to partake in, and poſſeſs the other. Which Peace includes all good in it, and ſo the perfect felicity of them that enjoy it. This therefore is one of the titles that are put on him, *The Prince of Peace*, Iſai. 9. 6. Hence therefore the Subjects of this peace, or thoſe to whom it is applied by him, are they for whom he had before procured it, for whoſe ſake he engaged in the affair of Mediatorſhip. Joh. 17. 19. *And for their ſakes I ſanctifie my ſelf, that they alſo might be ſanctified through the truth.* And he doth all that in it, which is requiſite to the inſtating and ſettling of them in it.

AND now we may come to the *buſineſs it ſelf*, wherein this Office is diſcharged, according to the Anſwer before us. And here the Execution of this Office is diſtributed into two parts, where we are told, 1. *What he doth in the Application of it to and in his Elect and Redeemed.* 2. *What he doth for them in reſpect to his and their Enemies.*

I. *CHRIST executes his Kingly Office upon his Elect and Redeemed in that which he doth to and in them.* And this is expreſt in two reſpects: both of which do properly refer to this life. And tho' there be the affair of the Great Day of Judgment, which alſo belongs to this Office; yet becauſe it is pointed at under the Exaltation of Chriſt, I ſhall adjourn the diſcourſe of it, till we come thither. Here then, 1. *There is ſomething he doth for the bringing them under this Kingdom of his.* 2. *Something that he doth for them when they are made the Subjects of it.*

1. *THERE is ſomething he doth for the bringing them under this Kingdom: He ſubdueth us to himſelf.* Though his Father hath appointed him a Kingdom, yet he muſt gain to himſelf Subjects of it. Here then let us obſerve,

(1.) *THAT God the Father in the eternal compact, gave to him a number, who were to be redeemed by him, and made the Subjects of his ſpiritual kingdom.* Our Saviour Chriſt himſelf commemorates this gift, *Joh.* 17. 6, 9. Theſe he was to purchaſe to himſelf, and upon that purchaſe they were to be *his Seed*, Iſai. 53. 10. And they were deputed *to ſerve him*, Pſal. 22. 30. And therefore, from the conſideration of this purchaſe, we have the Apoſtle urging this duty of glorifying him, 1 Cor. 6. 20. *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorifie God in your body, and in your ſpirits which are God's.*

(2.) *THAT theſe, thus given him by his Father, are in their natural eſtate Rebels and Enemies.* All mankind are, by the Apoſtaſy in ſuch an eſtate. There is not one of the children of men, but who are fallen away from God, and have taken up arms againſt him; ſuch they were all, when Chriſt came to dye & ſuffer for them, *Rom.* 5. 10. The very nature of man is revolted, filled with enmity, and averſe to all ſubjection. *Rom.* 8. 7. *Paul* tells us what he, and all of us ſometimes were, Tit. 3. 3. *For we our ſelves alſo were ſometimes fooliſh, diſobedient, deceived, ſerving divers luſts and pleaſures, living in malice & envy, hateful, and hating one another.*

(3.) *THAT the Subjects of his Kingdom muſt be free and voluntary Subjects.* Pſal. 110. 3. *Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power.* He will not acknowledge any for true members of his ſpiritual Kingdom, who do not ſpontaneouſly acknowledge him for their Lord and Sovereign. They muſt come to that free profeſſion, Iſai. 35. 22. *For the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Law-giver, the Lord is our King, he will ſave us.* He requires them to *give* him their *hearts*. There is a Covenant which he calls them to enter into with him, and there muſt be their deliberate conſent in it. He receives none that will ſay, they *will not have this man to reign over them.*

(4.) *TO this end he muſt ſubdue them.* There is no other way to the ſetting up his Kingdom in them, but by conquering of them. Their natural corruption will not yield, but muſt be broken. The ſetting up the Kingdom of Chriſt in the World is compared to a conqueſt, *Rev.* 6. 2. His Father hath on this account promiſed him this conqueſt, *Pſal.* 2. 8,9. And hence that in, *Pſal.* 45. 3, 4, 5. Now this is done in the work of Converſion, wherein Chriſt by his Spirit doth effectually perſwade men to cloſe in with the terms of Peace. He, in order to the eſtabliſhing of this Kingdom in the Souls of men, doth by vertue of his Prophetical Office, propound, and reveal to them the terms of peace. But this is not all that he doth, nor is it alone ſufficient: but he withal, takes away that rebellion which is naturally in the Will, and makes the ſinner freely and fully to yield to himſelf. And this is not done by meer perſwaſion, but by Almighty power. And ſo, he is ſaid to bring all the natural powers into

ſubjection.

ſubjection. 2 Cor. 10. 5. *Caſting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt.* This indeed is not done by compulſion, or doing violence to men, forcing them againſt their wills to yield obedience to the laws of his Kingdom; but he puts forth an infinite power in bringing them to a voluntary obedience; in taking away their rooted obſtinacy and rebellion, and putting into them a free and ready compliance with him: *taking away* that *heart of ſtone*, &c. He doth not only tell the terms of the Covenant, and declare the manner of the Kingdom, and then uſe ſtrong and rational arguments to win them to conſent; no, but he takes the obſtinacy out of their hearts, and cures the enmity that is in their wills. And as he makes them to apprehend the excellency and deſirableneſs of the new Covenant, ſo he influenceth them, and gives them ſuch a *drawing*, as makes them *run after* him, *Cant.* 1. 4. Converting Grace is not only inviting Grace, but it is contracting Grace; it draws ſtrongly, irreſiſtably, effectually. If Chriſt did not, as a King turn hearts to himſelf, he would be a King, without Subjects. Men would never *turn*, if he did not *turn* them. *Jer.* 31. 18. Chriſt ſends his Goſpel by his Embaſſadors, with authority. He bids them declare his Royal Edicts; *Command* men to *believe*, 1 Joh. 3. 23. Tell them, it is his will that they forſake Sin, and Satan, and World, and Self, and come over to Him, and that under pain of damnation. See *Mar.* 16. 15, 16. and, *Mat.* 10. 14, 15. But this is not all, but he alſo ſends forth his Spirit into the hearts of his Redeemed, when the time deſigned for their Converſion is come, who ſubdues all oppoſition before him; *caſts out the ſtrong man*; makes the ſinner to caſt off the yoke of hell, to *renounce all other lords*, and reſign himſelf up freely to Chriſt, to be led and ruled by him. *Iſai.* 26. 13. And in the act of Faith, the Soul takes him to be Lord and Chriſt.

2. *THERE is ſomething that he doth for them, after they are made the Subjects of his Kingdom.* And that conſiſts of two things, viz. *His Ruling, and Defending us.*

(1.) *HAVING ſubdued a People to himſelf, he Rules them.* One and the principle end of a King is to Govern a People. And of Chriſt it is ſaid, that the *Government is on his Shouldier*, Iſai. 9. 7. And He hath accordingly thoſe titles given him, Iſai. 55. 4. *Behold, I have given him for a witneſs to the people, a leader and commander to the people.* His Kingdom is called the Kingdom of Heaven; to diſtinguiſh it from all earthly Kingdoms; and becauſe he brings all the true Subjects of it to an Heavenly Kingdom. And the Subjects of this are his Church: therefore he is called *King of Iſrael*, Joh. 1. 49. And ſaid to be anointed *on his holy hill Zion*, Pſal. 2. 6. Now this Church is partly Militant, partly Triumphant. And it is that part of it which is Militant, that is the proper Subject of this Rule, in order to the making of it Triumphant. And this Rule or Government that Chriſt exerciſeth in his Church is twofold; *External* and *Internal*.

[1.] *THERE is an External Government in the Goſpel Church, which Chriſt requires all that profeſs themſelves his Subjects to ſubmit unto.* And this he adminiſters *mediately*. And hither belong all thoſe Offices which he hath appointed in it. *Eph.* 4. 11, 12. He therefore derives their Commiſſion from this Authority of his. *Mat.* 28. 18, 19. *Joh.* 20. 21. And he requires ſubmiſſion to them, Heb. 13. 17. *Obey them that have the rule over you, and ſubmit your ſelves.* Hitherto alſo belong the Goſpel Ordinances or Inſtitutions, Preaching, Sacraments, &c. Preaching and Baptiſm, *Mat.* 28. 20. *Rom.* 10. 15. The Lord's Supper, *Luk.* 22. 19. 1 *Cor.* 11. 23. Diſcipline, *Joh.* 20. 23 And all the Goſpel Precepts of Faith, Repentance, and new Obedience. Hence called the *Law of Chriſt*, Gal. 6. 2. And there are Sanctions put to them, *Mat* 16. 16. *Rom.* 8. 13.

[2.] *THERE is alſo an Internal Government in the hearts of all that are Converted and made his Subjects.* And this is by the influence of his Spirit; whereby he excites, and aſſiſts thoſe Graces of Sanctification that he hath put into them, and makes them to exert themſelves in faithful ſerving of him. He ſo influenceth them, as to make them follow him in their whole courſe. They make his Word their rule, his Will their warrant; and his Glory their deſign. He ſo governs them, as they ſhall never totally ſwerve from the way of peace; but he keeps them in the right way, and if at any time, they ſtep out of it, fetcheth them in again: He mortifies all their corruptions, and ſtrengthens all their Graces: He *puts his fear into their hearts*, and thereby keeps them in ſubjection. According to, *Jer.* 32. 40.

(2.) *HE alſo Defends them.* This is another thing belonging to the Office of a Prince, to Protect his Subjects. The happineſs of a Kingdom mainly conſiſts in its Peace. This Peace is either within its ſelf, which is maintained by keeping Government in a due exerciſe, or from foreign Invaſion: and that is done by providing for the ſecurity of the Subject againſt any ſuch thing. It is his Churches Peace which Chriſt is concerned for, and that of every true member in it. *Peace* is his very Legacy that he bequeaths to them. *Joh* 14. 27. This Peace is *External, Internal, Eternal*; and Chriſt ſecures all unto them. Iſai. 26. 3. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee: becauſe he truſteth on thee.*

[1.] *HE gives his Church outward Defence and Peace, ſo far as he ſees beſt for them.* It is by his protection, that there is a Church in the World. If he had not taken its part, &c. *Pſal.* 124. *begin.* This is one thing aſcribed to him, Pſal. 89. 18. *For the Lord is our defence: and the holy One of Iſrael is our king.* He is a

wall of fire round about them. The *Pillar* that followed and conducted *Iſrael* in the Wilderneſs, was an emblem of this.

[2.] *HE maintains the inward Peace of his People, by Defending of them againſt that which would moleſt them.* Their own Conſciences, and Satan, would moleſt them with accuſations, and terrify them; but he makes all quiet within, he ſpeaks peace to the Soul; and that word effects it, Iſai. 57. 19. *I create the fruit of the lips; peace, peace to him that is afar off, and to him that is near, ſaith the Lord, and I will heal him.* And therefore it is the priviledge of his Subjects, Pſal. 119. 165. *Great peace have they which love thy law.* And if there be any diſquiet here, He comes and compoſeth it again.

[3.] *HE conducts them to eternal Peace.* And accordingly defends them from all that would prevent them of it. The perfection of Peace is not here; there will be trouble in this world, outward and inward; but there is an everlaſting Peace remains for his Subjects when they ſhall be put out of the reach of all that can offer to diſturb them. Now he here ſo defends them, as that they are without fail brought to this, againſt whatever attempts there are to keep them from it. Hence that refers to this defence, 1 Pet. 1. 5. *Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation, ready to be revealed in the laſt time.* Pſal. 73. 24. *Thou ſhalt guide me with thy counſel, and afterward receive me to glory.*

II. *CHRIST Executes his Kingly Office in behalf of his Elect and Redeemed, in what he doth for them with reſpect to* His *and* their *Enemies.* Which is here expreſt in two words, *He reſtrains* and *conquers them.* This might have been referred to his Defence, as being uſed in it; but there is ſomething more than meer Defence in it. And here let theſe few things be obſerved,

1. *THAT Chriſt's Mediatorial Power extends to the whole Creation in behalf of his Church.* So *Eph.* 1. 22. Not only as God, but as Chriſt, he hath the diſpoſe of every thing, Math. 28. 18. *And Jeſus came, and ſpake unto them, ſaying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.* Angels, Devils, and wicked Men. *Phil.* 2. 9. It is true, none but his Redeemed are the free Subjects of his Kingdom; but yet all the reſt are at his beck, and under his Providential diſpoſe, ſo as to make them and all their concerns, ſubſervient to his Glory, and the good of his People. Hence we have the extent of his dominion ſet forth, Pſal. 2. 8. *Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmoſt ends of the earth for thy poſſeſſion.* Pſal. 72. 8. *He ſhall have dominion from ſea to ſea, & from the river unto the ends of the earth.* And he keeps a powerful hand over them, nor can they poſſibly withdraw themſelves from the mighty influence of this Government of his.

2. *THAT his Church in this world hath many Enemies.* The Church Militant dwells in the midſt of thoſe that hate it. Our Saviour warned his Diſciples of this, and gives them the reaſon of it, *Joh.* 15. 19. The Kingdom of Chriſt is in the midſt of Adverſaries; they dwell by the hill of Lions, and mountain of Leopards. Wicked men malign them; the children of *the bond woman perſecute* the children *of the free,* Gal 5. 29. The Devil alſo is peculiarly their adverſary, and uſeth all his induſtry to do them miſchief. 1 Pet. 5. 8. *Be ſober, be vigilant: becauſe your adverſary the devil, is as a roring lion walking about ſeeking whom he may devour.* Yea, and the fleſh in them, which is the remains of the kingdom of darkneſs, ſets its ſelf againſt the ſpiritual kingdom that is ſet up in them. It *luſteth,* Gal. 5. 17. it *wars,* Rom. 7. 23. Every luſt is thus engaged, 1 Pet. 2. 11. *Dearly beloved, I beſeech you as ſtrangers and pilgrims, abſtain from fleſhly luſts, which war againſt the ſoul.*

3. *THAT the Enemies of his People, are alſo his Enemies.* And that is good news for them. It is for his ſake they are ſo. Hence that, Pſal. 44. 22. *Yea, for thy ſake are we killed all the day long: we are counted as ſheep for the ſlaughter.* And Chriſt ſo accoſts *Saul,* when he was engaged in perſecuting of his Church, Act. 9. 5. *I am Jeſus whom thou perſecuteſt.* Their rage ultimately deſigns againſt Chriſt's Kingdom. They ſeek to ſubvert that in the World, and to overthrow it in the hearts of his People. It is becauſe they firſt hated him, that they are ſo ſet againſt his people. Joh. 15. 18. *If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.* Hence that, Mat. 10. 22. *And ye ſhall be hated of all men for my ſake.* When therefore the people of God pray for help, they uſe ſuch an Argument, Pſal. 74. 22. *Ariſe, O God, plead thine own cauſe, remember how the fooliſh man reproacheth thee daily.*

4. *CHRIST therefore exerts his Royal Power in Reſtraining and Conquering theſe Enemies.*

(1.) *IN Reſtraining them.* He doth not always preſently ruine them; but ſuffers them to be; and to combine againſt his Church. And indeed there is nothing more admirable than to ſee how Jeſus Chriſt keeps a Church in the World, in deſpite of all the attempts of earth and hell againſt it. Though it be afflicted and toſſed with tempeſt, yet it is not ſwallowed up. Herein verifying that, Mat. 16. 18. *Upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.* He lets out their malice as far as he ſees meet, and there he bounds it; according to, *Pſal.* 76. 10. Hence that, *Pſal.* 129. *begin.* And this is as wonderful, in reſpect of the Graces in his People, which he preſerves, by limiting the temptations which are offered them. 1 *Cor.* 10. 13.

(2.) *IN Conquering them.* This he doth not preſently, becauſe he will have the Subjects of his Kingdom proved, and their Graces exerciſed firſt. But he will do it at length, he will not leave till he hath done it. For it is *perfect Peace,* which he, as a King hath undertaken to conduct them to; which they cannot

not enjoy till all their enemies are brought down, and made to lie at their feet. He hath promiſed to *bruiſe Satan under their feet ſhortly*, Rom. 16. 20. He hath ſaid that he will deſtroy all thoſe that hate them. He hath ſaid, that under the Kingdom of this our *Solomon*, his Subjects ſhall be filled with Peace, *Pſal.* 72. 7. And he will not ceaſe to manage his Scepter for them, till he have given them reſt; He will tread down all adverſe powers. He will break the force of the Kingdom of darkneſs; deſtroy the Devils Kingdom. He will not leave his People any one enemy to give them moleſtation. There ſhall not be one Luſt left within them to perplex; one Devil without to tempt them; nor one wicked man to perſecute them. He himſelf overcame upon his Croſs, when he *led Captivity Captive*, and made a triumph in his Reſurrection; and he will ere long give to all His a triumphant Charior, in which they ſhall ride in ſtate to the Palace of Eternal Glory. And all this belongs to the Kingly Office of Chriſt.

USE. *AND what remains then, but that the Children of Zion ſhould be joyful in their King.* According to, *Pſal.* 149. 2. Have we ſuch a King? Let us then with greateſt confidence and chearfulneſs place our truſt in Him, and make our boaſt in Him all the day. And though we find our enemies within, and without, to be more and mightier then we are, yet let us not be ſunk in our Spirits, but, reſolving our hopes into Him, let us bid defiance to them all, and committing of the whole management into His Hands, and leaving it with Him, now ſtand ſtill, and ſee His Salvation.

[FEBRUARY 18. 1695.]

SERMON *XCIV.*

II. WE proceed to inquire, *Why it was Neceſſary that Chriſt ſhould be a King, or ſuſtain this Office alſo?* For, by this we are put in mind of God's great kindneſs to us, in giving us a Mediator ſo inveſted as to anſwer all our wants. Now, though *this neceſſity* may be read in the conſideration of the *Nature* of the Office, yet we may ſee it farther confirmed to us in the following concluſions.

1. *THAT the condition of God's Elect before Converſion calls for it.* That converſion, or regeneration is neceſſary in order to the Salvation of Sinners, is witneſſed to us by Chriſt himſelf, *Mat.* 18. 3. *John* 3. 3. For as a main part of man's miſery formally conſiſts in his ſinful ſtate, ſo is his renovation eſſential to his happineſs, unto the effecting of which this Office of our Mediator is neceſſary, as appears in theſe things,

(1.) *THAT all God's Elect are in their natural eſtate, his enemies, and held under the power of a corrupt nature.* The firſt poſſeſſion of the heart is held by the ſtrong man, whether by him we underſtand Satan, who is called the God of the world, and rules in the Children of diſobedience; or the *body of death*, or the corrupt nature in man. Such was their natural condition, *Eph.* 2. 2,3. And we may gather this out of the deſcription given us of the natural man, *Rom.* 3. 12,&c.

(2.) *THAT this power of Satan and natural Corruption, muſt be vanquiſhed in the work of Converſion.* Converſion is properly the *turning* the Soul *from* Sin and *Satan unto God*, as we have it deſcribed, *Acts* 26. 18. It is the ſubverting of the dominion of other lords, and bringing the ſinner into obedience to God; it is the tranſlating of the man from darkneſs into God's marvellous light. Theſe with divers other parallel expreſſions uſed in Scripture, to ſet forth this great work of Converſion, do intimate thus much: for as long as we are the ſervants of ſin, we cannot be the ſervants of God. *Mat.* 6. 24. There *is no communion between light and darkneſs*, no *fellowſhip with God and Belial.*

(3.) *THAT this work exceeds the power of men and means to effect, in and of themſelves.* A ſinner cannot convert himſelf; for a ſtate of ſin is a ſtate of ſpiritual death, Eph. 2. 1. *And you hath he quickned who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.* And what power hath a dead man to do any thing towards his own Reſurrection? Corrupt nature is become a lump of enmity, Rom. 8. 7. *Becauſe the carnal mind is enmity againſt God: for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* And how ſhould it change its own temper? A godly man cannot convert a ſinner by his good will, and utmoſt endeavours; he may deſire it, he may pray for it, he may take a great deal of pains for it, and be uſed by the Spirit as an inſtrument in the treating with the ſinner about it, but effect it he cannot, when he hath done all, *Job.* 1. 13. The Ordinances of the Goſpel, though they are the ſanctify'd means for this end, and the Spirit of God is wont to come in and with them to do this work, yet alone and by themſelves they are not effectual; for if they were, why are not all that ſit under them converted by them, as well as ſome? Yea, why are the moſt obſtinate, and the moſt unlikely prevailed over by them, when the better as men eſteem, and more eaſy natures, feel not their vertue, but remain after all, under the dominion of ſin. And what elſe is the meaning of that, 1 Cor. 3. 6. *I have planted, Apollo watered: but God gave the increaſe.*

(4.) *HENCE, if ever a Soul be Converted, there muſt vertue proceed from Chriſt, to the doing of it.* There is nothing leſs than Omnipotency required to the bringing this about, and therefore the word of God compares it to ſuch works as outbids the works of nature, and are truly miracles; the *opening the eyes* of ſuch as are *born blind*, the unſtopping the *ears* of one naturally deaf, the *creating*

ating of a world, and the *raiſing of the dead*, and nothing muſt be too hard for him, who can do all this. Chriſt alone hath power over an hard heart to ſoften it, over a will that is filled with all malice, and reſolutely bent to ſin, to ſubdue it. Converſion therefore is repreſented as ſuch a work, Eph. 1. 18, 19. *The eyes of your underſtanding being enlightned: that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the ſaints: And what is the exceeding greatneſs of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.* Now it was Chriſt that raiſed himſelf by his own power: ſo it is by the very ſame power, and nothing ſhort of it, that he converts the Sinner.

(5.) *THE diſpenſation of this power properly belongs to his Kingly Office.* For though he hath this power in him eſſentially as he is God, yet the authority of exerting it as Mediator, for the conquering the luſts and the corruptions in us, and the delivering us out of the hands of our ſpiritual adverſaries, and making us to yield cordial obedience unto him, is of his Office, and can be aſcribed to no other but his Kingly; by vertue whereof he hath authority, to manage the conqueſt that he gains over our hearts, to the making us his voluntary ſubjects, and taking us into the Covenant of peace, and priviledging us with all the benefits of theKingdom of Heaven. It is therefore annexed to the proclamation of him to be his Fathers King, *Pſal.* 2. 6,8,9 and, 45. 4, 5. In a word, all thoſe that remain in their natural rebellion againſt God muſt needs *periſh*, *Pſal.* 92. 9. As all would do if Chriſt did not conquer them by his power. In ſum, if he were not King to get himſelf ſubjects, he would loſe the great deſign of his Prieſthood, and none of his redeemed would ever obtain Salvation, by reaſon of their deſpiſing of the offers of grace, through their natural rebellion, which he only as a King overcomes in them, by his royal efficacy.

2. *THE ſtate of the Church militant, or of Believers after Converſion doth alſo require this Office.* The Church of Chriſt and Believers in it, could not continue in this World, without the Government of ſuch a King. The Church militant would never arrive to be a Church triumphant, if he did not ſway the Scepter, and govern both it and the World. I ſhall not draw this out at length, but only offer ſomething very briefly which may ſhow us the truth we enquire after, and that both in reſpect to every true Believer perſonally, and to the Church in general.

(1.) *BELIEVERS could never hold on in the way of Peace, and get ſafe to the end of it, did not Chriſt manage this Office for and over them.* We do not paſs immediately from Regeneration to Glorification; but there is a *work* to be *done*, a *race* to be *run*, a *courſe* to be *finiſhed*: and we need the ſame powerful conduct to carry us through the *narrow way*, that we had to bring us in at the *ſtrait gate*. The ſame hand that *began*, muſt *perfect the work*, Phil. 1. 6. The Children of God need Government, and cannot do without it; and they are altogether unable to govern themſelves. *Jer.* 10. 23. They would certainly go wrong if He did not guide them. Their Grace muſt be both preſerved in being, and maintained in exerciſe; but they cannot do it of themſelves. He muſt keep them alive, or they would dye; He muſt uphold them, or they would fall; He muſt influence them, or they *can do nothing*, Joh. 15. 5. Every Believer hath a warfare which he is engaged in, *Eph.* 6. 12. And his life is concerned in it, and there are many and potent enemies lying in wait for it, and ſeeking all advantages that they may devour it; whereas his Grace is a weak creature; and what is it to ſuch a multitude? If there were not an Almighty power to preſerve it, it would not hold out ſo much as one battel, how much leſs through the whole ſpiritual warfare. 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. There is indwelling ſin within him, thoſe remains of the body of death, or the natural corruption, which was born with him, that is ſo ſtrong as that it often *brings* him *into Captivity*, and *Chriſt* only can give him *deliverance* from it. *Rom.* 7. 23, 25. A man's own luſts would quickly ſwallow up all his Graces, if Chriſt did not with his royal Power maintain them. And there are the powers of Hell: there is Satan that *devouring Adverſary*, who, as he hath a peculiar ſpite againſt the Saints, ſo is indefatigable in his attempts to do them all the miſchief he can. 1 Pet. 5. 8. *Be ſober, be vigilant: becauſe your adverſary the devil, is as a roaring lion walking about ſeeking whom he may devour.* And both his policy and power would eaſily undo the Believer, if Chriſt did not take care of him, and afford him ſeaſonable and ſufficient ſuccour; and therefore all the *ſtrength* that we have againſt theſe potent enemies, is in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and his *mighty power*, Eph. 6. 10. There are many ſnares and pits in the World, and he would on all occaſions be entrapped in them, if he had not the conduct of this great Prince; ſo that there is his ſafety. Pſal. 73. 24. *Thou ſhalt guide me with thy counſel, and afterward receive me to glory.* And it is certain, that the immutability of a believers Grace, the not failing or dying of his Faith, his abiding in Chriſt, and perſevering in Holineſs, are all from the vertue which proceeds from Chriſt, as King of Saints; without the conſtant emanations whereof, he would never paſs the pikes, or get through an evil world, to the Kingdom of Glory, but would fail in his way, and fall ſhort of his end.

(2.) *THE Church it ſelf had never ſtood to this day, if it had not had ſuch a King over it as Chriſt is.* Hitherto it owes its entire acknowledgment of its preſervation. He that ſhall but conſider what enemies the Church hath ever had, ſince the new Covenant hath been diſpenſed to fallen man, and what de-

ſigns

ſigns theſe enemies have been contriving and purſuing againſt them, from the beginning to this very day, muſt needs confeſs, that it is one of the greateſt wonders that have been heard of, that it hath ſtood out, and weather'd all theſe deſigns and attempts; and muſt confeſs a divine Sovereign Wiſdom & Power to have been wonderfully exerted herein. Have not all the powers of the Kingdom of darkneſs been up in Arms againſt the Church? Have not the Kingdoms and Powers of the World been united in conſpiracy and combination to ſubvert it? Have they not laid their Counſels in the dark, and contrived them with the greateſt skill, and utmoſt policy, whereof they have been ready to ſay, none ſhall withſtand or prevent us? Hath not the great red Dragon vomited out mighty floods to drown it? Have not the Beaſt and the falſe Prophet joyned their heads and hands, with all their united forces to blow it up, or break it in pieces? See how theſe conſultations are deſcribed, *Pſal.* 83.3,&c. And is there a Church of God in the World ſtill for all this? Whether ſhall we aſcribe it? What would have become of it long before this day, if Chriſt had not been its King? Well may we apply the confeſſion of the people of God, *Pſal.* 124. to this contemplation. And it is becauſe he is King, and will remain ſo to be, till all the affairs of his Church are accompliſhed, & he hath trodden down all the adverſe Powers that ſet themſelves againſt it. Therefore it is that it hath ſtood, and ſhall ſtand, to their own admiration, and aſtoniſhing confuſion of their Adverſaries. It is he who looks on, and *laughs* at their conſultations, and *hath them in deriſion*, Pſal. 2. 4. It is he that *breaks* all their plots and deſigns *in pieces*, Iſai. 8. 9,10. It is he who *ſlumbers not nor ſleeps*, therefore are they not ſurprized. He marcheth in the head of this Army, therefore it is not routed, nor do the *gates of hell prevail againſt it*. And this is it that extorts that confeſſion from them after all, Pſal. 58. ult. *So a man ſhall ſay, Verily there is a reward for the righteous; verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.* Verifying that in, Prov. 21. 30. *There is no wiſdom nor underſtanding, nor counſel againſt the Lord.*

III. IT follows that we take a brief account of the Excellency of the Kingly Office of Chriſt; that he is a moſt *glorious King*, tranſcending all earthly Potentates whatſoever, whoſe kingdom and power is but a dark ſhadow of His, and is infinitely ſurpaſſed by it in all reſpects. And this will appear,

1. *IN regard of its Univerſality.* And that,

(1.) *IN all the Ages of the World.* The mediatorly Kingdom of Chriſt was ſet up and commenced immediately upon man's fall, and is to continue till the great Judgment be over, for the management of that belongs unto it, 1 *Cor.* 15.25. In the diſpenſing of which Judgment he ſhall appear glorioufly upon his Throne, and make thoſe to know him to be a great King, who have ſomtimes ſaid, that *this man ſhall not reign over us.*

THAT he was actually King from man's fall appears, becauſe then began his mediatorial diſpenſation; then the Covenant of Grace was revealed, and began to be diſpenſed, for the Salvation of Sinners; then God began to have a Church, and that Covenant was never without a Mediator; and *there is* but *one* real *Mediator*, 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. Whereas all theſe Offices of Chriſt are the branches of his Mediatorſhip, and were conferred upon him in it. That it hath continued ever ſince, without inrermiſſion, is evident, becauſe there hath been no time ſince, wherein God hath not had a Church, and thoſe who were brought into Chriſt by Converſion, and kept in him unto eternal life, which could be by no other vertue but this. Nor is it leſs evident that it ſhall continue to the end, or to the laſt Judgment, becauſe that alſo is devolved on him, and he is to manage it, Joh. 5. 27. *And hath given him authority to execute Judgment alſo, becauſe he is the Son of man.* And it is after that, that we are told that he will reſign it, 1 Cor. 15. 28. *And when all things ſhall be ſubdued unto him, then ſhall the Son alſo himſelf be ſubject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.* Whereas all other Kings here have but ſhort reigns, their lives are all but ſhort, and they are often hurried away faſter than other men; and though they ſeem to live in their Succeſſors, yet they ſometimes expire; however they give place for them, and ceaſe perſonally to reign; whereas Chriſt hath no Succeſſor, nor can his Throne be undermined; many attempts have been made againſt it, but they have all proved unſucceſsful, and been the bane of thoſe that engaged in them.

(2.) *OVER all Men.* There have indeed been very large empires in this World; we read of *Ahaſuerus*, that he reigned over one hundred twenty-ſeven Provinces. It is reported of *Alexander* that he wept that there were no more worlds for him to conquer. The Roman dominion, when in its height, extended a great way; but alas! the biggeſt of theſe was but a ſmall portion of the whole. But the dominion of Chriſt reacheth to and over all the men that have been, are, or ſhall be, in the world, without exception. There have been none over whom his Scepter hath not ruled. *Solomon* was but a dark type, Chriſt being the antitype, of whom it is ſaid, Pſal. 72. 8. *He ſhall have dominion alſo from ſea to ſea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.* And it is of him that the prophetical viſion is intended, *Dan.* 7. 13, 14.

(3.) *OVER all Creatures.* The whole Creation are his ſubjects, the upper as well as the lower world are under his homage, and required to pay it to him, Phil. 2. 10. *That at the Name of Jeſus every knee ſhould bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.* He is head over them all, and they do yield him obedience, either active or paſſive, *Eph.* 1. 21,22. The holy *Angels* do *worſhip him*, *Heb.* 1. 6. They acknowledge

him

him to be their head, are willingly at his beck, and he ſends them forth at his Will, to be employed in the adminiſtration of the affairs of his Kingdom in the world, and they attend upon it with the greateſt ſpontaneity. The *Devils*, thoſe rebellious legions are under his Juriſdiction; and though they neither love him, nor willingly ſerve him, yet they cannot withſtand the efficacy of his government. He hath conquered them, holds them under reſtraint, and they cannot ſo much as hurt a Swine without his permiſſion. And he will call them 'ere long to his Tribunal, and doom them to their eternal ſufferings. All other Creatures whether in Heaven or in Earth; Sun, Moon, Stars, Fowles, Fiſhes, Beaſts, are all at his Service, and he uſeth them as he will for his deſigns, *Pſal.* 8.6,&c. He therefore can engage them to be at peace with us, *Job.* 5.22,&c. Whereas the greateſt Potentate on Earth, rules over but a few, and thoſe only ſuch as are on the ſame Earth with himſelf.

2. *IN reſpect of its Efficacy.* Chriſt's Kingdom is a Kingdom of uncontroulable and irreſiſtable power; he is a King againſt whom there is no riſing up; his Throne is firm and unmoveable, though all the powers of the world ſhould join themſelves together, and lift at it, they cannot ſhake or ſtir it, Pſal. 29. 10. *The Lord ſitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord ſitteth King for ever.* None ever reſiſted him and proſpered. Nay, it bears down before it, all that ſet themſelves to oppoſe it, and makes all theKingdoms in the world to ſtoop to it, *Dan.* 2. 44. Earthly Princes ſit very unſteady upon their Thrones, they are not ſecure for all their guards, fortreſſes, and utmoſt endeavours to eſtabliſh themſelves; they ſometimes meet their matches, and are overpowered; they may undertake, but are not certain to accompliſh, but are many times diſappointed. But the Kingdom of Chriſt is an all-conquering Kingdom. It is Chriſt who is ſet forth, *Rev.* 6. 2. He never attempted any thing but he brought it to paſs; the greateſt reſiſtance that the whole Creation can make againſt him, is but to render his triumphs the more glorious; if he ſaith but the word, it is done, whether in Heaven or Earth, Sea, or in the great Deep. Such is his efficacy, *Pſal.* 135. 5,6.

3. *IN regard of its Subjects.* And that which is here chiefly to be obſerved, is that it rules over the hearts and conſciences of men. And that is it, which the greateſt Monarchs in the world, could never yet make any fair pretence unto. The great Men of this world, though never ſo abſolute in their Government, have only a command over men's bodies and eſtate; but they can neither know what their minds are towards them, nor can they make any rules to bind their Conſciences, or call them to an account; they cannot reach their thoughts, nor call them to an account beyond their words and outward actions; nor yet inflict puniſhments on them any farther than reacheth the outward man: their Judgment is there limited. But Chriſt's Juriſdiction extends to the heart, and rules over the Conſcience. He gives laws to that, and binds it under the ſtrongeſt obligations. And he knows what men's thoughts are of him, and will judge and puniſh them. Yea he cannot only conquer the bodies, but the hearts of men, and bring them to obedience. 2 Cor. 10. 5. *Caſting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt.* And if they continue in rebellion he can reach them with ſpiritual plagues.

4. *IN reſpect of its Laws.* Abſolute and arbitrary Government is among men, no better than tyranny. The beſt Laws are a foundation for the beſt Government, and will render it ſo, if duly adminiſtred. Now, though Chriſt hath an abſolute Dominion as God, and uſeth much of his liberty in ruling over the world, yet he governeth his Church by a Law, i. e. He hath given them a Rule which ſurpaſſeth all the Laws of other Kingdoms; it is the beſt, moſt ſuitable for the end of it, to guide them to life; moſt perfect, there is nothing wanting for their regulation in all caſes; and hence it is compleatly ſufficient. We have therefore that encomium of it, *Pſal.* 19. 7,&c. 2 *Tim.* 3. 16,17. And the happineſs of God's Iſrael above all others is declared on account of it, *Deut.* 4.8. Pſal. 147. 19, 20. *He hath ſhewed his word unto Jacob, his ſtatutes and judgments unto Iſrael, He hath not dealt ſo with any nation; and as for his judgments they have not known them; Praiſe ye the Lord.*

5. *IN regard of its Rewards & Puniſhments.* They are poor rewards that earthly Kings have to beſtow upon their faithful and moſt deſerving ſubjects; ſome fading titles of honour; ſome periſhing profits, and the like; and for their puniſhments inflicted on the greateſt rebels, they are only bodily and temporary, Mat. 10. 28. *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the ſoul: but rather fear him which is able to deſtroy both ſoul and body in hell.* They can wreak their revenge only on the outward man, take away a dying life, put them to a ſhort torture, and ſtigmatize them with a reproach that is ſoon forgotten. But in Chriſt's Kingdom, there are the moſt glorious rewards for thoſe who are true to him; there is a Crown and a Kingdom, there is Immortality and eternal Life; *A Kingdom that cannot be moved*, Heb. 12. 28. and *an eternal weight of glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 17. And for them that are diſobedient, there are everlaſting miſeries, unconceivable torments in the bottomleſs pit, where the ſmoak of their furnace aſcends for ever and ever, a never *dying worm*, and a *fire* that *is* never *quenched*, Mark 9. 44. In a word, The Kingdom of Chriſt is called in Scripture by way of eminency, the *Kingdom of God*, of *Heaven*, of *Peace*, of *Glory*. It is a

Kingdom

Kingdom in which the true Subjects dwell in ſafety; the moſt ſecret and powerful enemies, can have no ſecurity; a Kingdom in which righteouſneſs reigns, and no wrong is done; where the meaneſt ſervice is not forgotten, nor ſhall miſs of a bleſſed reward; where the meaneſt member is not neglected, but abundantly taken care of; and ſo is in all reſpects incomparable.

USE. *IS Chriſt ſuch a King?* Then,

1. *SEE here the Admirable happineſs of all his true Subjects.* They are every way ſafe for the preſent, and ſhall be brought to perfect bleſſedneſs in the end. None can harm them. He is Omniſcient, and ſees all the plots that are laying againſt any of his: He is Omnipotent, and able to ſecure them againſt all the rage of Earth and Hell. He dearly loves all that are his; they are his *anointed*, and he will ſuffer none to *harm* them, *Pſal.* 105. 15. They are as the *Apple of his Eyes*, and he will keep them as charily, *Zech.* 2. 8. They are his favourites, and he hath purchaſed a Kingdom for them, and will without fail bring them, to poſſeſs them of it. Luk. 12. 32. *Fear not, little flock; for it is your Fathers good pleaſure to give you the kingdom.* Hence,

2. *LET it call upon us all, to renounce our other Lords, and put our ſelves under the Kingdom of Chriſt.* This is no encouragement to caſt off civil obedience to humane Orders which are of God's appointment. But remember, Sin, and Satan, have a dominion in all unregenerate ones. Say then as they, Iſai. 26. 13. *O Lord our God, other lords beſides thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.* Their Government is tyrannical, but this is ſweet and *eaſy*, Mat. 11. ult Their Service is a meer ſlavery, but his is the greateſt *liberty*, His *law* is ſuch, *Jam.* 1. 25. You will be ſooner or later aſhamed of ſerving them; but, Pſal. 119. 6. *Then ſhall I not be aſhamed, when I have reſpect unto all thy commandments.* Chriſt, and He only can deliver you from your enemies; *God is ſo*, and none but he can interpoſe, 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. The *Law is ſo*, and he only can ſave you from it, *Act.* 4. 12. *Satan is ſo*, and none elſe can pluck you out of his hands, *Rom.* 16. 20. *Sin is ſo*, and none elſe can deliver you from it, *Rom.* 7. 23, 24, 25. You can neither find nor keep in the way of peace of your ſelves. He muſt both bring you into, and keep you in it. *Iſai.* 26. 3. In ſum, your eternal happineſs and miſery will run here. And remember, He will be your King and ſave you, or he will as a King deſtroy you.

3. *LET the People of God acknowledge Him for their King, by demeaning themſelves accordingly.* Yield him Obedience, live up to his Laws, ſeek to exalt the honour of his Kingdom; avoid every thing that will reflect reproach upon it. Carry all your concerns to him. Go to him, to enlighten your darkneſs, to ſubdue your corruptions, to ſuppreſs your temptations, to overcome all your Souls enemies; and ſubject the very thoughts of your hearts to his command. And thus live chearfully in his Service, waiting upon him for that Glory which he hath promiſed to all that ſerve him faithfully.

[MARCH 17. 1695.]

SERMON *XCV.*

QUESTION XXVII.

WHerein did CHRIST's Humiliation conſiſt?

ANSWER.

CHRIST's Humiliation conſiſted in His being Born, and that in a low Condition, made under the Law, undergoing the Miſeries of this Life, the Wrath of GOD, and the curſed Death of the Croſs, in being Buried, and continuing under the Power of Death for a time.

WE have been conſidering of Chriſt's Preparation for the diſcharge of the great affair of Mediation and Redemption; conſiſting in his *Incarnation* and *Unction*. Under the latter whereof, we have taken notice of thoſe Mediatorial Offices of a *Prophet*, *Prieſt*, and *King*, which he ſuſtained and diſcharged in it. It now follows that we proceed to the Contemplation of the work it ſelf; which he performed in the execution of theſe Offices. And this is that which Divines call *actual Redemption*. And this conſiſts of two parts, viz. *His Humiliation*, and *His Exaltation*; which are ſet before us in this and the following Queſtion, and Anſwer. And before I proceed to ſpeak of them diſtinctly; a word or two may be premiſed, touching the *Neceſſity* of them both in our Redeemer, for the rendring His Work compleat. It was therefore *fit and neceſſary*, that he ſhould be humbled; how elſe could he anſwer the Law for us, in which he muſt be ſubjected to the Law, fulfil the righteouſneſs of it, pay our debts, and bear our penalties, ſatisfy for our offences, and purchaſe for us, all the good needful to make us happy? If he do not all this, he cannot be our Redeemer; and he could not do this, unleſs He were humbled; as will after appear. It was no leſs fit, that after he had humbled himſelf he ſhould be exalted. For it became him, that having diſcharged all that he undertook as Mediator, He ſhould have an acquittance; that having merited, He ſhould be rewarded; having purchaſed

purchaſed, He ſhould be put in poſſeſſion; ſo that it might appear that the Work was done, that Juſtice had taken up ſatisfyed in it. Our Surety had not done his Work, till he hath taken up our bonds, and gotten full acquittances for us. In ſum, Chriſt ſtood as a publick Perſon for us, he muſt therefore be humbled, becauſe we deſerved to be brought low: He muſt be made a curſe for us, becauſe we were accurſed: and he muſt be exalted, that ſo he might bring us to Glory. The former of theſe is his Humiliation; which is firſt to be treated of; both becauſe it was firſt in order of time, and alſo becauſe it was the meritorious cauſe of the other. Chriſt's Exaltation had its foundation in his Humiliation, *Phil.* 2. 7,8,9. This then is that which lies before us. Our Anſwer doth not give us a deſcription of it, but only points us to the ſeveral Heads to which it is to be referred, and wherein the execution of it was concerned. But for our better underſtanding of this affair, we may firſt take an account of the Humiliation itſelf, and then purſue it in the ſeveral particulars, wherein it diſcovered it ſelf. That we may take up the right conception of Chriſt's Humiliation, let this Deſcription be given of it, *The Humiliation of Chriſt is that Abaſement of his, whereby he ſubjected himſelf to the Law for us, to ſatisfy for our offences, and to procure for us, Life and Salvation.* The clearing of this deſcription will give us much light into this great Truth, on which our Salvation depends. Here then obſerve,

I. *THE general nature of it: it is his Abaſement.* Humiliation is a lying upon the ground. Abaſement is a throwing ones ſelf at the foot of another. Thus Chriſt laid himſelf at the foot of God for our ſakes. And here we may conſider two things,

1. *WHO it was that was thus Abaſed?*

Anſ. *THE Perſon thus abaſed. was Jeſus Chriſt; the Eternal Son of God.* Phil. 2. 6, 7. *Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of men.* But yet we are to conſider him in order to this abaſement, as prepared for it. For as God, or in reſpect of his Divine nature, he could not be humbled or abaſed. Hence,

1. *IT was the Son of God in our nature*, that was thus laid low. It was in *the form of a Servant*, which he aſſumed. *Phil.* 2. 7. The meer aſſumption of the humane nature into the unity of his Perſon, conſidered by itſelf, could not be a part of his Humiliation, but only the preparing of a ſubject for it, and ſo muſt be, in order of nature, before it, tho' in time they were together; becauſe in taking our humanity, he ſo took it as to put a low condition upon it. He could have taken it in the form of a Prince, as well as of a Servant, but he choſe the other as ſuited to his deſign. He took our nature, with all the abaſement which ſin had put upon it, excepting ſin it ſelf. This is called his *taking our infirmities*, Mat. 8. 17. He was a Man ſubject to all the frailties, ſorrows, ſufferings, ſickneſſes, neceſſities, diſgraces, which *Adam's* fall had expoſed our nature unto. Here then let theſe three Concluſions be noted,

(1.) *THAT the Humane nature of Chriſt*, (as it bare the reſpect of a Servant, which reſpect accompanied his aſſumption of the nature,) *is the firſt and proper ſubject of all his Abaſement.* As he is God, he changeth not; nor can he be in his divine nature leſs than infinitely glorious, and above all praiſe. He cannot ſo be leſs then, or inferiour to himſelf; being unchangeable. It was then his Humanity that was capable of, and did receive the impreſſions of this Humiliation. He took our nature, that he might take our miſeries and ſorrows. *Heb.* 2. 14.

(2.) *THAT the manifeſtative glory of his Divine nature, while he was in the form of a Servant, was for the time vailed.* His Divinity was beclouded in his ſervile ſtate; that tho' it was it ſelf as ſplendid as ever, yet it was for the moſt part, hidden from the ſight of men, and they had a very low account of him. *Iſai.* 53. 2,3. *Pſal.* 22. 6. Nor was he fully *declared to be God*, till or after his *Reſurrection*, Rom. 1. 14. Though this was no debaſement of his eſſential glory, but only a vailing of his declarative.

(3.) *HENCE his Humiliation is truly aſcribed to his Perſon.* Inaſmuch, as that humane nature in which the Son of God was abaſed, was of his Perſon, being united to it in his wonderful Incarnation. And hence all the works done by him, as a Redeemer, are perſonal acts; on which account the *Word*, i. e. the Son of God, is ſaid to *Tabernacle among us*, Joh. 1. 14. And the Church to be *Redeemed by* the *blood* of God, *Act.* 20. 28.

2. *IT was Jeſus Chriſt anointed to the Office of a Mediator, that was thus abaſed.* It was God's choſen, his Servant that was humbled.

Hence,

(1.) *IN his Unction he was prepared for this Condition.* For then and there he received all theſe ſuitable Graces, that were to carry him through ſuch an eſtate. And here are two more obſervable,

[1.] *HUMILITY:* A willingneſs to deny himſelf, to vail his own glory; to be any thing, to do any thing that might be ſerviceable to that end of his coming into the world. In the exerciſe of this Grace, he did not think ſcornfully or diſdainfully, of going through the loweſt and leaſt ſervices, to meet with the vileſt and moſt ignominious Sufferings, that lay in the way of his procuring their good for whoſe ſake he undertook. His *ear* therefore is ſaid to be *bored*, Heb. 10. 6. And he tells us that he *is lowly*, Mat. 11. 29.

[2.] *MEEKNESS:* Whereby as man, he reſted ſatisfied in his low eſtate, without repining or murmuring. He could patiently bear with any Providences, and ſuffer any miſeries that befell him. His Spirit did not riſe; He made no noiſe, but expreſſed the greateſt

greateſt ſilence in his Sufferings. Hence compared to a *Sheep*, Iſai. 53. 7. This vertue alſo he aſſumes to himſelf. *Mat.* 11. 29.

(2.) *IN the ſtate of Humiliation, he exerciſed theſe Vertues.* And that both in his *active* and *paſſive* Obedience. For he abaſed himſelf to do the loweſt Services, and to bear the ſharpeſt afflictions. His whole life was a travail of labour and ſuffering, wherein the immeaſurable vertue of theſe Graces ſhewed it ſelf. Hence that, 1 *Pet.* 2. 21, *&c.*

2. *HOW far He was Abaſed?*

Anſ. *JESUS CHRIST was abaſed very low.* It was not an ordinarily mean and debaſed condition that he took upon himſelf, but wonderfully ſo. As will appear in theſe things,

1. *HE became inferiour to, or lower than God the Father.* As God, He was his *equal*, Phil. 2. 6. was co-eſſential, co-eternal, had the ſame Being, Attributes, and divine Glory. But now he becomes his Subject and yields obedience to him: is his *Servant*, (Iſai. 42. 1.) denies his own humane will, that his Fathers may take place. Mat. 26. 39. *O my Father, if it be poſſible, let t'is cup paſs from me: nevertheleſs, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* Reſigns himſelf to let him do what he will with him.

2 *HE became inferiour to Himſelf.* He humbled himſelf, (*Phil.* 2. 7.) did as it were, thruſt himſelf down, put himſelf below himſelf. The Man Chriſt was a glorious Perſonage; the humane nature, by being aſſumed into the perſonality of the Son of God, was highly diſtinguiſhed. This union rendred him more excellent than all the children of men: But he vailed this glory; He obſcured himſelf. 2 Cor. 8. 9. *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that though he was rich, yet for your ſakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.* He was an anointed King, and yet would be a Servant. He was Judge of the World, and yet would ſtand at man's bar, and there be arraigned, condemned and executed.

3. *HE became inferiour to the Angels.* Though he was their Lord, yet he put himſelf in a *lower* condition than them. *Heb.* 2. 7. They are immortal Beings, but he became a mortal man, and did die. They are powerful Beings, but he became a frail man. They enjoy perpetual tranquility, but he was a man of ſorrows: Yea he was in ſuch a condition as to need the help of Angels. Luk. 22. 43. *And there appeared unto him an Angel from heaven, ſtrengthning him.*

4. *HE became inferiour to Men.* He not only became a man, but put himſelf below, not only the common ſort, but the moſt abject and meaneſt of all men. He ſuffered himſelf to be made a meer ſlave, and ſold for thirty pieces of Silver, which was the value of ſuch an one. *Exod.* 21. 32. Yea, he was made the leaſt of men, reported not worthy to have a look caſt on him, *Iſai.* 53 2, 3. A very ſcoff and ſcorn, fit only to be laden with all the reproaches and revilings that the children of men could caſt upon him; (*Pſal.* 22. 6, 7.) made a companion of thieves and robbers; Crucified between two of them. Yea, when his life came in competition, a *Barabbas*, a robber and murderer, & ſeditious perſon, is counted more fit to live than he. Yea is hurried out of the world with a tumultuary cry. *Luk.* 23. 18. *Mat.* 27. 24.

5. *HE debaſed himſelf ſo far as to be accounted no man at all.* Yea, to be reckoned among Beaſts; yea among the moſt contemptible Inſects. Pſal. 22. 6. *But I am a worm and no man; a reproach of men, and deſpiſed of the people.* There is nothing more deſpicable then a Worm; every one ſcorns it, tramples upon it; it lies on the ground neglected. Such was the Lord Jeſus Chriſt here. Men were neither careful nor afraid of what injuries they did him; they could mock, revile, ſpit upon him, without any remorſe.

6. *HE became inferiour to the very Beaſts themſelves.* He was in a lower, meaner, and poorer condition than they. Although he was the Lord of the upper and lower World, yet he ſo emptied himſelf, as not to have the actual poſſeſſion of any ſettled habitation or place of abode in this World. And in that reſpect he was inferiour to birds and beaſts. And this he inſinuated to one that was in a pang offering to become his follower, Mat. 8. 20. *And Jeſus ſaith unto him, The foxes have holes; and the birds of the air have neſts, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*

7. *HE was made inferiour to all Beings.* There was no member of the whole Creation was laid ſo low as Chriſt laid himſelf, when he was in the ſtate of Humiliation. He became *nothing* at all. Mar. 9. 12. *It is written of the Son of man, that he muſt ſuffer many things, and be ſet at nought.* The word ſignifies to be made a *nothing* of, to have no price put upon one; not to be reputed for ſo much as any thing; to ſtand as an empty cypher, and not to have the value of ſo much as an Unite. Thus it was with Chriſt in this World. And it is to be obſerved, that he was not meerly paſſive, but alſo active in all this. Not only did God and men abaſe him, but he abaſed himſelf; He complied with his Father, and made uſe of Men and Devils as inſtruments in this affair. *Pilate* could have done nothing to him, had not power been given him; and he gave it him. Phil. 2. 7. *He made himſelf, &c.* He laid down his own life, He voluntarily reſigned himſelf to all that befell him. And till his own hour was come, his enemies could do nothing to him.

II. *WE have the ſpecial Nature of Chriſt's Humiliation*, in the reſidue of the Deſcription. In which we may obſerve two things,

1. *THE State of his Humiliation: He ſubjected* himſelf to the *Law* for us. This, with the deſign he had of working Redemption in it, is aſſerted. Gal. 4. 4, 5. *But when the fulneſs of the time was come, God ſent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we*

might receive the adoption of ſons. And he did this for us, i.e. in our ſtead; not only as our Surety, but Repreſentative too, bearing the perſon of all God's Elect. And there is a great deal more in ſaying he was *Obedient* to the Law for us, than meerly that he was *Subject* to the Law. For by being ſo for us, he put himſelf into our place, and bear the reſpect that we did to it, which was that which made his Humiliation ſo deep and low, becauſe our legal ſtate was by the apoſtaſy become ſo exceedingly debaſed. There was therefore a double Obedience of Chriſt neceſſary, in his ſtate of Humiliation, viz. Active, and Paſſive.

(1.) THERE was an *Active Obedience neceſſary for us*; i.e. that he ſhould *fulfil all righteouſneſs*, Mat. 3.15. He muſt do all that the law of Works required of us. There are ſome, otherwiſe Orthodox, who deny this, and reſtrain it to his paſſive Obedience, becauſe the Scripture ſo often puts the emphaſis upon *that*. But here obſerve,

[1.] *IN the Salvation of fallen man there are two parts:* A *delivery from miſery*, and a *participation in happineſs*; not only ſomething negative, but ſomething poſitive too. Chriſt came not only to ſave us from the curſe, and deliver us from hell; but withal to make us heirs of Glory, and purchaſe Heaven for us Eph. 1. 14. *Which is the earneſt of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchaſed poſſeſſion, unto the praiſe of his glory.* And to *give eternal life*, Joh. 10. 27, 28.

[2.] *THE condition of life and happineſs according to the firſt Covenant, was active, perfect Obedience, to the whole Law of God.* So the promiſe of the Covenant ran; and it was poſitive, and ſo far neceſſary, that the leaſt failure in it expoſed man to, and brought him under the threatning of death. *Gal.* 3. 10. This obedience was active, for the tenor of the law Covenant was, *Do* and *Live*, Rom. 10. 5. Nor could man expect life on any other terms.

[3.] *THE terms of the firſt Covenant ſtand inviolable.* They muſt be performed either by the man himſelf, or a ſufficient Surety repreſenting him. Believers indeed are not under the firſt Covenant, but yet that Covenant is not removed by rejection, but completion. *Mat.* 5. 18. God did not diſgrace, but honour the Covenant of Works in the way of man's Redemption by Chriſt.

[4.] *HENCE, Chriſt could not be a compleat Saviour, without his active Obedience, becauſe, without it, the condition of life required in the firſt Covenant, could not be fulfilled.* Chriſt was *made under the Law to redeem*, Gal. 4. 4. His challenge for us muſt be according to law. He muſt therefore do, that we may live. Hence, in his Mediatorial Prayer, he makes this plea, Joh. 17. 4. *I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finiſhed the work which thou gaveſt me to do.* And his active Obedience, is oppoſed to *Adam's* active Diſobedience. Rom. 5. 19. *For as by one man's diſobedience, many were made ſinners: ſo by the obedience of one, ſhall many be made righteous.* He muſt not only redeem us, but the Inheritance too.

(2.) *THERE was alſo his Paſſive Obedience neceſſary for us.* Indeed for himſelf it had not been needed. He had not been a man of death according to law, if he had no way been reckoned guilty. If *Adam* had kept his integrity, Death had not been heard of in the World. The Covenant promiſed life to perfect obedience, but Chriſt's life was perfect: He was undefiled, and knew no ſin: but for us it was requiſite that he ſhould die.

For,

[1.] *THE Law denounceth Death againſt all thoſe that in any point become guilty of the breach of it.* Gal. 3. 10. This was the expreſs threatning, *Gen* 2. 17. So that man no ſooner became a Law-breaker, but he was a man of *Death*. Sin involved *Adam* and all his Poſterity in the Sentence; and man is dead in law, as ſoon as he is any way under the imputation of ſin. *Rom.* 5. 12.

[2.] *THERE is no other way to expiate or buy off the Sentence but by Death.* The Sin-offering muſt be ſlain. There is no expiatory Sacrifice without Blood. The Goat on which the Lords lot fell, muſt be killed, before the Scape Goat be ſet at liberty. There is no other price of man's Redemption exhibited, but the price of Blood. The firſt Covenant was ſo conſtituted, and God's Juſtice in it was ſo engaged, that if man become a tranſgreſſor, there muſt be Blood ſhed for his recovery; nor can any other thing be taken in lieu of it. Man ſtands a Priſoner at God's Bar, convicted of, and condemned for ſin, and except he hath one to die for him, he muſt die himſelf. *Ezek.* 18. 4.

[3.] *HENCE, Chriſt by becoming man's Redeemer, came under the law of Death.* It was not enough for him to merit life & happineſs for us, but he muſt alſo diſengage us from all the curſes under which we were held bound: becauſe we were *under the curſe*, He muſt *be made one*, Gal. 3. 12. Becauſe we were ſinners, *He muſt be made ſin*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. So that Chriſt, from the firſt moment of his Incarnation was a reputed Sinner; and voluntarily ſubmitted himſelf to the Judge, to do by him, as the Law declares againſt the Sinner, quietly ſuſtaining all that was laid upon him. *Iſai.* 53. 5, 6, 7.

2. *WE have the End of His Humiliation:* Which anſwers his two-fold Obedince. He therefore ſubmitted himſelf,

(1.) *TO ſatisfy for our Offences:* i. e. To make reſtitution to the Law of God, according to the obligation that Sin had brought us under unto it. Some deny Chriſt's Sufferings to be ſatisfactory, and would have them only exemplary. But let us obſerve,

[1.] *THE Law muſt be ſatisfied.* It is an unchangeable Rule, and proceeds from a God with whom there is no ſhadow of turning. And it was the foundation of the relative Juſtice between God and man.

[2.] *THE*

[2.] *THE Sinner cannot make perſonal Satisfaction.* Not by active Obedience; for ſuffering is the proper anſwering of the Law by the Sinner. Beſides, all active Obedience is perpetually due, and ſo cannot compenſate for any defect. Not by paſſive Obedience, becauſe he is a Sinner, and can in no other way ſatisfy for an offence given to an infinite Majeſty, but by ſuffering eternally: ſo that the debt is ever paying; never diſcharged; and ſo in ſatisfying he periſheth for ever.

[3.] *HENCE, if there be no Satisfaction offered by another for him, he is without hope.* Man's deſtruction is of himſelf, but his help is in God. *Hoſ.* 13. 4. Either then, the Law muſt be cancelled without fulfilling, which is contradictory to the rule of Juſtice, or man muſt ſatisfy for himſelf, which is utterly impoſſible; or Chriſt muſt ſatisfy for him. Now that Chriſt died to make Satisfaction appears, becauſe he died as a *Surety*, Heb 7.22. For he was Surety to the whole Law for us, and therefore was engaged to comply with what the Law exacted of him, which was, to ſuffer, after the ſame way and manner, for the ſubſtance of it, that we muſt have done if he had not undertaken for us: Now that penalty was the firſt and ſecond Death. *Gen.* 2. 17. So that he muſt undergo both. And on this account he is ſaid to *take away ſin* as a *Lamb*, Joh. 1. 29. which is by being offered. And to bear the *Chaſtiſement of our peace*, Iſai. 53.5. So that the Law hath nothing to charge on us, becauſe it hath executed its righteouſneſs on him. And nothing leſs can be intended in that, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21.

2. *TO procure for us Life and Salvation*, i.e. in a *way of merit*. For he treated with God according to the terms of the Covenant of Works. And hence alſo they no leſs err, who make Chriſt's active Obedience to be meerly exemplary; as if he had lived only to ſhew us a pattern, and died to redeem us. For if ſo, there were no happineſs for us. There is a Covenant merit, as well as a Covenant penalty. A man may ſatisfy and not merit: but this will not procure for us a compleat Salvation. Chriſt came to make us heirs of the Kingdom, which that he might, he did all that was needful to the bringing it about. And that *He* humbled himſelf for this end, is evident, becauſe *He became* thus *low and poor*, that he might make his people *rich*. 2 *Cor.* 8. 9.

USE. I. *LEARN hence, that not only the free Grace, but alſo the exact Juſtice of God ſhines forth in the Redemption of Man by Chriſt.* The Doctrine of Chriſt's Humiliation in general holds out this truth; and the conſideration of it in particular, will farther clear it up. There is Grace eminent, both in the calling of Chriſt to this work, when our miſery called for it: God had no need of our Salvation, but we were undone without his mercy: we had been the only loſers, if Chriſt had not come. And alſo in accepting it at his hands for us: He was not bound in Juſtice to take up with a Surety; He might have fallen upon the principal Offender. As alſo in his conferring of it upon us; if he had not applied it to us, we had not ſought it at his hand. *Iſai.* 65. 1. But yet as to the ſubſtance of the work it ſelf, it is done in way of exact Juſtice. God pardons none but ſuch for whom Chriſt hath ſatisfyed; He ſaves none, but thoſe for whom he hath merited. Chriſt was humbled, or we had never been exalted. We were not made ſo high, but he was firſt made as low. Hence Juſtice and Mercy are here combined, *Pſal.* 85. 10. And how may this ſilence our minds when we are perplexed about the Juſtice of God; and think it ſtands in the way of our Salvation? Had not Chriſt come, it would ſo have done, but his Humiliation hath cleared the way to our delivery from Hell, and participation in the glories of Heaven: And now *God can be both juſt, and the juſtifier of all thoſe that believe in Jeſus Chriſt.*

USE. II. *WE here alſo learn, that Chriſt is a ſufficient Object of Faith, for a Sinner to truſt in.* His Humiliation rendred him all that for us which we need, to make us fully and for ever bleſſed. And the conſideration thereof affords us plentiful ground to eſtabliſh our hope and confidence in Him, in as much as he hath done all that which is needful for our Salvation to the utmoſt. There is nothing that we can want, but it is provided in this Work for us. We are in our ſelves guilty Sinners, and the terrible curſes of the Law are out againſt us: And where ſhall a ranſom be found that we may not go to the pit? Why, Chriſt humbled himſelf to the Death of the Croſs; bare the wrath of God, and ſuffered the penalty of Sin; and this was enough to take up all our bonds. We are earneſtly ſollicitous for happineſs, and inquiſitive how we may be bleſſed for ever: And there is no bleſſedneſs for us, unleſs the Law be perfectly kept; but we have no righteouſneſs of our own, which will ſtand for this, our beſt being filthy rags: But here is a Righteouſneſs compleat, He fulfilled the whole Law; and his Father was fully pleaſed in and with him. And remember, if we have truly believed in him, all this was for us: it is to ſtand in the Law for us, and is every way ſufficient ſo to do, in as much as He was our accepted Surety. And being the Son of God, gave infinite worth to his whole Obedience, both active & paſſive. Let us then reſolve our whole hope into him; and truſt in Him for Eternal Life.

[APRIL 14. 1696.]

SERMON *XCVI.*

WE have taken an account of the Nature of Chriſt's Humiliation, it now follows, that we preſent it in the *ſeveral particulars* wherein it was exerted, in all of which we are to obſerve how he carried on the Work of Redemption, which was the very buſineſs

that thisStatè of his was concerned in. We muſt here carry along with us,thatChriſt'sHumiliation, properly conſiſted in his being *ſubject to the Law for us*, that ſo in our ſtead he might both merit and ſatisfy, according to the tenour of the Law ; ſo that our whole Salvation was to be procured by his active and paſſive Obedience, and our whole hope for eternal Life depends upon this, that he hath thus obeyed in our ſtead. We are therefore to trace this in every paſſage that follows, the particulars whereof are but ſummarily pointed at in the Anſwer before us. And in order to our methodical proſecution of theſe things, we may reduce them to their proper heads.

CHRIST then humbled himſelf both in his Life and his Death. In the former of theſe his active, in the latter his paſſive obedience did more principally appear ; though both of them were exerted in each. For, he therefore did what the Law required, that by doing he might procure eternal Life for us ; and he ſuffered, yea died, that he might free us from eternal Death.

I. *WE are to begin at his Life* ; for he both lived as well as died for us. His whole Life as well as his Death, was upon our account. And in the conſideration of his Life, we are to obſerve his *entrance* into the world, and his *commoration* in it. He muſt come into it, for here were they that were to be redeemed by him, and here was that work to be done, the vertue whereof muſt ſave them ; And becauſe this work could not be done in a moment, but required time for the accompliſhment of it, he muſt therefore tarry here a while, and dwell among men, for ſuch a ſpace as was requiſite for the performance of it : And on this account he is ſaid to *tabernacle among us*, Joh. 1. 14. i. e. He tarried here, as one abſent from his home, till he had fulfilled the buſineſs his Father ſent him hither about.

IN *His Entrance into the World*, there are two things of ſpecial remark, viz. His *Conception* and *Birth*, which are particularly mentioned in ourCreed ; and the obſervation whereof is helpful to eſtabliſh our Faith in him as our Redeemer. Now theſe two are conſiderable,either as they refer to his Incarnation, and ſo we have taken an account of them under a formet Queſtion ; or in reſpect of the circumſtances attending them,in which he was humbled in them; and that refers to our preſent Subject. Our Catechiſm mentions not the former of theſe here, but rather involves it in the latter ; and indeed the circumſtances in which he humbled himſelf in theſe are the ſame ; yea, the Conception itſelf was rather a preparing him to be humbled, than a part of his Humiliation, becauſe in it he was incarnated. I ſhall therefore paſs to the conſideration of his Birth, which is the firſt thing before us in the Catechiſm, viz. *His being born, and that in a low Condition, being made under the Law.* Touching his being made under the Law, we have already obſerved it in the general account of his Humiliation ; and it is well to be remembred, that he was not only made under the Law, as *Adam* was in his ſtate of integrity ; for ſo he would only have owed his active obedience to it ; but ſo as fallen man, upon whom the curſe is fallen : ſo that he alſo ſtood obliged to pay a paſſive obedience to it. And on that account is ſaid to be *made a curſe for us*, Gal. 3. 12. And in ſuch a ſtate was he born, wherein the deepneſs of his Humiliation appears. And this may well be referred to the condition in which he was born. Our Catechiſm ſeems to makes his Birth one part of his Humiliation, conſidered in itſelf, and his *low condition* that accompanied it an adjunct to it, or a farther degree of it ; but then we muſt look upon his Birth as diſtinct from his Incarnation, which hath been before proved not to belong to that ſtate, but to prepare him to be a ſubject, both of that, and alſo of Exaltation. And thus we may conceive of him,as humbled in it ; in that he would not only be a man, for ſo he might have been as *Adam* was, by creation ; but he would be of our ſtock, lineage, kindred, who were become baſe & ignoble, & vile. Hence that is remarkable, Heb. 2. 14. *Foraſmuch then as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood ; he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame, that through death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil.* The ſame fleſh and blood with us, he would be a brother of ſuch worms, and corruption, as we were, that ſo the right of Redemption might belong to him ; and therefore it is emphatical, ver. 16. He doth not ſay the nature of man, but *the Seed of Abraham.* But that wherein the Humiliation of his Birth mainly conſiſts, is the low eſtate in which it was ; for he was put into that eſtate for us, and the vertue of it is applied to us, and ſo it belonged to his Redemption. There were indeed notable appearances of his Glory, which accompanied his Birth, by which God would give a Teſtimony, that he was the Meſſias. As, the glorious Star that appeared about that time, which was lighted up as a Taper, to give the World intimation of the Sun of Righteouſneſs being about to riſe, and the coming of wiſe men from the eaſt, upon the invitation of the Star. to viſit, worſhip, and pay homage to him, *Mat.* 2. *begin.* As alſo the ſtately appearance of an hoſt of heavenly Angels to a company of poor Shepherds, proclaiming, as Heralds, hisBirth,and ſinging a glorious Anthem upon it, *Luk.* 2. *begin.* But his Birth itſelf was accompanied with a wonderful meanneſs, he mightily debaſed himſelfin it. He was born for us, and ſo was born in a condition anſwerable; and in it, it appears what ſin had made us in our very Birth. And there are a few things may here be taken notice of, as properly belonging to his Humiliation, viz.

1. *HE was born under a ſentence of Condemnation.*

nation. As ſoon as he had put our nature on, he ſtood under the doom of the Law; He was born to dy, and was adjudged to it, as ſoon as he was Man. We are all born children of wrath, in our natural ſtate, and he put himſelf in our place, and therefore came to *fulfil the Law*, Mat. 5. 17. And this is a main article of it. He had never been born, if it had not been to be made a Sacrifice; God *prepared* him *a body* for this, *Heb.* 12.5. Juſtice took hold on him, as ſoon as ever he came into the world, and diſcharged him not, till it had taken its ſatisfaction of him: and he lived in the view of it all his days, and was frequently ſpeaking of it.

2. *He was born of a Sinful Woman.* It was a low ſtoop in the Son of God, that he would be born of, and derive from any of *Adam*'s ſinful children. True honour in God's account conſiſts in Holineſs, and Sin is to Him the vileſt diſgrace. Original Sin in his Mother had made her more mean and ignoble than any thing elſe could: had ſhe been an Empreſs, it had yet been in Chriſt a debaſing of himſelf to derive his humanity from her. That a clean thing ſhould come out of an unclean is ſtrange; for though ſhe was ſanctify'd by Grace, yet ſhe was not arrived at ſpotleſs perfection, but had the ſtain and pollution on her. And as it is a diſgrace to have a Traytor to ones father, it is no leſs to have a Sinner to ones mother: and thus Chriſt, though without ſin, would be thus nearly related to Sinners, for whoſe ſake he came into this world.

3. *JOSEPH and Mary were very Poor and Contemptible. Mary* was his true mother, as really as any other woman is the mother of her children. And *Joſeph*, though not really, yet in the eſteem of men, was his father, and became reputed ſo; the honour or contempt of his condition muſt reflect upon him. They did indeed derive from *David*, but they were grown out of eſteem, and reduced to a very mean condition, little regarded among rich and wealthy neighbours. *Joſeph*, a Carpenter, a Calling laborious, and not very profitable: which afterwards gave them occaſion to ſpeak ſo contemptuouſly of him, Mark 6.3. *Is not this the carpenter, the ſon of Mary, the brother of James and Joſes, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his ſiſters here with us? and they were offended at him.* And why was this? but becauſe ſin had robbed us of our honour, and made us ignominious; had forfeited our right to all things, and reduced us to poverty.

4. *THE Time of his Birth is here very conſiderable.* There was a time when the Nation enjoyed its liberty, and had the command far and near; but he was not born then, but now, when the Nation was in ſlavery to the Roman Empire; and at ſuch a ſeaſon, when in witneſs of his ſlavery, there did go out a Tax, and every one muſt repair to his City, there to endure it; *Joſeph* & *Mary* muſt alſo do this, *Luk.* 2. *begin.* And at that very time, while the ſignal token of ſlavery was acting, he muſt be born into the world: ſo to make it appear in the very circumſtances of his Birth, that he not only took on him the *form of a man*, but *the form of a ſervant*, Phil. 2. 7. And why? but becauſe we now by ſin become ſlaves, and brought under the moſt cruel bondage.

5. *THE Place of his birth and Circumſtances of it, do farther ſet forth the low condition of it.* We have it deſcribed, in Luk. 2. 7. *And ſhe brought forth her firſt born ſon, and wrapped him in ſwadling cloaths, and laid him in a manger, becauſe there was no room for them in the inn.* When we hear the report of the Great King of the World, the Supreme Potentate to be born, we would ſuppoſe the greateſt Preparations imaginable to be made for it, the moſt ſtately Palace, moſt ſumptuous Chamber, moſt ſplendid Furniture, the moſt royal Attendance, and magnificent Entertainment, that ſo his Birth might, in ſome meaſure anſwer his Dignity. But alas! how far is it from this? Inſtead of a Palace, he is content with a Stable; for noble Attendance, he is born among the Beaſts; for coſtly Dreſſing, either ſome poor rags gotten of charity, or to be ſure as mean as the low condition of his poor Parents allowed; in the room of a coſtly Cradle richly prepared, a ſorry Manger, and likely a lock of Hay for a Pillow; and the beſt Attendance on this Solemnity, a company of poor folks, who were put to it for a lodging, and fain to take up with one like that of *Joſeph*'s. Thus came he ſilently into the World; no Bells rung, no Bonfires made, no Proclamations iſſued to invite the World to come and pay homage to their Prince. This was becauſe we had turned ourſelves out of all, and forfeited our right to every bleſſing.

6. *THE Reaſon of his being born in ſuch a place, adds to this Conſideration.* Luk. 2. 7. *Becauſe there was no room for them in the inn.* Alas! what Great Perſonages in compariſon, were they that belonged to *Bethlehem*, that they muſt take up all the rooms of Entertainment, and crowd out the Lord of Glory. Could none of them think or ſay, it is good manners for us to give place to our Lord and King? No, He muſt be ſo obſcure, that his Mother muſt be thruſt out, and conſent to take up a naſty hole, in which to Travail of Him who was King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; while the huffing and ſwaggering Blades of the place take up and command all the Entertainment. Such a low and mean thing, ſuch a nothing and contemptible thing did Chriſt make himſelf, in his very Birth. Thus he came into the world, and this he did in our ſtead, and on our account.

USE. *LEARN then from hence, how low ſin had laid us; and how much Chriſt hath loved us.* Truly, this leſſon is pointed to, at every paſſage of Chriſt's Humiliation. When we conſider what Chriſt made himſelf, it ſhews us what we had made ourſelves by

Sin,

Sin, and when we reflect on it, that he did it for us, it then declares his unſpeakable kindneſs to us. Let us then lay out a few thoughts upon the matter before us; let me invite you all to come to the birth of your Saviour; ſee and behold the King of Glory, vailed in obſcurity, & entring into the World under a Cloud; the Lord of Heaven and Earth entring into his Dominion, in the meaneſt and obſcureſt Equipage imaginable; Him who made both Heaven and Earth, not accommodated ſo much as with an Houſe to be born in, but to be turned among Beaſts: And why? Our Sins procured it; we had loſt our Right to all, we deſerved Poverty and Miſery, to be turned out of Houſe and Home. We were under this Curſe. The Son of God was a Great King; He could have commanded all the World, He could with a Word have built a ſtately Palace, and furniſhed it magnificently for himſelf. But how had he been our Redeemer then? It was *for our ſake that he became poor*, 2 Cor. 8. 9. He was *born for us*, Iſai. 9. 6. And for that reaſon he was thus born. And was not this condeſcendency a diſcovery of his great Love? Let his Stable and Manger then, make him exceeding precious to us. And do we enjoy any benefits in our birth, let us acknowledge it hither. For though in the day of patience, God allows this favour to wicked men, yet ſhould God's People derive all their mercies through Chriſt, and aſcribe them to him; and every circumſtance thereof ſhould help to eſtabliſh and increaſe our love to him. And this may ſuffice to be remarked on his *Birth*, or his *Entrance* into the World.

WE are now to proceed to look on Him in regard *to His Commoration in it.* And there we may follow him, firſt *in his Private*, and then *in his Publick Life.* Chriſt indeed was born to be a Publick Perſon, and he was ſo influentially from his entrance into the World; but yet firſt took upon him a private Condition of Life, before he entred upon his publick Miniſtry; in which he remained till he was about *Thirty Years of Age*, Luk. 3. 23. And there was Reaſon for it. For,

1. *THE ſtate of Humanity, as he aſſumed it, ſo required.* He might indeed have taken our nature in its compleaſage and nature: ſo our firſt Parents were made; But becauſe he muſt be born, and ſo be firſt an Infant, which Age is not fitted for publick Employment. And there is no queſtion, but if *Adam* had ſtood in his integrity, Children would have been Children, incapable of Service, till they were grown: To be ſure it is ſo with fallen man, who muſt learn to ſpeak, and go, &c. And they are all the infirmities ſinleſs of this ſtate, which he took on him.

2. *THE Law under which he was born pointed to it.* He was *made under the Law*, Gal. 4. 4. i. e. *Moſes's* Pædagogy. Now the Levites, were not to enter on publick Service, till they were *Thirty Years old*, Numb. 4. 3. And tho' Chriſt was not of that Tribe and Order, yet they were Types of Him in this reſpect. And therefore though he gave a wonderful Specimen of his Accompliſhments at Twelve Years old. (*Luk.* 2.46,47,) yet he would accommodate himſelf to the Law, being to *fulfil all righteouſneſs*, as well in the poſitive precepts, as thoſe that were moral.

3. THERE are ſome of the People of God, who are to lead *a private Life*, and others who are called to *publick Service*; and Jeſus Chriſt went through *both Conditions*, that he might *ſanctify* both of them to His People. So that whether we are called to ſerve God in a private or publick Capacity, we may have advantage to exerciſe our Faith in Him, for the application of his Holineſs to us in either of them, ſo as to render us acceptable to God.

I. *WE are to begin at His Private Life.* In which we may conſider, 1. *His ſtate of Infancy.* 2. *His more ripe Age.* And obſerve how he *humbled* himſelf for us in both.

1. *CHRIST was an Infant, to ſanctify the Infancy of His People.* Holineſs is required of us from the Womb: But our Childhood and Youth are vanity. *David* prays, Pſal. 25. 7. *Remember not the ſins of my youth.* And he obtained by faith in the Child Jeſus. And as it was an humbling of himſelf for the Son of God to be an *Infant of days*, and of ſtrength, to hang on his mothers Breaſts, and depend on her for his ſuſtenance; ſo there were three more peculiar paſſages, wherein his Humiliation in his Infancy was Celebrated; His *Circumciſion*, His *Oblation* and *His Flight into Ægypt, and return from thence.* A brief touch upon each may ſuffice. In the two former of theſe he complied with the Ceremonial Law. Not that he had in him any real defilement of ſin, for he was without ſin; but the Law pointed to him as the end of it. Rom. 10. 4. *For Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth.* And it was to declare that he was a Sinner by imputation. Had not his People been Sinners, there had been no need of theſe Ceremonies; they were an *hand-writing of Ordinances againſt* the people, *Col.* 2. 14. He therefore obeyed theſe according to the meaning of them; and ſo acknowledged himſelf to be the greateſt Sinner by imputation.

1. *CONCERNING His Circumciſion:* We have the account of it, Luk. 2. 21. *And when eight days were accompliſhed for the circumciſing of the Child, his name was called JESUS, which was ſo named of the Angel before he was conceived in the womb.* Where we ſee that it was exactly attended, to the very day which the Law preſcribed. The tittles of God's Law, that are little regarded by the moſt, are of weight to a gracious Soul; they were ſo to Chriſt. Now concerning the Circumciſion of Chriſt, let theſe few remarks be made,

(1.) *CHRIST by being Circumciſed, intimated that He was the Author and Inſtitutor of that Ordinance.* For though it was conſecrated to Divine Service, long before his coming in the Fleſh,

Fleſh, even in the days of *Abraham*, yet he gave that law to *Abraham*. For it was he that appeared to him, and made the Covenant with him; and now he put a note of honour upon it by his own example, hereby ſealing his approbation of it: And it was a great reſpect that he put upon the Ceremonial Law, by conforming to it.

(2.) *HE hereby farther intimated, that this Ordinance received its vertue and efficacy from Him.* That it was he who made this ſign to be effectual to the ſpiritual end of it, when it was made uſe of by the Ancients in former ages: And that all that get any good by it, had it from him: the vertue of it depended on him, and they were led up to him as the ſubſtance of that Ceremony, and received at his hands that heart circumciſion, which was ſhadowed out by it; according to, Col. 2. 11. *In whom alſo ye are circumciſed with the circumciſion made without hands, in putting off the body of the ſins of the fleſh, by the circumciſion of Chriſt.*

(3.) *HE being typed out by the Circumciſion, fulfilled the figure of it, by applying it to himſelf.* For,

[1.] *HEREBY he declares that he was of the Poſterity of Abraham.* Not only that he was a man, but of ſuch a Stock: for with *Abraham* and his Seed was the Covenant of Circumciſion made; and by this note they were to be diſtinguiſhed from all the other People in the World. By this note therefore Chriſt ſigned himſelf, Heb. 2. 16. *For verily he took not on him the nature of angels: but he took on him the ſeed of Abraham.* The Jews might elſe have cavilled againſt him, and brought ſome reaſon to reject him; for they were to have no communion with ſuch as were uncircumciſed. But he herein ſubjected himſelf to the Judaical Polity, and Ceremonial Law; which being a part of inſtituted Worſhip, he could not paſs by, but muſt obſerve in his courſe. And though he was not active in this as man, being in his Infancy; yet, as God, He ordered it to be ſo, to prove his perfect Obedience.

[2.] *HE was Circumciſed to manifeſt the fulfilling of the Type and Figure in him.* The way in which Chriſt was to remove the Law, with reſpect to the curſe of it, required this. Circumciſion, and the Law of Ordinances, which was a great ſervitude upon his People, was to be removed by him, by *fulfilling*, Mat. 5. 17. And though his main work was to anſwer the things which were ſpiritually ſignified by that Law; yet there was a great Curſe annexed to that Law, unto thoſe that failed in any part of it. *Deut.* 27. 26. Now that People never did keep the Ceremonial Law exactly; as the Hiſtory of thoſe times fully declares, and is to be gathered from that of *Peter*, Act. 15. 10. He therefore was Circumciſed, and ſo obliged to it; as, Gal. 5. 3. *For I teſtify again to every man that is circumciſed, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.* And by obeying it, he took that curſe off.

[3.] *CIRCUMCISION typed purity, whereas Uncircumciſion was a note of pollution or uncleanneſs.* Thoſe that were Circumciſed, were Ceremonially cleanſed from Original ſin; it was a typical taking away the pollution, that man's nature had contracted by the Fall. And Chriſt was Circumciſed to ſhew that that Original ſin that His Redeemed labour of, was imputed to him; and that he was clean from pollution; and that we are to go to Him for this cleanſing. His Circumciſion is therefore declared to be made uſe of, in the helping of us to put off the body of ſin, *Col* 2. 11. i.e. the Circumciſion which he by his Spirit applies to us in purifying us, which he repreſented in his being Circumciſed.

[4.] *CIRCUMCISION looked at, & pointed to Him.* It was therefore only a directory to them before his coming, whereby they were helped to look to, and wait for him; and hence it was to be of uſe no longer, than till he was manifeſted to the World: For, when the Day brake, and the Son of Righteouſneſs aroſe, the Shades were to fly away. Hence he attended it, compleated it, and ſo conſummated, and put an end to it, and all the other legal Ceremonies with it, *Col* 2. 14. But now there was no more need of Types, when the Antitype was come: The Sun being riſen, the Candles were to be put out.

[5.] *CIRCUMCISION was a Sign of the Engagement to the keeping of the whole Law of God:* In doing what was required in it, or ſuffering the ſevere Penalties of the neglect of ſo doing. *Acts* 15. 10. Hence called the *Covenant*, *Gen.* 17. 10. Chriſt therefore received this Ordinance, to ſhew that he ſtood bound to pay all our Debts of active and paſſive Obedience to the Covenant of Works, to take away the Guilt and Pollution of our Sins from us, and purify us in himſelf. The Benefit of Circumciſion is in Obedience, Rom. 2. 25. *For circumciſion verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumciſion is made uncircumciſion.* By this therefore Chriſt ſtood engaged to God, to take upon him in our ſtead, all that the Law ſhould exact. His Circumciſion was the earneſt of what he was to do for us in his following Life and Death.

[6.] *HENCE the Name given him at his Circumciſion intimates as much.* It was a Cuſtom, &c. to give a Name by which they were liſted in the Church viſible. Now the Name given to Chriſt was the ſame which was foredeclared by the Angel, as appointed by God, and it was, *JESUS*, which expreſſed and ſignified his Office, and repreſented the very end of his Circumciſion, being now conſecrated to be the great Redeemer and Saviour of his People; and ſo, the reaſon of it is explained, *Mat.* 1. 21.

USE. *WHAT great Encouragement then have we to go to Chriſt as our Surety and Undertaker?* When we conſider how this ſinleſs Saviour became obliged to the Law, and that by ſo ſolemn a Sacrament, and this could not be for himſelf, who had no ſin of his own to be cut away from him; it muſt needs then be

be for his People, as he was our Surety, and bound himſelf, to anſwer the Law, for all thoſe to whom he ſtood ſo related; and that is for all that believe in him. And now we look upon him, as having in his Circumciſion, taken the curſe upon himſelf, that ſo he might remove it away from us. How may this ſerve to ſtrengthen our Faith in him, and enable us to reſt the more quietly upon him, in a confident expectation of his performing all that for us, which is requiſite for our Salvation.

[MAY 12. 1696.]

SERMON *XCVII.*

2. TOUCHING *Chriſt's Oblation.* We have the Hiſtory of it, *Luk.* 2. 22, &c. And this was done in Conformity to the Ceremonial Law, occaſioned by the memorable Preſervation of the firſt born of *Iſrael*, when the Angel of God ſlew thoſe of the *Egyptians*; from which time God challenged them for His, *Exod.* 13. 12, 13. This Ceremony had a reſpect to Chriſt, and was to be fulfilled in Him, and he in Obedience complied with it. A few remarks may here ſuffice,

(1.) *CHRIST was Mary's Firſt born. Mat.* 1. *ult.* The Queſtion is not, whether ſhe had any more Children afterwards, nor is it in words recorded in the Goſpel that ſhe had; but he was the firſt according to the Law, i. e. the Male *that opened the womb*, which was the meaning of the Law, Exod. 13. 2. *Sanctify unto me all the firſt born, whatſoever openeth the womb among the children of Iſrael, both of man and of beaſt: it is mine.*

(2.) *HE was the only begotten of his Father by eternal Generation. John* 1. 14. Though God hath many Children by Adoption, even as many as are made Believers in Chriſt, *Joh.* 1. 13. Yet He had no other but Him by natural Generation.

(3.) *HE was the Firſt-born and Heir of every Creature. Col.* 1. 15. The reaſon why the firſt born Son of an Iſraelite, was by their Law to be made the Heir, and have a double Portion of his Fathers Eſtate, was a Ceremony, and typical of Chriſt, who is called the *Heir of all things*, Heb. 1. 2.

(4.) *HENCE he was in dignity and prehemineence above all the adopted Children of God. Col.* 1. 18. Believers are only Heirs by Chriſt, but he is Heir of himſelf. We are Children by vertue of his Sonſhip. We are married to him, and ſo come to be intereſſed in his Eſtate; but he hath an Original right to the Inheritance. *Rom.* 8. 16, 17.

(5.) *IT was typical that the firſt born was to have the Kingdom and Prieſthood:* That they were to be the heads of their Families, on whom all that belonged to them were to depend, and to whom they were ſubjected; and who had the right of Redemption belonging to them: Theſe, and whatſoever Inſtitutions of like nature, were to point at Him, who was to be the *Firſt-born*, the Prieſt, Prophet, and King of His Church, on whom all the People of God are to have their dependance for life, and all good. *Eph.* 1. 21, 22, 23.

(6.) *CHRIST's being Offered intimated, both that he was holy, and that he was to be the great Price of man's Redemption.* It was a Ceremonial expreſſion, to expreſs that the perſon was peculiarly ſanctified to God. There were many degrees of Ceremonial holineſs. All the Lord's People were holy; but ſome were more holy than others; and the firſt born had a ſpecial conſecration to him, expreſſed by his offering; and God took him inſtead of the whole Family; and the reſt were freed by them. And what did this ſignify, but that Chriſt was to be given in exchange for us, and ſo through him we ſhould be ſanctified to God? And therefore the preſenting of the firſt born was in lieu of all.

(7.) *THE quality alſo of the Oblation that was offered with him, did expreſs the low & debaſed condition he was in:* And ſignified how much he debaſed himſelf for our ſakes. There was a Law which indulged them that were poor, to preſent an oblation anſwerable, by which they declared themſelves to be ſuch. And this is therefore remarked about Chriſt, not for nothing, *Luk.* 2. 24. compare, *Lev* 12. 6, with 8.

USE. *THIS may help to direct our Faith in our dependance on Chriſt.* He was offered in our ſtead, and for us: Hereby giving us to underſtand, that he is the firſt born of the Family of the faithful. Let us then ſecure our title to him as our elder Brother; derive our Redemption from him; challenge our Heirſhip through him; fetch our freedom from him; and depend on his Atonement made for all his Brethren. Let us then ſeek his Interceſſion: Go to Him, whoſe the Prieſts Garments are, to plead for us. And remember, He was devoted to God from the beginning of his Life; offered in his Infancy: ſo that all his Life was for us. Let us then wait upon him for all the Grace, whereby we may ſerve God from our Youth.

3. THE laſt remarkable paſſage of his Infancy, is *His Flight into Ægypt, and return from thence.* We have the Hiſtory of it, *Mat.* 2. 13, &c. Touching which alſo, a few Obſervations may ſuffice,

(1.) *THE Time of it was in his Infancy:* At what time preciſely none can tell; but we find it was after his Oblation, for that was performed in the time and manner appointed. And it was doubtleſs before he was two Years old; for *Herod* would take care to comprehend him within his Slaughter. And thus Chriſt felt the ſorrows of a curſed Life in his Infancy; and before he can ſpeak he is perſecuted. He began, as well as ended, his Life with trouble. *Job*'s aſſertion concerning man, was verified in him, Job 14. 1, 2. *Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth alſo as a ſhadow, and continueth*

nueth not. And the reaſon was, becauſe he was both born, and lived for us, *Iſai.*9.6. The curſe of death fell upon us from the conception. Hence, Job 5. 7. *Yet man is born unto trouble, as the ſparks flie upward.* And the Son of God muſt take this upon him. And the thoughts of this may antedote our diſcontent at the early ſorrows we meet with here. The Yoke ſhould be the more eaſy to us, ſince Chriſt hath born the heavy end of it: and direct us to Him, to have all the ſorrows we are born to, ſanctifyed to us, by His; and if ſo, then may we pick Joy and Conſolation out of them. And have we enjoyed any comfort in our Child-hood, and not been expoſed to all miſchiefs; Let us aſcribe it to Him who bore all for us.

(2.) *THE Reaſon of this Flight. Herod* ſought his life, and he flies to ſave it, *Math.* 2. 13. *Herod* was at that time King of the Jews, and hearing of one born who bare that title; and fearing that he might dethrone him or his Succeſſor; ſeeks to cut him off, and ſo to defeat all the Prophecies of him, and make void the Word of God: He no ſooner hears that he is born, but he plots his death. The wicked World have ever been enemies to the Kingdom of Chriſt, and ſought to ſubvert it. If Men and Devils could have hindred it, our Salvation had never been wro't out by Chriſt. He hath ever been perſecuted either in his Perſon or Members. And it may teach us, what meaſures to expect from the World, and not to think it a ſtrange thing. Mar. 10. 24. *The diſciple is not above his maſter, nor the ſervant above his lord. Herod* perſecutes Chriſt, and ſeeks his life, and he flies to ſave it. It is ſometimes lawful to fly from Perſecutors, and get out of their reach. Chriſt as man, was under the Law, and he did this in obedience to the Sixth Command. It is true, we may, and ought to be willing, when called to it, to loſe our lives for Chriſt. But, as we ought not to ſave them ignobly; ſo neither to throw them away vain-gloriouſly. Chriſt had a work to do, and he reſerves himſelf for it. If God's Glory calls us to dye, we muſt not refuſe it; but if our life may be for his honour, we ſhould not be prodigal of it. Chriſt flies to ſave his life: The promiſe is ſo to be believed, as that we do not in confidence of it, neglect to uſe the ordinary appointed means for the obtaining of it. God had promiſed his Son to uphold, and carry him through his work, yet he doth not wait for a miracle in it, but ſerves God's Providence in flying away from the danger.

(3.) *THE Occaſion of this flight:* God's warning by an Angel, Mat. 2. 13. *And when they departed, behold, the Angel of the Lord appeared to Joſeph in a dream, ſaying, Ariſe, and take the young child, and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will ſeek the young child to deſtroy him.* God ſometimes fore-ſignifies to His the miſchief that is contriving againſt them, and affords them advantage and direction, for the eſcaping of it; and it is their duty to improve it for their ſafety. Sometimes he gives them no ſuch warnings; and then he lets them know that he will have them to glorify him by Suffering. We ought therefore to eye God's Providence in this regard.

(4.) *THE Place whether Chriſt fled:* ver. 14. *When he aroſe, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt.* And the reaſon, ver. 15. *And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken of the Lord by the Prophet, ſaying, Out of Egypt have I called my ſon.* This Text is obſcure, and hath perplexed Interpreters. Some think that the Prophecy did literally aim at him. But he that conſiders the Text and Context, (*Hoſ.* 11. *begin.*) will readily ſee this miſtake. And ſo others think the Prophet to ſpeak analogically; but that cannot ſtand: for the Evangeliſt plainly tells us that it was done, that this Prophecy *might be fulfilled.* Others therefore rightly judge, that this, as other Prophetical Scriptures, hath, though not a double, yet a compound ſenſe, having a reſpect both to the Type and Antetype: and to be accompliſhed more darkly in the one, more illuſtriouſly in the other. It became Chriſt to accompliſh all the Old-Teſtament Types; and the Evangeliſt to reduce the obſervable paſſages of his Life to thoſe Types; thereby to make it appear that he was the Meſſiah, in whom theſe were accompliſhed. Here obſerve;

[1.] *ISRAELS bondage in Egypt repreſented the ſpiritual bondage of all mankind under the Curſe.* Their ſervitude expreſſed the doleful ſervitude of man by nature, under the hand of cruel task maſters. Hence their ſpiritual deliverance is thus typically ſet forth, Exod. 20. 2. *I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the houſe of bondage.*

[2.] *CHRIST therefore was to deſcend into this ſpiritual Egypt to fetch his People from thence.* And this he was to do, by taking their place; not in reſpect of ſin, but of thoſe ſorrows which their ſin had procured them; which he was to undergo, by *being made a curſe* for them, *Gal.* 3. 13.

[3.] THE Type being applyed by the Prophet to Chriſt, He *not only myſtically accompliſhed it* in his whole ſtate of Humiliation, *but literally alſo*, to give one more proof that he was the Meſſiah; being the Perſon who was the Antetype of the Prophecy.

[4.] HENCE, *by this it appeared, that all that concerned Iſrael litterally, was to be fulfilled in him myſtically.* And here,

1. *ISRAEL went down freely into Egypt.* He was not forced; to ſhew how man of his own accord freely caſt himſelf into a ſtate of ſin and miſery. God compelled him not, the Devil forced him not, but it was his own act. *Hoſ.* 13. 9. And Chriſt went freely down into Egypt, it was a voluntary act; to ſignify, that of his own accord, without compulſion, He took upon him the miſery he underwent,

to deliver us from that which we had voluntarily hurried our ſelves into. *Joh.* 10.17,18.

2. *ALL Iſraels ſufferings in Egypt ſhadowed the miſeries that our ſin had merited; ſo alſo of what Chriſt was to ſuffer.* And he went down to Egypt to ratify this, that he was ſo to ſuffer: that he was to be a man of ſorrow, and acquainted with grief, that we, who were in bondage, might be brought out of thraldom.

3. *AS Iſrael after a time of bondage, were* in the fulneſs of time, *brought out of Egypt* from the houſe of Servants; *ſo Chriſt after a whiles tarriance, came up again*, to ſignify, that after he had Suffered for us, he ſhould overcome hell and death; be delivered from the curſe, give us freedom, and become the Captain of our Salvation; leading us to the land of Promiſe. And let all thoſe who have experienced deliverance from the tyranny of Sin and Satan, acknowledge it to Chriſt. As God ſent *Moſes* to them to conduct them; ſo he hath ſent his Son to us, to ranſom us, and powerfully to deliver us. Aſcribe it then wholly to him, and give him the whole praiſe of it.

(5.) *HEROD's Cruelty againſt the poor Infants of Bethlehem.* ver.16. *Then Herod when he ſaw that he was mocked of the wiſe men, was exceeding wroth, and ſent forth, and ſlew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coaſts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had enquired of the wiſe men. Herod* is diſappointed of his expectation: and now that he may make ſure work, he murders all the Children, that came within the compaſs of the place where Chriſt was to be born, hoping thus not to miſs of his prey; though God had prevented him. No carnal policy can outdo, or antedate the wiſdom and care of God, for the protection of his Children. No doubt but theſe Infants were Martyrs. they died in Chriſt's Cauſe, and for his ſake, and he ſuffered in them. *Herod* ſought not their death directly, but his, elſe they might have lived. And they that will be for Chriſt, may learn what to meet with from the World. However, here is our conſolation, if Chriſt ſuffers in us, we ſhall reign with him.

II. *NOW let us proceed to obſerve how Chriſt humbled himſelf in his private Life, in the more ripe Age of it.* And that is mainly inſtanced in the ſubjection that he yielded to his Parents, of which, Luk. 2. 51. *And he went down with them; and came to Nazareth, and was ſubject unto them.* And the Employment or Calling which he followed, of which, Mar. 6. 3. *Is not this the Carpenter*, &c. We may make a few glances on each of theſe.

1. *TOUCHING Chriſt's Subjection to his Parents*, it is obſervable, that the word uſed to expreſs it, ſignifies, to be ordered by, or under another; or a yielding ones outward actions to the government and command of another. And it implies theſe things,

(1.) *A cordial acknowledgment, of the Superiority and Authority of another, to command us, and our duty to obey him.* Thus Jeſus Chriſt acknowledged the Authority of *Joſeph* and *Mary*: that they bare the relation of Parents to him, and accordingly were inveſted with power to order his works and affairs. The *Fifth* Command enjoyns this, and he diſcovered his approbation of the equity and righteouſneſs of that Command.

(2.) *A reverend and high eſteem of them in the heart, as Superiors.* There is no true ſubjection, but what begins at, and proceeds from an hearty eſteem. Outward Compliments without it, are but mockery. Jeſus Chriſt did count them by vertue of that relation, and God's Command, to deſerve all honourable eſteem from him as a Child; He therefore feared them, and placed an high account upon them.

(3.) *A reſpectful carriage or deportment, and that both in words and geſtures.* To riſe up before them, to bow the body to them; to ſpeak to them with all ſubmiſſion; to give them their titles, and keep a due diſtance. Thus did Chriſt to his Parents; he neglected no duty to them, and therefore not this.

(4.) *AN obeying and not reſiſting of their Commands.* The Subject takes not his own meaſures, what, when, and how to do, but receives them all from his Superiour; comes and goes at his bidding; and when he *ſaith do this, he doth it*, Mat. 8. 9. He doth not controle, and diſpute, much leſs refuſe; but what he is commanded, he doth it willingly, readily, chearfully; and ſo did Chriſt. Now the ground or reaſon of this ſubjection, or why Chriſt thus did, is,

[1.] *PRINCIPAL; that he might fulfil this part of righteouſneſs, and ſo merit for us.* Life was promiſed at firſt on account of perfect obedience, and that is not perfect except it be univerſal. That to Parents is one of thoſe duties to which the promiſe of life is made. We are all guilty of breaking this Command, as well as any other; He therefore obeyed that we might have that article in the Covenant for us. Chriſt in his private life was a publick Perſon, acting the part of a Redeemer.

[2.] *SUBORDINATE; that he might herein ſet a pattern to Children for their imitation.* They greatly err, who think that Chriſt was to be only a pattern: Wo to us if he be no more. And they deceive themſelves who think to have this benefit by Chriſt, and will not imitate him; for he hath bidden us to *learn* of him, *Mat.* 11. 29.

NOW the eminent humility of Chriſt in this part of his Life, will appear in theſe things,

1. *THE greatneſs and glorioufneſs of his Perſon.* He was the Eternal Son of God, the Lord of the Creation: He was *David's* Lord; and the Saviour of his Parents. And yet having taken the relation of a Child upon him, he freely ſtoops to the condition: and never was a Child in this world, ſo willingly and obſequiouſly ſubject as he.

2. *THE*

2. *THE meanness and poverty of his Parents.* They lived in a low and contemptible part, were very poor, and despised by others, who looked on them with contempt But he considered not what they were to the World, but what they were to Him. Had they been Princes and great Potentates, he could not have shewn them greater respect, nor paid them more officious service. A Father and a Mother, are and ought to be the same to a Child, let their outward condition in the World be what it will: So did Christ esteem and practice.

3. *THE great wisdom and understanding he had to direct his own affairs; and be ruled by his own discretion.* Truly Christ could have instructed his Parents, and better have told them what was fitting to be done, than they him. It is observable that this History is prefaced with one, wherein we are told, how he disputed with the Doctors, and astonished them with his wisdom, *Luk.* 2. 46, 47. And yet for all that, he practised this submission. He was perfect in Grace, and full of Wisdom; whereas his Parents were subject to sinful infirmities, indiscretions, and passions; and yet he bears with all that, and takes not on him to be their controuler, or to laugh at and despise their lawful Authority over him, but readily complies with them. Hence,

1. *HOW severely will this condemn disobedient Children another Day?* As soon as they grow up a little, they grow weary of Family Government, and shake off filial subjection, &c. How will this president in Christ rise up against them, who dwelt with, and was subject to his Parents, till he was Thirty Years old, and was called to his publick Life.

2. *LET Children then prize and imitate this Pattern.* Be not ashamed of your Parents, nor rebel against their Authority; let them be what they will, yet you owe them subjection for Conscience sake. Remember, none had more to have said against it then Christ had, and yet he was obedient to God in it.

3. *LET Children then go to Christ to have their Youth sanctified, and their failings in their duty to Parents covered.* There is not the most obedient Child living, but if God should enter into Judgment with him for Sins of this kind, he would be condemned. How undutiful have you been? And there is a dreadful curse against you for it. Get then a title to this Obedience of Christ too, that it may answer for you; And go to Him for Grace to help you to live as he did; and seek your Acceptance with God in Him.

2. *TOUCHING the Employment or Calling which Christ followed in his private Life.* It is certain that he did not spend that time idlely, but in following the labour of a particular Calling. And this is intimated in his being subject to his Parents; it being one part of filial subjection to attend the Calling which his Parents appoint him to. And that he did so is evident in that they called him *the Carpenter*, Mar. 6. 3. which was *Joseph's* own Calling; and Christ under him served in it. Thus the Lord of the whole Creation humbled himself to a private, mean & despicable Employment. Here observe,

1. *THAT inasmuch, as God's People here, are some in a publick, some in a private Capacity, Christ to shew his approbation of both, took each of them upon him.* He would lead a private life, that none of his might think it much to live so after him; and he would enter into a publick Employment, because he was thereto called of God. And thus hath he sanctifyed each condition to those who believe in him; and teacheth us from hence, that God may be, and is to be served in every state.

2. THAT in as much, as Christ needed not man's teaching, to fit and prepare him for his publick work, and the Law under which he was made forbidding him to spend his time in idleness, *He therefore took upon him a lawful Calling, and laboured in it.* Labour in some honest Calling is part of man's duty; commanded in the moral Law. Our first Parents in the state of innocency came under it, and it was commanded to all, 1 *Thes* 4. 11. Men in publick place, are to follow a publick Employment; Men in a private state, are to follow a private Calling Yea, the constitution of man's nature calls for it: habits are made for acts. Why was man made capable of Employment, with understanding of mind, and fitted organs of body, but that he should exercise himself in some vocation, and therein serve God? Thus then Christ obeyed God, and answered the tenor of the first Covenant.

3. *LABOUR is necessary in subserviency to God's Providence, for the supplying our selves with an outward Subsistence.* God doth not ordinarily feed men with miracles. He hath obliged man to this way of living, and made a connection in the precept between these two. Christ therefore, though the Owner of all things, humbleth himself to live by his hands; and thus he obeyed the Law, depending on God in his own way, joyning faith with obedience.

4. *LABOUR, with sweat and weariness, is a part of the Curse which Sin hath subjected fallen man unto, and brought upon all those Employments, wherein he is to exercise himself in getting his livelihood. Gen.* 3. 19. So that fallen man cannot labour hard without irksomeness and pain. And Jesus Christ being made a curse for us, took on him, and bare this part of the curse also for us. He took on him a Calling, though honest, yet painful; this was a great point of humility in him; He was the Lord of Glory, whose were the beasts on a thousand hills, who could multiply bread with a word, to feed thousands; to work hard for a livelihood, and have nothing to subsist on, but what he got by industry; for him who made the World with a word, to sweat in a Carpenters Calling, to earn himself food and raiment.

5. *IT was a part of the duty of Children to*

take care for their Parents in their age & need. Christ's Parents were now grown into years, and were poor; and he laboured for them, and their relief. And this is one requital which the Law requires to be paid to Parents for their love and care expreſt to us in our Infancy and Childhood, 1 *Tim.* 5. 4. Hence,

1. *LEARN we of Christ.* Though he bare the curſe, yet he took not off the obligation from us: He did not labour to procure leave for us to live in idleneſs; but procured that we might do it honourably and comfortably. Nor need any be aſhamed of a lawful Calling, ſince Chriſt hath honoured it by his example. Nor do they live as he did, who abandon themſelves to idleneſs.

2. *LET this direct and encourage us, when we find the weight and difficulty of a laborious life, to repair to Christ:* As to ſanctify our labours by his, and help us to glorify God by them, ſo to mitigate the ſorrows of them, by removing the curſe from them, and help us to ſerve our Generation cheariully, waiting upon him to help us in our work; and ſo conduct us, as that when a ſhort & weary life is ended, we may, with him, reſt from all our labours, and have all our ſweat, and dult, and toil taken from us; having all our miſtakes and follies in our whole buſineſs pardoned through him, who did all things well: that ſo, in the meaneſt ſervice, we may be accepted through the Beloved.

[JUNE 9. 1696.]

SERMON *XCVIII.*

II. WE now proceed to conſider Chriſt *in His Publick Courſe*; and take notice how he humbled himſelf in that. In the former he lay hid in obſcurity; and it was known to but a few, that this was he that was to redeem Iſrael. He was doing for us, whiles there was no notice taken of him: but at length he did more openly manifeſt himſelf to be the Meſſiah. Having lived till Thirty Years of age in a private Calling, and retired; He now ſtept forth into the World, in the work of his Miniſtry. And it was a great wonder that ſo Serene a Majeſty ſhould be ſo long in the World, and yet lie hid from the World, under a diſguiſe. In the conſideration of this, there are three things worthy remark, 1. *His Entrance upon*, 2. *His Progreſs or Courſe in*, 3. *The Concluſion of His Publick Life.* We may make ſome Obſervations on each of them.

1. TOUCHING his *Initiation, or Entrance upon His Publick Adminiſtration.* It was meet that he who was to Officiate in ſo ſolemn an affair, ſhould with ſuitable Solemnity be introduced into it. And referring to this, the Goſpel gives us an account of two things, viz. *His Baptiſm* and *His Temptation.* In the former he was with great State inaugurated, in his publick Service, or declared to be the accepted of God. In the other he was proved, and his eminent fitneſs for his work made manifeſt. Let us make ſome brief Remarks on them.

1. TOUCHING *His Baptiſm*; we have three Evangeliſts taking notice of it particularly; from which Records we may obſerve,

1. *THE Baptiſm it ſelf:* Of which take this Aſſertion; It was a part of Chriſt's Humiliation, by which upon his entrance into his publick Miniſtry, he ſignally ſubjected himſelf to the Law of God for our ſakes. It may be ſaid, what need had he to be Baptized, who had no pollution on him, and therefore had no occaſion to be waſhed? and becauſe he wanted not the thing ſignified, the ſign was ſuperfluous. But it is to be replied, that there were divers other reaſons for his Baptiſm, viz.

(1.) *IT belonged properly to his ſtate of Humiliation to be Baptized.* In it he ſubjected himſelf to the Law for us. Now man owed obedience to the whole Law of God; when therefore Baptiſm became an Ordinance of God, it obliged them to whom it was ſo declared, to conform to it. Chriſt therefore was under a moral tie of ſubmitting to it. By the Second Command we are obliged to obſerve, and keep all God's Inſtitutions, as he ſhall at any time reveal his mind to us in them. And there is this difference between natural and inſtituted Worſhip, the former binds always, but the latter is alterable, according as God pleaſeth to change the mode of Worſhip appointed. Now Baptiſm became an Inſtitution at this time: *John* Baptiſt being inſpired to divulge and adminiſter it. And ſo it became the duty of his viſible People to receive it: and it became a part of the righteouſneſs required of man. He therefore gives this reaſon why he would be Baptized, Mat. 3. 15. *And Jeſus anſwering, ſaid unto him, Suffer it to be ſo now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteouſneſs. Then he ſuffered him.*

(2.) *THE Baptiſm of Chriſt was a ſign ſuitable to his Office, and ſo be ſuitably received it.* He was, in the compleating of the Great Work of man's Redemption both to die, and riſe again: And he took a ſpecimen of both here. The Apoſtle intimates that in our Baptiſm we have communion with Chriſt, both in his Death and Reſurrection, *Col.* 2. 12. Chriſt therefore in it, received a Seal of it in himſelf; i.e. He did now ſignificantly lay down his life, and re-aſſume it. He went into the waters, intimating, that he was to expoſe himſelf to the wrath of God, the floods whereof were to encompaſs him: And he came up again out of the waters, to ſignify, that he ſhould be freed from the wrath of God, having ſatisfyed it with an infinite efficacy.

(3.) *BAPTISM is a Sacrament, not only of Sanctification, but of Juſtification too.* Hence, Circumciſion which was of the ſame import, is

is ſaid ſo to be, *Rom.* 4. 11. Hence *John Preached Baptiſm* for pardon, *Mar.* 1.4. Water imports the Blood of Chriſt, which not only waſheth off the ſtain, but alſo the guilt of Sin. Chriſt's Blood is a juſtifying, as well as ſanctifying Blood, and being applied to us, delivers us from condemnation. And therefore for this reaſon alſo was Chriſt Baptized, to ſignify, that though he were no ſinner by real inheſion, yet, ſeeing he bare the imputation of ſin, he muſt expiate it by his Blood; and in that way be juſtifyed as our Surety. On this account he is ſaid to be *made ſin for us*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. This he cleared himſelf of by dying, and thereby ſatisfying Juſtice; and riſing again when he had ſo done. Rom. 4. 25. *Who was delivered for our offences, and was raiſed again for our juſtification.*

(4.) *CHRIST was Baptized, to declare that he was the bond of both Covenants*: i. e. the Law Covenant, and that of the Goſpel. For though they are eſſentially but one, yet they are called two, the New and the Old, from the different mode of their diſpenſation. Chriſt dated and finiſhed the Old-Teſtament diſpenſation, by fulfilling it in himſelf; hence he was Circumciſed: He gave being to the New Teſtament, and therefore was Baptized: to ſhew that both meet and center in him as the common term. The Apoſtle therefore puts them both together as meeting in him, *Col.* 2. 11; 12.

(5.) *CHRIST was Baptized to ſhew that he and his People are bound up together in one Covenant.* Baptiſm is a Seal of the Covenant of Grace, which God hath made with his People; and it Seals up all the Grace of that Covenant to them. Now Chriſt is Mediator and Surety in this Covenant. So that the People of God are not looked on ſeperately from him in it, but joyntly with him. Hence it was meet, that he who was Head of the Covenant, ſhould have a ſacred, ſolemn and viſible Seal and Confirmation of it given him, in the ſame way, wherein it is given to his; and that was by his Baptiſm.

2. *THIS Baptiſm of his was accompanied with an eminent call of him to, and confirmation of him in his publick Miniſtry.* So in *Mat.* 2. 16, 17. And there are three notable paſſages in it,

(1.) *THE opening of the Heavens to him.* His Baptiſm being to introduce him into his publick Work, now the Heavens do viſibly open to him; which did ſignally intimate, that he was indeed the Great High Prieſt who was to enter into the Holy of Holies; not that which was ceremonially ſo, in the earthly Temple, but that which was typified by it, viz. the place of Glory, which readily openeth to him. Intimating alſo, that he was a great Prophet, to whom the ſecrets of Heaven ſhould be revealed, and that was to be more fully acquainted with the ſecrets of his Father; and that he was the mighty King to whom the doors of the glorious Palace ſhould open, and entertain him upon his Throne.

(2.) *THE deſcent alſo of the Holy Ghoſt viſibly in likeneſs of a Dove, had ſpecial intimations in it.* It confirmed him to be the true Meſſiah; having been prædicted to *John*, and given to him by revelation, to be a token by which he ſhould know him on his open manifeſting of himſelf. Joh. 1. 33. *And I knew him not: but he that ſent me to baptize with water, the ſame ſaid unto me, Upon whom thou ſhalt ſee the Spirit deſcending, and remaining on him, the ſame is he which baptizeth with the holy Ghoſt.* The Spirit's coming on him alſo manifeſted the fulneſs of the Spirit; or thoſe unmeaſurable Graces which were to be conferred on him, to furniſh him for the wonderful diſcharge of all his Offices; it therefore not only *deſcended* but *abode on him*, Joh. 1. 32. We therefore read of him, Joh. 3. 34. *For God giveth not the ſpirit by meaſure unto him.* The form alſo which the Spirit repreſented, viz. of a Dove, was to ſignify that meek and lowly frame of ſpirit, whereby he was abundantly fitted to attend the whole work of his Humiliation. Hence that, Math. 11. 29. *For I am meek and lowly in heart.* And more ſpecially to ſubmit himſelf ſilently and quietly, as a ſpotleſs Sacrifice, to atone the Juſtice of God for our ſins, *Iſai.* 53. 7.

(3.) *THE audible Voice from Heaven, was a further illuſtrious divine Teſtimony to his Mediatorſhip.* God gave open approbation to him with reſpect to the work he had undertaken. He proclaims him to be his Son, in whom was his delight. He was his beloved Eternally; and his preſent undertaking gave to him great content; for looking upon him, as now engaged in the great work of Redemption, ſtanding in our room, to do and dye for us, he takes up fully ſatisfyed in it, as that in which was his delight. When therefore there was afterwards, a like voice heard by the Diſciples that were with him in the Mount, it is added, *hear him*, Mat. 17. 5. in which God required all obedience to him from his people.

Use. I. *LEARN we hence a leſſon of Thankfulneſs to Chriſt for this paſſage in his Humiliation.* And indeed we are very deeply beholden to him for it: a great part of our Comfort is to be derived from it. Baptiſm is a ſacred Seal in which we are ſolemnly engaged in Covenant to the Lord, to be his, and to ſerve him in holineſs of life all our days. But alas! how far do we fall behind in fulfilling our Covenant Obligations? And how much of trouble would the thoughts of our Baptiſm bring upon us, were it not that Chriſt had declared himſelf to be the Surety of this Covenant, to be bound up with us in his Baptiſm? This therefore affords matter to encourage and ſtrengthen our Faith in him, that if we are truly in him, he will anſwer for our Covenant failings; and if we have real faith in him, we may thus depend upon him for it, and plead his Baptiſm for this end.

Use. II. *LET this then direct us to Chriſt, to ask of him his Spirit and Grace, whereby our*

Baptiſm

Baptism may be sanctified to us, and become effectual to the great end for which it was appointed. It was the speech which *John* directed to them who came to his Baptism, Math. 3. 11. *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me, is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the holy Ghost, and with fire.* Hereby pointing and directing them from this to that, not daring to rest in the bare outward Ordinance, which of it self will not save any; but to seek after that which is represented and sealed in it. Baptism it self is but a sign and a seal, a new Testament Ceremony, and therefore saves none *ex opere operato*, but is only a medium, or an outward help to Salvation. And they that rest in means, and go not to Christ in them, will miss of the end. Let us then address him, and beg of him, that as we have been signally baptized into him, with the Baptism of Water, so we may receive Grace from him, by the application of his Blood, to cleanse us from sin, to crucify sin in us, and us to the World, and to raise us up to holiness, and newness of life; and encourage ourselves to this, by his being Baptized, as the Mediator of the Covenant, in which all this Grace is exhibited.

Use. III. *LEARN we hence not to despise the Ordinance of Baptism.* Had it not been an Ordinance of Divine Institution, Christ would not have reckoned it for a part of that righteousness that he must fulfil: And say, that in and of it self it hath no efficacy to produce the thing signified by it, and unto which it is appointed, yet if God requires of us to obey him in it, and wait on him for his Grace in this way, it is fit that he should be obeyed by us: they therefore that slight and contemn it, pretend to be wiser than Christ; and by despising one of God's appointments, do expose themselves to his righteous displeasure. It should then put us upon it to honour this Ordinance, because Jesus Christ honoured it by his own Example.

2. WE now proceed to the other thing observable upon *Christ's Entrance into His Publick Ministry*, and that is *His Temptation.* This also is particularly recorded by the same Three Evangelists. And this followed presently upon his Baptism: though it is uncertain how long, there being some expressions, in *Joh.* 1. which seem to intimate that there were some days interposed. See *ver.* 29, 35. The History of this Temptation is largely recorded, in *Math.* 4. *begin.* which I shall not commorate upon. Only we may in general remark, that it also belongs to His Humiliation; and no doubt but Christ deeply abased himself, in being exposed to Temptation; and it was for our sakes. More particularly let us observe,

1. *THE Temptation it self.* In which consider,

1. *WHEN it was*; viz. as was observed, *soon after his Baptism.* And between that and his entring upon his publick Ministry. *Math.* 4. 1. with 12. *Luk.* 4. *begin.* When God calls any of His forth to any eminent Service for him, He is won't to prepare them for it by some eminent Trials. Christ was thus proved. And He doth it, as for the exercise of their Graces, so for their encouragement in their work, by experiencing his help in such an hour.

2. *THE Place where this Temptation commenced*: in the *Wilderness*; a place of Solitariness, where he was sequestred from the company of Men, and without the ordinary supply of Life; and conversant among the Beasts of prey: all of which are remarked by the Evangelists. So that it was a place giving all advantage for the Temptation. God sometimes brings his Children into, and Satan ever waits to take the advantage of such a Condition, wherein they meet with such things, as give scope for Temptation to be urged upon them. And therefore, when Sovereign Providence doth so expose, we may expect the Adversary, and ought to prepare to be assaulted by him.

3. *THE leading Cause of this Temptation*: The Spirit driveth him; or he was led by the Spirit into the Wilderness: i. e. it was by the instigation of the Spirit, who would thus have him proved, and give a proof of his strength. His call therefore was clear; He did not thrust himself upon it, but God called him to it. And it tells us, that as we are not to thrust our selves into the way of Temptation on choice, and without a call, lest we so provoke God to desert us; so if God at any time call His to it, they are not to refuse or shun it, but rely on him for his help, who when he calls his on, will bring them off with victory.

4. *THE Author of the Temptation*; the *Devil.* (*Mat.* 4. 1.) And is on that account eminently called *the Tempter*, in, *ver.* 3. He is the old enemy of mankind; the most subtile and daring one to assault us. God makes use of him in his permissive Providence; and yet he is not the less to blame. And if we are at any time used to tempt others to sin, though God suffers it to be so, yet we may know who it is that sets us on work, and that is no other than the Devil.

5. *THE Temptation it self:* which had three main branches in it, 1. *To distrust in God, and using indirect means to help himself.* 2. *Presumption in reliance on God.* 3. *To Idolatry.* Satan will assault us every way. He will try one, and if he fail there, he will essay on the other hand; and he will be growing in his Temptations.

6. *THE Arguments used by the Tempter*: two of them are pretended to be fetch'd from Scripture, and the third is by a Temptation from the World. Satan tempt us from the present occasions first. He usually begins with abused Scripture; and he improves the World as the great Snare, with which

he

he would entangle us. We ought therefore to be wary in all theſe reſpects.

7. *HOW Chriſt repulſed him*, viz. by the Word of God rightly applied. We are not to be afraid of uſing the Scripture, becauſe Satan and his Inſtruments abuſe it. Our beſt Artillery, whether to defend our ſelves from the hurt of temptation, or repulſe the Adverſary from tempting us, is the Word of God. Thence we muſt fetch our ſtrength and ſecurity.

8. *THE duration of the Temptation*, viz. *Forty days*. For though, in *Mat.* 4. it is ſaid that after the end of *forty days*, *the tempter came*; yet in *Luk.*4.2. He is ſaid to be *tempted* the *forty days*, i. e. Satan was offering all the while, though the fierceneſs of the onſet was reſerved till then, when the advantage was at the height. It is not enough to withſtand a ſhock or two, but it is the glory of God's Children, with Chriſt, to bear the repeated onſets of the Adverſary, and to perſevere, though the trial be of long continuance. But,

2. *WE may here enquire into the Reaſon, why our Saviour was thus tempted at his very Entrance upon his Publick Work; or the ſeaſonableneſs of the temptation which he was expoſed unto.* And in *general* it may be this, viz. It was that he might hereby give proof and evidence that he was a Perſon, every way compleatly fitted, and fully endowed with ability, to go through the great Work which lay upon him; and ſo is an Object of Truſt for all his People to rely upon. But a little more *particularly*, obſerve,

1. *THAT Adam & Chriſt were two publick Perſons, acting on the account of many.* Into their hands was credited and depoſited, the whole ſtock of thoſe whoſe Perſons they repreſented, and they were all to ſtand or to fall, in and with them. Hence they had each of them their furniture, i.e. all that Grace in ſtock, the right management whereof might be, for the happineſs of theirs: They had each of them, all habitual Sanctification, and a Covenant which they were to fulfil; in the fulfilment whereof they were to ſecure, not only their own happineſs, but the happineſs of theirs too. Hence that expreſſion, 1 Cor. 15.22. *For as in Adam all die, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.*

2. *THE firſt Adam ſtanding in his innocency in the midſt of all his perfections, and under the awful tie of a ſolemn Covenant, is ſet upon, aſſaulted, and tempted by Satan, and overcome without much ado*: And hereby he loſeth all that ſtock and treaſure, becomes a bankrupt, undoes himſelf and his whole race, forfeits the happineſs he ſhould have ſecured for them, and procures all miſeries for them. *Rom.* 5. 12.

3. IT *was therefore requiſite, that he who would go through the work of Man's Redemption effectually, and manage the buſineſs of his Salvation to purpoſe, muſt be ſtronger than the firſt Adam, leſt, if otherwiſe, the Work ſhould fail in his hand, and be loſt in his undertaking.* Poor man would thereby be doubly loſt. Had Chriſt failed, as Adam did, man's hopes had been gone for ever. There was but this one way left. *Act.* 4.12. And had that failed, Mankind had been undone.

4. *HENCE it was meet that Chriſt ſhould be tempted & tried, to make it appear that he was ſtronger than the firſt Adam.* He was therefore taken at all diſadvantages; not in the Garden, but in the Wilderneſs; not with a Companion, but without all Society but that of wild beaſts; not in fulneſs, but in emptineſs and hunger; and here he wreſtles with Satan, is tempted with continued and repeated aſſaults, and yet gets the day; conquers his proud enemy, holds out to the laſt, let him take all his advantages, and yet overcomes him, and drives him away with diſgrace. This lets the People of God underſtand, that they have a better Head, and ſtand under a better Covenant by vertue of their Head, then mankind did at the firſt.

5. *THE Holy Spirit deſcended on Chriſt in his Baptiſm; and it was fit that his furniture ſhould be proved.* And for this he conflicts with Satan the grand enemy, and lets him find how eaſily he can foil him. Little tho't the Devil that he had ſo ſtrong an one to grapple withal. But he is driven out of the field, and Chriſt beats him with his own ſtaff. And thus there is an eminent proof given of the difference between Grace put into the hands of a mutable creature, and Grace under the abiding preſence, and conſtant aſſiſtance of the Spirit of God.

6. *SATAN is our grand enemy; and Chriſt did this as our Redeemer.* He fought this battle for us, and overcame the Devil on our account; and hereby made it appear effectually, that he was one mighty to ſave. And ſo by this act of his, he gave a notable proof how fit and able he is to ſuccour us, when we are tempted. For, becauſe he hath had experience of Temptation, and ſo cannot but pity us under thoſe furious aſſaults which are made upon us. *Heb.* 4. 15. And *able*, becauſe he hath conquered him in the open field. Heb. 2. 18. *For in that he hath ſuffered, being tempted, he is able to ſuccour them that are tempted.*

USE I. *LEARN hence, God's admirable love to, and care for his People, in providing them with ſuch a Saviour.* Herein appears one principal excellency of the new Covenant, in the approved ſufficiency of *Him* who was the Head and Mediator of it: One whom neither force nor flattery could beat out of his work, or allure into a ſnare. It was as great, and in ſome reſpect a greater Queſtion that lay at the ſtake, when Chriſt and the Devil were encountring, then when Satan tempted the firſt Adam; *there* was a very great hazard, but that was reparable by a new way, that infinite wiſdom had contrived; but *here* was the ſame thing, viz. the eternal welfare of man, and at the laſt caſt: which if now loſt, it was no more reparable. But herein

herein God teſtifyed his great love, in that the ſecond Adam was not only furniſhed with all created Grace, as he was Man, but being the Eternal Son of God, and receiving the abiding preſence, of the ever-bleſſed Spirit with his Humanity, He is carried thorough the battle, unſhaken and perfectly victorious; and therein gave evidence, that the Work could not fail in his conduct, but be compleatly finiſhed to God's Eternal Praiſe.

USE. II. *THIS may direct and encourage the Children of God, to repair to Chriſt for help in all their Temptations.* Do not conclude that you are none of his becauſe you are ſo tempted. The Son of God, though without ſin, yet met with Temptation. And you may expect to find compaſſion from him, who is ſuch an High Prieſt as is experienced, and knows what it is to be furiouſly aſſaulted, and is tender of his tempted ones. He therefore cannot relinquiſh his People in the fight, but muſt needs come in for their help: and you may rely upon him for good ſucceſs in his ſuccour. When you conſider the Tempter in the moſt formidable thoughts, as principalities, and powers, as ſubtle and potent, then look upon Chriſt as One that is too wiſe and ſtrong for all that can oppoſe you; who diſcovers all the depths, and diſſolves all the counſels of this great Adverſary. The Devil did his worſt when he tempted Chriſt, and yet prevailed nothing. Believe then in Him, and whenſoever you find any aſſaults made upon you, and eſſays uſed to draw you into ſin, take heed that you do not rely on your own ſtrength; but betake your ſelves forthwith to him, engage his ſtrength with you; and fighting by faith under his banners, you ſhall be made to be more then Conquerours.

[JULY 7. 1696.]

SERMON *XCIX.*

2. *WE proceed to conſider Chriſt's Progreſs in his Publick Life:* Which he entred upon immediately after his Temptation; and continued in unto his Death: Of which I ſhall not here give a particular account, but refer you to the Hiſtory of the Four Evangeliſts, which is mainly taken up in making of remarks on the more obſervable paſſages of it. I ſhall only more generally gather up the ſubſtance of what is therein contained, in which he both expreſſed his Humiliation, and made it to appear that he was the Redeemer of men. And here,

1. *THE mean and low part which Chriſt bare voluntarily for our ſakes, is worthy our obſervation.* As he was born obſcurely, and brought up meanly, ſo he paſt through the World, as one empty of all the good things of it; and he did it voluntarily, was not forced to it. He was the eternal Son of God whiles he lay under this diſguiſe: And he did it for our ſake, becauſe ſin had robbed us of all. We had forfeited every benefit of life. And he ſtood for us: He was infinitely rich in himſelf, being the Lord of the World, and Heir of all things; but *he became poor*, that he might make us *rich*, 2 Cor 8.9. This debaſed ſtate of his, then was meritorious. So that herein he diſcovered his wonderful love to thoſe whom his Father had given him, in taking their deſerved meanneſs upon him, that they might ſhare in his fulneſs, who had loſt their right to all that is good, and merited to be ſtript out of all. Hence we find that he lived without an earthly eſtate, though all was his; and was maintained by the charity of others, who *miniſtred of their ſubſtance to him*, Luk 8.2,3. He lived without the Honours of the World; did not come forth among men in great pomp, as earthly Potentates are won't to do. He was not proclaimed with the ſound of Trumpet; nor did they cry before him, Bow the knee. He only took a few deſpiſed Fiſhermen, and Mechanicks into his company; and when once he would give a ſpecimen of his Glory, and how eaſily he could command all the Worlds reſpect; yet he did it with a great deal of meekneſs, and lowlineſs; as is obſerved, Mat. 21. 5. *Tell ye the daughter of Sion, behold, thy king cometh unto thee, meek, and ſitting upon an aſs, and a colt the foal of an aſs.* And that very Aſs was a borrowed one too. Yea, though a moſt glorious Perſonage, yet *he took on him the form of a Servant*, and became of *no reputation*, Phil.2.7. He was ſo far from being accommodated with ſtately Palaces, delectable Orchards and Gardens, and whatever things are the delight of Princes, that he had not ſo much as a poor Cottage, that he called his own, *Mat.* 8. 20. And this mean part he ſuſtained here in this World, that ſo he might entitle us to all the heavenly Riches, Glories, and Pleaſure: yea, that he might procure for us, a true right to all the comforts and conveniences that we enjoy in this life; thus ſharing with us in our curſed condition, that we might be fellow-heirs with him in his glorious one. And there are two leſſons we may learn hence,

1. *THAT a Perſon may be truly happy, without theſe things.* True Riches, Honours, and Pleaſures, are not to be valued according to this World, and the concerns of it. Jeſus Chriſt, though mean in this World, yet was, both rich and noble in himſelf; and was able to make many rich and noble. Let none then be diſcouraged at a low eſtate, and mean part in this World, or account themſelves really the worſe by reaſon of it. Nor let us look upon the people of God according to their outward garb, and breadth they bear in this World. They may be, *as poor, yet making many rich: as having nothing, and yet poſſeſſing all things*, 2 Cor. 6. 10. Nor let us think that Chriſt will have any the leſs eſteem of us. What ſaith he? Jam. 2. 5.

Hearken

Hearken my beloved brethren, Hath not God choſen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promiſed to them that love him?

2. *LEARN hence that Chriſt's poverty and meaneſs is no rule, or example for the vowed poverty of Papiſts, whom they call Mendicants:* Who profeſs to renounce all intereſt in the World, to live upon alms, and practice beggery. For, beſides their horrible diſſimulation on that account, let us obſerve,

(1.) *THAT Chriſt's mean condition was extraordinary.* It was not a part of that Obedience which meerly as a man under the law, he owed to the moral precepts of it; for there is no ſuch ſtate required of man in the moral law; but it belonged to his mediatorial function, as he ſtood for us, and was to bear the penalty of our ſins; it is therefore ſaid to be *for our ſakes*, 2 Cor. 8. 9. And what was properly mediatorial, is not imitable by us, ſince he alone was to be Mediator. 1 *Tim.* 2. 5.

(2.) *THAT Chriſt's low condition was without beggary.* Though he was poor, yet he did not go about begging of Alms. He was indeed *miniſtred unto*, and received of what was freely contributed to him, but he did not devote himſelf unto a mendicant life; nor did he need it.

(3.) *THAT Chriſt has procured for us a right to the things of this life.* He not only purchaſed Grace and Glory for us, but alſo reſtored to us the title which we had forfeited. *All things* therefore are *given* with him, *Rom.* 8. 32. The *promiſe* therefore, which is rooted in him, contains theſe things as well as the other, 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. And through him *all things* come to be ours, 1 *Cor.* 3. 21, 22. We ought then to acknowledge him in what we have of comfort, of credit, in this life; and be thankful to God for Chriſt, through whoſe purchaſe they derive to us.

2. *THE buſineß which Chriſt did in this part or condition:* i.e. in ſum, *He went about doing good.* So *Peter* expreſſed it, *Act.* 10. 38. Jeſus Chriſt came into a World that was grown a Hoſpital of miſerable creatures, that did every way ſtand in need of having kindneſs ſhewn them; and he carried himſelf in it as a great Benefactor, at all times ready to ſhew them his ſeaſonable ſuccour: And there was never ſuch an one to be heard of, before or ſince: Whether we conſider,

1. *THE bowels of compaſſion that were in him towards miſerable men.* See, *Math.* 9. 36. Their miſery moved his pity; and the very ſight of it ſo wro't upon his tender affections, as to put him upon ſhewing them this kindneſs, notwithſtanding their unworthineſs of it, and the provocations they gave him to with hold it. For, though Chriſt, as God, had not affections properly ſo called, nor could be moved with external objects, yet, as Man, he had them, and they were *full of Grace*, Joh. 1. 14. Nor could all the affronts he met with, which were many and great, hinder him from pitying them, and doing them ſuch kindneſſes as they ſtood in need of.

2. *THE indefatigable pains which he took in this.* He ſpared no labour or travail in it: He wearied his Body, and exhauſted his Spirits in it. *Joh.* 4 6. He denied himſelf his natural reſt, and ordinary repaſt for it: He ſhunned none, but took every opportunity to be at it. How many Peregrinations did he make from *Judea* to *Galilee*, and round about all the adjacent Regions, to ſeek for Opportunities to apply his Beneficence, to thoſe that ſtood in need of it; yea, when he retired for ſome breathing, yet he readily entertained ſuch as followed him.

3. *THE number and quality of thoſe to whom he did good.* Thoſe who thus taſted of his kindneſs were innumerable. There are but a few of them, in compariſon of what they were, recorded in the Goſpel. *Joh.* 21. 25. And yet thoſe that are recorded are without any parellel. And they were all ſorts of Perſons to whom he extended theſe favours; the poor as well as the rich; and he was as ready to ſuccour the one as the other. He refuſed not the noble, nor did he deſpiſe the baſe: His enemies taſted his bounty as well as his friends. He prayed for them that crucified him, as well as for his diſciples & followers. He viſited the Phariſees when they ſought to him, and the Publicans too, though he was reproached for it.

4. *THE kinds of good that he did:* And they were of all ſorts. He did Men good for their Bodies, and for their Souls, and that in all the reſpects which their need called for. He healed all ſorts of diſeaſes in the Bodies of men; palſies, leproſies, feavers, and what not? He opened the eyes of the blind, &c. caſt out Devils, raiſed the dead: He fed thouſands when they were faint, and could get no food. And the good he did, did not reſt here, but he did good to mens Souls: And indeed his other kindneſſes were to uſher in theſe. He therefore together with healing their Bodies, pardoned their ſins; brought them out of darkneſs into his marvellous light; reſtored many a bankrupt Child of Adam, to a right to all the glories of the Kingdom; gave them bodily and ſpiritual ſight at once; freed them from bodily poſſeſſion, & ſpiritual dominion of Satan, from the Grave and Hell, at the ſame time.

USE. LEARN we hence, *That it is a Chriſt-like frame of ſpirit, to be much in doing good to ſuch as ſtand in need of our help.* Chriſt made it his whole buſineſs throughout his publick life, thus to do; and he thought nothing too much to deny himſelf of, that he might do it: He travailed from place to place; did not wait for mens coming to him, but he went to them. Would we then be much like to him, and approve our ſelves for his true diſciples; let us herein imitate our Lord and Maſter, endeavouring to fill up our lives with doing all the good we have opportunity for. That is the advice given,

Gal. 6. 10. *As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, eſpecially unto them who are of the houſhold of faith.* And we have Chriſt himſelf ſet before us for our Preſident.

3. *THE ſpecial Work that he purſued in his Publick Life: and that was to bring men into a ſaving acquaintance with God.* He himſelf has ſaid, Joh. 17. 3. *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.* His buſineſs therefore was to reveal God thus to man, *Joh.* 1. 19. And for that reaſon he declares himſelf to be *the Light of the World*, Joh. 9. 5. So that his publick life was that wherein he entred upon his Miniſtry, therein to make diſcoveries of the glorious truths of God, to men that were in *darkneſs* and ignorance; *Matth.* 4. 14, 15, 16. So that his *Prophetical* Office was here more peculiarly to be exerted: Though he gave demonſtrations of his other Offices alſo in this courſe of his Miniſtry; His Prieſtly in praying for Sinners, His Kingly in healing of Diſeaſes, and controuling of Devils, and forgiving Sins; yet that which was moſt of all incumbent on him, in reſpect of his appearing among Men, was his Prophetical: Though all this while, in his obedience to his Father, he acted in the diſcharge of his Prieſtly, carrying on the buſineſs of Satisfaction and Merit; but yet his going about openly, was to aſſert the great Truths of Salvation, and acquaint men with the way of life and peace; and for this he was appointed, *Iſai.* 61. *begin.* And what elſe he did to and for men, had a ſubverviency hereunto: From him therefore flowed that Light, which diſcovers God in his glorious Grace for the encouraging of undone Sinners, to ſeek to him for life.

Use. *LEARN hence, that the greateſt good we can do to any, is being inſtrumental in bringing them to the ſaving knowledge of God in Chriſt.* Here did all Chriſt's other Services to men center. When he did men good otherwiſe, it was to inſinuate himſelf into them. When he healed their Bodies, it was that he might do good to their Souls: When he took away their diſeaſes, it was in order to the taking away their ſins; and by all kindneſſes to oblige them to love him, and truſt in him as the great Saviour. And could we thus do, how much like him ſhould we be. Let us do men all the outward kindneſs we can; but let it be our greateſt aim in all, to inſinuate our ſelves into them, ſo as thereby to be better helped in drawing of them after Chriſt, and bringing them to be acquainted with him; ſo ſhall we ſhew them the greateſt kindneſs that we are capable of. Thus did *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 9. 22.

4. HERE the more eſpecial things to be obſerved in Chriſt's Publick Life, are *His Teaching of the People*, and *His Working of Miracles.* Of each of theſe, take this brief account,

1. *HIS Teaching was the more Principal:* For he appeared openly to be *a Miniſter* of the Heavenly Myſteries. Hence ſo called, *Heb.* 8. 2. Concerning the which obſerve,

(1.) *THE ſubject matter of his Teaching was the Goſpel of the Kingdom. Mat.* 9. 35. This was the beſt News that ever was heard in the World. The word tranſlated *Goſpel*, ſignifies *good* and *glad tidings.* And though in a ſtrict ſenſe it is limited to thoſe truths, that concern the good will of God to fallen man, in ſending his Son to be a Saviour; yet in a more large ſenſe, and as it is applied to Chriſt's Preaching, it comprehends all thoſe truths that are needful to be known in order to the convincing man of his need of Salvation, informing him of the Object and his ſufficiency, and directing him in the way for obtaining of life by him. His buſineſs was to declare, that whereas, the Law and Juſtice had reigned unto Death and Hell, God had found out a way, by his own Son in our Fleſh, to ſatisfy Juſtice, and give Eternal Life to all ſuch as ſhould believe on him; and accordingly to invite ſinful men to accept of him by Faith, and Life by him. See, *Rom.* 5. *ult.* Hence in his Preaching he told men of their miſery, wooed them to himſelf, and pointed them to holineſs.

(2.) *THE Perſon thus Preaching, was Jeſus Chriſt.* It is true, he diſpenſed the Goſpel truths to men, by *John Baptiſt* his forerunner, and afterwards by his Apoſtles, and Goſpel Miniſters, or his Legates or Embaſſadours; for He is the fountain of the Goſpel Miniſtry, and they derive thence from his Prophetical Office; they borrow all their light from him, and their whole ſucceſs depends upon him: Yet he himſelf alſo Preached in Perſon. He is called *the Chief Shepherd*, 1 Pet. 5. 4. And he went up and down from place to place Preaching the Goſpel himſelf; as the Evangeliſts abundantly do teſtify.

(3.) *THE Adjuncts or Circumſtances attending his Preaching*, were either ſuch as reſpected *Himſelf*, and the manner of his Teaching, or his *Hearers*, and the efficiency it had upon them.

1. *RESPECTING Himſelf, and the manner of his Teaching.* Obſerve,

[1.] *THAT He was diligent and conſtant in it*, i.e. He took all occaſions for it, and omitted no fair opportunity: It is true, as he was Man, he could not be inceſſantly at it, becauſe he had other things to do: He muſt have his times to reſt, to eat, and drink, to journey, to be working of miracles: But he needed not time to ſtudy his Sermons, as the ordinary Miniſters of the Goſpel do; for he received not *the ſpirit in meaſure*, Joh. 3. 34. But he took every occaſion; He Preached *publickly*; When there was any aſſembling in the Synagogue, he went thither and taught; He went to the Temple in Jeruſalem daily, becauſe there was a concourſe thither; Whiles he was in the City, he preached to the multitude that flocked after him, and in the Wilderneſs, on a Mountain, out of a Ship, &c. He Preached alſo in *Private* Houſes to Perſons that

that came to him: nay, if it were but one, he would take pains with him; as, *Nicodemus*, *Joh.* 3. Yea, he would Preach at Suppers, or Entertainments given him; as at the Houſes of *Matthew*, *Zacheus*, *Simon* the Leper, and others: and though he ſpent no little time in private Prayer to God, yet he would take the Night frequently for that; chuſing to loſe his own bodily reſt, rather than omit the occaſion of Preaching to men.

[2.] *THAT he was very gracious in his Preaching.* It is remarked, Luk. 4. 22. *And all bare Him witneſs, and wondred at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.* He was himſelf *full of Grace*, as we obſerved; And he ſpoke graciouſly in all his Sermons to his Hearers: And this Grace was to be ſeen both in the matter, and the manner of his Teaching; He was always making the tenders of Grace and Mercy unto them whom he taught. The ſubject of his Doctrine was the free Grace of God appearing to ſinful man; and the manner was ſuitable to the matter; gracious words, ſweet and alluring Rhetorick, heart-melting arguments: He had the very Art of perſwading, and ſtealing into mens Souls.

[3.] *THAT he Preached with great Authority.* So it is recorded of him, *Mat.* 7. *ult.* There was a divine majeſty accompanied his Doctrines. When he ſpake to men of the great matters of their Salvation, his words carried a great deal of power in them; they left a mighty awe and impreſſion upon the hearts of his hearers, ſo that they were aſtoniſhed at them; they could not avoid the influence of them; but his *arrows* were found ſticking faſt in their hearts, and making freſh wounds in them. *Pſal.* 45. 5.

2. *RESPECTING His Hearers, and the Efficacy it had on them:* And that was diverſe. There is a double efficacy the Goſpel takes notice of,

[1.] *HIS Teaching was to ſome accompanied with their Converſion.* Their eyes were ſavingly illuminated, their hearts were broken, their wills were bowed, and they were turned from ſin unto God; His Goſpel was entertained, they received him, and ſo *became the Sons of God*, John 1. 12. And there were a great many of theſe: He found them dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, but he quickned them with his word through his Spirit.

[2.] *TO others it was attended with their Obduration, and Deſtruction.* As to the body of the Scribes and Phariſees, accompliſhing that prædiction, *Iſai.* 6. 9,10. compare, *Math.* 13. 14,15. ſome believed, but not ſincerely; others were convinced, but enraged; others mocked and flouted, and ſo hardned themſelves to their own ruin: And thus was that verified on them, which is mentioned, 1 Pet. 2. 8,9. *But unto them which be diſobedient, the ſtone which the builders diſallowed, the ſame is made the head of the corner: And a ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which ſtumble at the word, being diſobedient, whereunto alſo they were appointed.*

USE. *HERE is then an Example for Goſpel Miniſters.* It tells us how unlike they are to Chriſt, who leave their work to others, and themſelves neglect it; and who take no pains in their Miniſtry, but ſuffer themſelves to be diverted by every thing. It ſaith alſo, what Goſpel Miniſters ought to make the *deſign* of their Preaching, i. e. the Goſpel, the glad tidings of a Saviour, and not the bare Law, but as a Schoolmaſter to Chriſt. It alſo tells them how they ought to Preach, *Graciouſly*; they ſhould ſeek acceptable words, ſuitable to win Souls; not all Hell and Damnation, but ſuch as may allure Souls to Chriſt. *Hoſ.* 2 14. And with *Authority*; not conceal any Goſpel Truth, but declare it with the demonſtration of the Spirit, and power, ſo as to bind the Conſcience, captivate the Soul, and pierce the Heart. It ſerves alſo to caution Hearers, how they entertain the Goſpel, *Luk.* 8. 18. Chriſt never taught, but ſome were converted, and others blinded; and there is ſuch a divine effect on his Miniſters Preaching. 2 *Cor.* 2. 15, 16. Take heed then, which way the Miniſtry works upon you.

2. *HIS working of Miracles was annexed to, and concomitant of his Preaching.* In them indeed he exerted his Kingly Office eminently; but they were uſed by him as adjuncts to his Doctrine. And there are *three* things to be obſerved about them,

1. *THE nature of them.* They were *ſupernatural* effects, above the ordinary courſe of ſecond cauſes; and ſo they were great Works, ſuch as none but God could perform. For ſuch is the nature of a Miracle, as hath been obſerved in the Doctrine of extraordinary Providence: ſuch were his healing the ſick with a touch, raiſing the dead with a word, taking away maladies that accompanied men from their nativity, without the vertue of ſecond cauſes, or medicines; as in ſuch as were born blind, and were lame from the womb. They were alſo *ſenſible* effects; for though the work of Grace be a ſuper-natural work, yet it is not called a *miracle*, becauſe it is ſpiritual and affects not the ſenſes, as theſe do, and for that reaſon are called ſigns, which repreſent one thing to the ſenſe, and another to the mind.

2. *THE ends or deſigns of them*, were diverſe,

(1.) *TO diſcover the Perſon of Chriſt.* They made it appear, that he was indeed the Meſſiah promiſed. By theſe he was approved to be He whom they looked for. Act. 2. 22. *Ye men of Iſrael hear theſe words, Jeſus of Nazareth approved of God, among you by miracles, wonders and ſigns, which God did by him in the midſt of you, as ye your ſelves alſo know.* So that when they ſaw him do ſuch things as no man ever did, it ſet all eyes a gazing on him. He therefore pointed the Diſciples of *John* hither, to ſatisfy the inquiry they came about, *Math.* 11. *begin.*

(2.) *THEY were to confirm his Doctrine and Office.* His *Doctrine*; hence they were ad-

junctſ of his teaching. *Mat.* 9. 35. The People had ſuch a love and liking of the old Ceremonies, in which they had been trained, and which were upheld in the ſucceſſion of ſo many Generations, that it was needful that he ſhould out-do the works which were wro't in giving the Law, by more and greater than they, in the confirmation of the Goſpel. Theſe were a ſtamp on his *Doctrine*, or an heavenly Seal, giving them divine Authority: And his *Office*, to prove, that he came not on his own head, but was authorized by his Father, and had his Commiſſion for all that he did, or taught. Hence that, Joh. 10. 25. *The works that I do in my Fathers name, they bear witneſs of me.*

(3.) *TO ſignify his ſpiritual Operations.* They were ſigns, and ſo were to lead men by their ſenſes to more ſpiritual things; all of which were repreſented and reſembled by theſe ſigns: When he opened blind eyes, it ſignified that he came to *turn men from darkneſs unto light*: when he fed thouſands, it ſaid that he was the *Bread that came down from heaven.*

3. *FOR the manner of his doing them*, they were,

(1.) *VERY frequent.* There were now and then ſome wrought before; but now he went up and down doing of them: yea they were the uſual, if not the conſtant concomitants of his Preaching, being almoſt inſeperable appendices thereto.

(2.) *IN almoſt every ſort of Subject.* Jeſus Chriſt would have it clearly appear, that He is Lord of all, and of what a great extent his divine power is. Hence they were wro't, in Angels, in Men, in Brute Creatures, in Inanimates, in Heaven, Earth, Sea, in Corporeals, in Spirituals.

(3.) *THEY were wrought in his own Name.* His Diſciples alſo did many Miracles, both before and after his Death, and Reſurrection; but they did them in *his Name*, ſo that not they, but He properly did them. Hence they uſed his Name, *Act.* 3. 6, 16. But he uſed his own Authority in it, *I will be thou clean*, &c. Nor is it a contradiction to ſay, he did them in his Fathers Name, which points to the divine Authority: For he alſo ſaith, *I and my Father are one.*

Use. I. *LEARN hence, on what ſcore Miracles are to be expected.* Not for themſelves, or meerly for mens outward occaſions, but for the Goſpel ſake; and hence it may direct our Faith about them, and how far to look for them.

Use. II. *HOW unreaſonable a thing is it to refuſe to hearken to the Goſpel of Chriſt, or deny his Perſon and Office.* All of which have been confirmed by ſo many tokens, wrought by the Almighty power of God, with whom, as it is impoſſible to lie, ſo no leſs to ſet his Seal to an untruth: beware then of neglecting or deſpiſing, &c.

Use. III. *LET the Conſideration of Chriſt's whole Publick Courſe, engage our hearts in love to him, and encourage our Souls in their depending on him.* Great was his love, who thus ſtooped to do us good. Did Chriſt empty himſelf to fill us; ſpend himſelf to ſhew us kindneſs; Did he think no labour too much to ſhew his good will to us; How greatly doth he deſerve our love? How much doth he encourage us to adventure our all upon him? And remember He is as kind now he is in Heaven, as he was when upon Earth. Do we then want Teaching, do we want Healing, do we need Counſel or Conſolation? Bring all our wants to, and lay them before Him, and be not doubtful but believing.

[August 4. 1696.]

SERMON C.

II. IT remains that we take notice of *Chriſt's Humiliation*, as it appeared *in the Concluſion of his Publick Life.* And here we are to obſerve the care which he uſed in *his Preparation for his Death*; where ſeveral things might worthily be inſiſted on; as *his forewarning of his Diſciples about it, His endeavouring to comfort them in the conſideration of it*, that it might not be a prejudice to them when it came; inſtructing them in matters of greateſt concernment about it, and directing them how to carry it when he was gone; aſſuring them that he went to prepare a Place for them; promiſing them to ſend them the Comforter, and recommending them to God in a ſolemn Prayer. But I ſhall wave any diſtinct reflections upon theſe, and take notice of two more peculiar paſſages which are celebrated by the Evangeliſts, unto which the other may be referred, viz. his *Tranſiguration*, and his *Celebration of the Paſſover with his Diſciples.* And a few things may ſuffice here to be obſerved about each of theſe,

I. TOUCHING his Transfiguration: Altho' in it ſelf it were a beaming out of his Glory, in his mean and humbled eſtate, yet it belonged to his Humiliation, as it was a preparatory and help to fit him for his Sufferings, which he was near to his entring upon. And indeed there was a great deal of Chriſt's ſelf abaſement appeared in the Circumſtances attending theſe very acts of his, wherein he made ſome diſplays of his Glory, as we before obſerved in his triumphant riding into *Jeruſalem.* And here two things may come under our conſideration. 1. *The Transfiguration it ſelf.* 2. *The Uſefulneſs of it, in helping to prepare him for his Death & Sufferings.*

1. TOUCHING the *Transfiguration it ſelf:* We have the Hiſtory of it recorded by three of the Evangeliſts. *Mat.* 17. *begin. Mar.* 9. *begin. Luk.* 9. 28, *&c.* And the more remarkable paſſages in it, were ſuch as theſe,

(1.) *THE Perſons that were admitted to be Spectators of this glorious ſight.* And theſe were not all the Diſciples, but only three ſelected

ſelected from the reſt, not caſually, but upon deliberate choice. *Peter*, who had formerly thought it needleſs for his Maſter to die, and had rebuked him for ſpeaking of it; and Chriſt would have him here, to hear the neceſſity of it diſcourſed, who was alſo to be called to eminent trials. *John*, who being to live to the time in which *Ebion* & *Cerinthus* denied the Divinity of Chriſt, might be the better fixt in the belief of it, and furniſhed to confute them. And *James*, who being the firſt of the Apoſtles, that was to have his blood ſhed, in the defence of Chriſt's being the true Meſſiah, might here be fortified in his faith, for his more reſolute ſtanding up for his Maſter to the Death. And it tells us, that God uſually manifeſts himſelf more than ordinarily to his Servants, whom he intends to uſe in ſome ſingular Service for himſelf. Theſe three Diſciples were *thrice* thus ſingled out from the reſt on this account; and thus God prepares them for it. And it may point us what to look for, if at any time we have more than uſual manifeſtations of God's love made to us.

(2.) *THE Place where it was celebrated:* An *high Mountain*. See, *Mat.* 17.1. Many ſuppoſe it to have been *Tabor*, which is counted the higheſt mountain in *Gallilee*, in which Chriſt ſpent a great part of his time, during his publick Miniſtry. And it might be to them an emblem of Heaven, which is called *the Mountain of Spices*, Cant. 8. ult. However, it was a place of retirement from the World; and God uſually ſequeſters his Children from men, when he ſees meet to manifeſt himſelf glorioufly unto them. Chriſt treats his *Spouſe* in the *Chambers*, Cant. 1. 4.

(3.) *THE Seaſon of it:* It was *as he Prayed*, Luk. 9. 24. He engaged in the buſineſs of praying unto God, and whiles he was ſo doing, this glorious Change came upon him. And this recommends to us the duty of Prayer. The Praying Soul is like to have the greateſt intimacy with Heavenly Glory. It may therefore quicken and encourage us to be much in Prayer. It is called in Scripture a *drawing nigh to God*; which is the way to have him *draw nigh to us*. Jam. 4. 2.

(4.) *THE manner of the Transfiguration:* In *Matth.* 17. 2. it is ſaid, that he *was transfigured*, or metamorphoſed: the word ſignifies a change from one form to another. Therefore we read, *Luk.* 9.29. that the *faſhion of his countenance was altered*, or had another aſpect on it, than it was wont to have. It is added, *Mat.* 17.2. that *his face ſhown as the ſun:* it was full of ſplendid brightneſs, and glorious radancy. And the luſtre of *his raiment* is added: compare, *Mat.* 17. 2. with, *Mar.* 9. 3. and, *Luk.* 9. 29. And we ſhall find a fourfold gradation in it. 1. That of Art, and that the beſt, *no fuller*, &c. 2. That of Nature, of which Art falls ſhort; *white as the ſnow*, than which nothing is whiter. 3. Snow is dull, but here is a brightneſs added, for it *ſhone as the light* it ſelf, which hath a dazling ſplendour in it. 4. Of all light, the moſt *glittering* proceeds from the Sun, which is ſuch as we cannot ſteadily behold; *now his face ſhone as the Sun*. Here was a glimpſe of Heavenly Glory. And it tells us, that Heavens Glories are not to be parallel'd by any thing here below. Here are many words accumulated by the Evangeliſts, to ſhew that they wanted words to expreſs it. Let it then make us in love with theſe Heavenly things: and whatſoever excellency we ſee in any thing here below, let it knit our hearts and thoughts to the contemplations of theſe more incomparable Glories.

(5.) *THE Perſons appearing to, and conferring with him*: Theſe were *Moſes* and *Elias*, of whom it is ſaid that they *appeared* in their *glory*, *Luk.* 9. 31. Theſe were long ago, the one dead, and the other tranſlated, and were both admitted to the Glories of the Heavenly Habitation; and in that Glory which they enjoyed in Heaven, in that ſhining excellency did they appear, and were ſeen: *Moſes*, by whom the Law was promulgated to the People of God, and who was a Type of Chriſt, and is typically called a *Mediator*, *Gal.* 3.19. *Elias*, who was a great reſtorer of the Law, and an eminent Prophet in the Church of God, and alſo a Type of Chriſt. *Moſes* repreſented the Law, and *Elias* the Prophets: and their appearance gave the evidence that Chriſt was the end both of the Law and the Prophets; that all looked to Him. Hence that, Joh. 1. 45. *We have found him of whom Moſes in the Law, and the Prophets did write; Jeſus of Nazareth the ſon of Joſeph.* And this points us to the right uſe that is to be made of the Old Teſtament. The ſatisfaction of Chriſt, His active and paſſive Obedience; His being made a Sacrifice to atone God's Juſtice, and to make up the breach between Him and us, is the very drift of the Scriptures. The Old and New Teſtament differ in the manner of the diſcovery, but not in the thing diſcovered. Hence that, Eph. 2. 20. *And are built upon the foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner ſtone.* They err who ſet the two Teſtaments, one againſt the other: whereas they manage one deſign, *i. e.* the Covenant of Peace, in and by Jeſus Chriſt.

(6.) *THE Subject-matter diſcourſed on between Chriſt and them*; viz. *about his death*, *Luke* 9.31. And herein it appears that this ſolemn Transfiguration was in order to his preparation for dying. No doubt but there was in this Conference a Rehearſal of the great things ſpoken of in the Law and Prophets, in which Chriſt's Death and Sufferings are fore-ſignified; it being the bottom-deſign of the legal Ceremonies, and prophetical Predictions. And it tells us, that Chriſt's Death and Sufferings are a fit Subject for Heavenly diſcourſe, a Theme worthy the Contemplation and Conference of glorified Saints. *Moſes* and *Elias* are willing to leave the place of Glory for a while, to come and confer about it: and what

can

can be fitter for them in the Kingdom, than the reflection on the way by which they came to inherit it? Hence came the Redemption from the Curſe; and the foundation of eternal Life was here laid; and it is meet that the Glory of it ſhould for ever redound to Him whoſe due it is.

(7.) *THE Adjuncts of the Transfiguration*; which were ſuch as referred, either [1] *To the Diſciples*; Where obſerve, 1. *Their ſleep:* This glorious Apparition ſwallowed up their ſenſes, and caſt them into a Trance. And it tells us how little we can bear at preſent of the Glories to come; we muſt be *made meet for the inheritance of the Saints in Light.* 2. *Their waking and ſeeing the Interview, Luke* 9. 32. So they were Eye-witneſſes of it, and able to give their teſtimony to it. 3. Peter's *Rapture upon it, Luke* 9. 33. He thought himſelf almoſt in Heaven, and could have been content to ſpend the reſt of his time there: And it tells us, that Saints when they come to Glory, will never be weary of Heaven. A ſpiritual Mind, when it is *here* raiſed to heavenly Raptures, is loth to come down again; how much more, &c. How happy then are they who are gotten ſettled for perpetuity, in theſe ſpeculations, in the fulneſs of their luſtre. 4. *The fear that ſurprized them all, Luke* 9 34. And ſuch we ſhall find frequently to have been the effect of heavenly Viſions, on the ſpirits of the Prophets, *Hab.* 3. 16. *Dan.* 8. 17. which is an evidence of our preſent imperfection. [2] *In reſpect of the diſappearance of* Moſes *and* Elias, together with the *Voice* concomitant, and Chriſt's being *found alone, Luke* 9 34, 35, 36. And it tells us, that the glorious raviſhments of God's People, in reſpect of the peculiar manifeſtations of God to them in this Life, are wont to laſt but a little while. God will ſometimes refreſh, but he will not glut his People in this Life: He would have them to be in love with Heaven, but they ſhall not have the fulneſs of the Glories of it, till they come there.

2. *WE are now to conſider the* Uſefulneſs *of this Transfiguration, in helping to prepare him for his Death and Sufferings.* And this may be conſidered,

[1.] *WITH reſpect to Himſelf:* Death is a terror to humane Nature, and ſo was his Death, to the Man Chriſt, Mat. 26. 39. *And he went a little further, and fell on his face and prayed, ſaying, O my Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me: nevertheleſs, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* Heb. 5. 7. Now *He* was helped in this. For,

(1.) *HERE He contemplated the great neceſſity of it.* It was that which was foretold: It was the ſcope of the Law and Prophets: ſo that all the Predictions of it muſt prove falſe, all Types and Ordinances become vain, and be loſt, if He died not; and conſequently all the Promiſes would loſe their accompliſhment, and all the Elect of God fall ſhort of their happineſs; the Scriptures muſt ceaſe, and all Grace be at an end without it; the conſideration of which could not but animate him, whoſe love to his Fathers Glory, and his Peoples Good was ſo great.

(2.) *HERE God gloriouſly owns him, for his beloved Son:* And ſignifies what great content he takes in Him, and the Work that he was engaged in. And it was a very ſeaſonable acknowledgment; ſince he was very ſhortly to be ſtrangely forſaken by him, and ſuffer the greateſt deſertion that ever any beloved of God underwent, in carrying to him as an enemy, and inflicting on him all the curſes of the Law: needs therefore muſt the remembrance of this treatment be a very great ſupport, and help him to cry, *My God, my God*, in the greateſt darkneſs.

(3) *HERE alſo he was ſatisfied, that although he was to be deſerted, yet the work that he was to accompliſh by his Death, would infinitely pleaſe his Father*; That he would be wondrouſly contented in it, and that it would procure his favour for, and delight in all that were redeemed by him. For it was with reference to this work of his, that God gave that teſtimony to him; and he who came to do his Fathers Will, could not but be abundantly ſatisfied, that tho' he ſuffered, yet his Father ſhould thereby be abundantly glorified.

(4.) *HE had here alſo a ſhadow or prelibation of the Glory which he and his redeemed ſhould enjoy in Heaven, as a reward of that Death which he was ſhortly to undergo.* It was a beam from Heaven, to encourage him, a branch of Grapes to refreſh him, a taſte of Glory to ſupport his Spirit, thorough that forſaken wilderneſs, in the apprehenſion of that Heavenly Canaan, where he ſhould be glorified in his Saints, who ſhould, by this Death of his, live forever. And all this was a Teſtimony of the humbled ſtate of the Man Chriſt, in which he had occaſion for all this to carry him through his great Undertaking.

[2] *WITH reſpect to His Diſciples:* For whom he took care, and would therefore have ſome of them to be witneſſes of this, for their own and others ſtability. For in this there was afforded to them,

(1.) *AN evidence that this Jeſus was the moſt Glorious Son of God.* They were confirmed that He was God as well as Man, the Eternal Son of the Eternal Father. For *Peter* tells us that *this voice came from the excellent majeſty*, 2 Pet. 1. 17.

(2.) *A plain diſcovery that God the Father took infinite complacency in him.* That his Eternal Love was ſet upon him, and that therefore he had the deepeſt intereſt in God, and that whatſoever he asked of God, he ſhould obtain, and whatever he promiſed to them in his Fathers Name, ſhould be fulfilled.

(3.) *GREAT help againſt being offended at his Death.* It was an hour of great Temptation, and their faith was not a little aſſailed by it; but the remembrance of the pithy diſcourſe about it, in which the whole myſtery of the Scripture concerning it was laid open, muſt ſatisfy them in the neceſſity, and wondrous uſefulneſs and efficacy of it.

(4.) *A*

(4.) *A glimpſe of Glory which Chriſt ſhould be ere long advanced unto in Heaven.* And though it was but a faint and ſhort repreſentation of it, yet it was as much as they were able to bear; and gave a great help to their Faith about it, and the Glory which in and with him they ſhould ere long be advanced to. Hence,

(5.) *AN aſſurance that Chriſt ſhould not only himſelf be glorifyed, but that his People ſhould be with him, and ſee his Glory:* And be raviſhed, tranſported, and glorifyed with him; yea, be filled with his Glory: That that Prayer of his ſhould be abundantly anſwered, Joh. 17. 24. *Father, I will that they alſo which thou haſt given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou haſt given me: for thou lovedſt me before the foundation of the world.*

USE. AND did Chriſt thus take care to prepare for his dying, *Let us take advice from it, herein to imitate Him.* He did ſo, altho' he never put himſelf out of readineſs; how much more then had we need to do it, who are ſo often through our corruption, and the temptations offered, put out of frame. Let it tell us, that as it is of great concernment, ſo no eaſy thing to be always ready to dye comfortably.

II. WE paſs to the *Celebration of the Paſſover with his Diſciples.* Every Evangeliſt takes a particular notice of it; which I ſhall no further here look upon, than in the reſpect it bears to Chriſt making ready for his Death; and that both with regard to *Himſelf*, and *his Diſciples*, under which we may take brief notice, of the moſt remarkable things about it.

1. *IN reſpect to Himſelf:* Where we may obſerve,

1. *THE Celebration it ſelf of the Paſſover:* And here conſider,

(1.) *THE Paſchal Lamb was a Type of Chriſt.* Iſraels deliverance from Ægypt ſhadowed our being ſet at liberty from ſpiritual thraldom by Chriſt: And the Lamb appointed to be uſed in this Solemnity, did repreſent Chriſt the great Deliverer; and on this account he is called *our Paſſover*, 1 Cor. 5. 7. And he is for this reaſon ſo often called in the New-Teſtament, *the Lamb of God.*

(2.) *THE manner of uſing the Paſchal Lamb, did aim at, and decypher the Death of Chriſt, and the vertue of it deriving to his People.* It was therefore to be ſlain, though innocent, to ſignify that Chriſt, an innocent Perſon muſt die. The blood of it muſt be ſprinkled, being taken in a baſon; intimating both the bloody Death of Chriſt, and the application of the vertue of it to his People. The fleſh of it was to be roſted at the fire; typifying the fiery wrath of God that he was to undergo, to fit him for us to live upon by faith. It was to be eaten with bitter herbs, and unleavened bread, to intimate the application both of his active and paſſive Obedience to us for our ſpiritual benefit. Thoſe that ate the Paſſover, were preſerved from the deſtroying Angel; and the blood ſprinkled was the preſervation; ſignifying, that the blood of Chriſt, applied to us by the Grace of God, frees us from the ſtroke of divine revenge.

(3.) HENCE, *in the Sacrament it ſelf, at the Celebration of it, our Saviour ſtrengthned himſelf to the ſufferings that enſued.* For,

[1.] *IN it, he read that his Death was neceſſary.* He looked on the ſlain Lamb, and reflected upon Himſelf, as the Lamb of God ſeparated to the like ſufferings; and that this Type would loſe its great intent, if not verified in him. Hence he ſaid, that he *went, as it was written* of him in the divine decree; it was written in the Book of God, and in this very Ordinance.

[2.] *HE ſaw the bleſſed effects that ſhould ariſe from his Death*; viz. 1. *A paſſing over of all his Redeemed, to whom his blood ſhou'd be applied, in the day of God's wrath.* That by his Death, he ſhould free his own People from death; and that when a deluge of wrath ſhould overwhelm a world of Sinners, and bear them away in a flood of eternal deſtruction. 2. *That hence, his bitter paſſion ſhould be a ſweet feaſt to his People.* His great ſorrows, ſhould adminiſter matter of preſent joy to them here, and eternal rejoycing in Heaven for ever. And this Meditation was ſweet to him; and the Paſſover being preſently to be fulfilled in him, he now began his Suffering by viewing of them in it, and ſtrenghning himſelf thereto by this contemplation.

2. *THE Conference alſo which he had with his Diſciples at the Paſſover was alſo ſtrengthning to him.* For by theſe Diſcourſes he familiarized himſelf with his Death: He being now juſt ready to ſuffer, ſpeaks familiarly about it, draws his thoughts that way, and calls to mind, and ſpeaks of thoſe Scripture predictions, in which the will of God had been diſcovered about it, and the very circumſtances of it; in which he read the determination of or counſel of God, laying it out in all the particulars of it, by which he was encouraged in a full and free compliance with his Fathers will, which he came into the World to do.

3. *THE new Inſtitution which he then appointed, was alſo ſerviceable to this end*; viz. *the Sacrament of the Supper:* And the enacting and celebrating of this Ordinance, Chriſt ſet before himſelf, the conſideration of all the precious fruits and benefits which ſhould ariſe out of, and flow from his Death and Sufferings, whereby he corroborated himſelf againſt the ſorrows thereof. For,

(1.) *HE here preſented to himſelf, that though he muſt go through the bitter pangs of Death, yet he ſhould thereby become ſpiritual meat and drink, for the Souls of his People to feed and feaſt upon.* That from his dying, there ſhould ariſe matter of wondrous conſolation to them that believe in him, to the worlds end. It was by his Death, that his *fleſh* became *meat indeed,*

indeed, and his *blood drink indeed*. By this he was to conſummate his Redemption, and provide nouriſhment for faith, even eternal Life, thro' the efficacy of it. Hence that, Joh. 3. 14,15. *And as Moſes lifted up the ſerpent in the wilderneſs: even ſo muſt the Son of man be lifted up: That whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have eternal life.*

(2.) *HERE he looked upon the precious union there ſhould be between Him and his People, and between his People one with another, ariſing from his Death.* This Sacrament was an Ordinance of union; a gathering together of Chriſt and his People into one Society, and participation in common in thoſe rich fruits of his Death. There is therefore in it a communion with Chriſt, and each with other. 1 Cor. 10. 16, 17. *The cup of bleſſing which we bleſs is it not the communion of the blood of Chriſt? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Chriſt? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.* Now all communion flows from union. Hence that, Eph. 2. 16. *And that he might reconcile Both unto God in one body by the croſs, having ſlain the enmity.*

(3.) *HERE alſo Chriſt ſaw, that in the Celebration of this Ordinance his great Love to his Church, and the ſaving efficacy of his Death, ſhould be kept in remembrance for the ſtrengthning of the Faith of his People to the worlds end:* That his Death ſhould never be forgotten; and that, tho' it was bitter to him, that bitterneſs would ſoon be over, and the preciouſneſs of it, ſhould be matter of ſweeteſt meditation to, and celebrated by his People till his Second Coming, which ſhould make his Name precious. Hence this Ordinance was appointed to be a ſacred commemoration of his Death, 1 Cor. 11. 26. *For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do ſhew the Lords death till he come.*

(4.) *HE here alſo ſaw, what freſh and everlaſting delights it ſhould afford to himſelf, and his ſaved ones in the Kingdom of Glory.* That this Death of his would open Heaven for his Redeemed, and make it a moſt precious place, in which it ſhould be celebrated Eternally. Hence he ſpeaks of drinking this Cup again, *Mat.* 26. 29. He therefore kept it with joy; witneſs the Hymn. See, *Jam.* 5. 13.

2. *WITH reſpect to His Diſciples*; of whom he took care. For,

(1.) *BY the Supper itſelf, he gave them to underſtand, that he muſt needs die.* And in it gave them a clear Repreſentation of the great Advantage that ſhould accrue to them by his Death. He diſcovered in it to the life, his great Love to them in dying, and the wondrous Benefit that was to redound from it to them, and that his Body was to be broken, and his Blood to be ſhed for them. All which, he not only ſhadowed, but ſealed alſo in it.

(2.) *THE precious Diſcourſes with them at and after it, were abundantly helpful to them.* We have them recorded, *Joh.* 13. 18. Wherein he plainly told them, what need there was of his dying, what precious Benefits they ſhould receive by it, that he would ſend the Comforter to ſupply his Abſence, who ſhould both inſtruct and ſupport them: That he was going on their Account, to prepare a Place for them, promiſing that when all was made ready, he would come again and fetch them; and many ſuch like Counſels and Conſolations.

(3.) *THE precious mediatorial Prayer, which he put up with them, and in their behalf, was a mighty help to them.* We have it recorded in *John* 17. wherein he interceeds for them, challengeth all the favour to be beſtowed upon them that he had purchaſed, commends them to his Father's care and keeping, challengeth a propriety in them, and claims that they may be brought to, and poſſeſſed of that Glory, which he himſelf was then ready to be entertained in.

USE. *LET this commend to us the ſingular Love of Chriſt to his Choſen*; in that when he was to die for them, in order to the procuring of Eternal Life to be beſtowed on them; He was ſo far from ſeeking to eſcape it, that he ſet himſelf to make ready for it, with the greateſt Solemnity, as a thing which his Heart was greatly engaged in. And ſince he hath left ſuch an Ordinance, as his dying Legacy to his Church, for the keeping in mind of this incomparable Love of his; how ſhould it put us all upon it to give our regular Attendance unto it, and therein give him the thankful Acknowledgment of his Love to us, in ſo willing and ready a laying down of his Life for us, and ſo induſtrious a Preparation for his Death before it came.

[SEPTEMBER 1. 1696.]

SERMON CI.

WE have been conſidering how Chriſt humbled himſelf in his *Life*, which we have traced from his Entrance into the World, till he had done his Work in it, and was now ready to go out of it. But his Humiliation, or Obedience, did not here finiſh, but paſs'd over from a ſorrowful Life, to a curſed *Death*; and hither are we now to follow him, and take notice of his unparallel'd Love to his Choſen in it. Chriſt not only *lived*, but alſo *died* for us, and this was a tranſcendent Kindneſs. We may here firſt take an Account of his Death *Generally*, and then deſcend to a view of the *Parts of it*.

Firſt, IN the *General* Conſideration of Chriſt's Death, there are two things worthy our enquiry into, viz. 1. *The Neceſſity of his dying.* 2. *The Nature of his Death.*

1. TOUCHING *the Neceſſity of his dying.* The clearing up of which Article, is of great Uſe for the Demonſtration of his admirable Love to us. If fallen Man could have been happy

happy without this, Chriſt's good will herein had been ſuperfluous, which muſt needs highly derogate from the Glory of his Sufferings: It is neceſſary therefore that this Neceſſity be made to appear, eſpecially in this Age, wherein Chriſt's Satisfaction is ſo much flouted, and ridicul'd, by *Socinian* Teachers. We may here call to mind, what hath formerly been intimated, viz. that *Neceſſity* comes under a *double* Conſideration. It is either *Abſolute*, or *Connex* and *Hypothetical*. Here then,

1. *WHEN we ſay that it was neceſſary that Chriſt muſt die, it doth not intend an* abſolute *neceſſity*. For this neceſſity cannot be aſſerted of any of God's works *ad extra*. For, as God is his own *laſt end*, ſo whatſoever is requiſite to his own perfect happineſs, is in himſelf; nor can he receive any thing from the creature, which hath all from him. Hence, whatſoever is without him, is not aſcribed to his *nature*, whoſe acts are neceſſary and immanent, but to his *will*, whoſe tranſient acts are contingent. The futurition of the creature, as to the decree, and the creation of it in time, were not natural, but voluntary acts of God. It was an arbitrary thing with him, whether he would make a World, and Man in it; and had it pleaſed him not to have done it, he had been holy ſtill. If Chriſt's dying for us had been neceſſary, his Love to us in ſo doing had been the leſs remarkable.

2. *HENCE the Death of Chriſt muſt come under the conſideration of an* hypothetical *neceſſity*: i. e. it was neceſſary by conſequence, upon the ſuppoſition of ſome Premiſes, which we may deſcend unto by theſe ſteps.

(1.) *IT was not neceſſary that Chriſt muſt dye to make men happy, if God ſhould create him.* This neceſſity doth not depend upon the ſuppoſition of the Creation of man; for man was in his Creation made capable of being happy, without the Death of Chriſt. The Law given to man at firſt was in a Covenant way, and ſo it was his Directory unto happineſs: And the Threatning of Death, annexed to the law, in caſe of Diſobedience, inferred a Promiſe of Life, upon the Obedience of man. And the Apoſtle certifies us, that this is the Tenor of the law, according to *Moſes*, Rom. 10. 5. *For Moſes deſcribeth the righteouſneſs which is of the law, that the man which doth thoſe things ſhall live by them.* Now, the *Image* of God which was put upon man in his creation, contained in it, as an *habitual* conformity to that holy law, ſo alſo a concreated *Principle*, enabling him to an *actual* conformity thereunto; which had he exerted, he muſt, according to the Covenant, have been made happy, as a promiſed Reward of ſuch Obedience; and that he did not, but fell ſhort of it, was not by a compulſive neceſſity, or for want of power to obey, but it was a free and voluntary act of his own, in conſenting to the temptation.

(2.) *IT was not abſolutely neceſſary that man ſhould fall, and ſo give an occaſion for Chriſt's dying.* This *Hypotheſis* indeed is neceſſary that in order to Chriſt's dying for man's Redemption, Man muſt be in ſuch a condition, as to need ſuch a Redemption. There is no need to redeem one that is not become a Captive. We muſt therefore conceive, that in order to Chriſt's coming to dye on mans account, and to ſave him from dying, that man is fallen under the merit and guilt of Death. But that Man muſt fall, that ſo Chriſt might die, is not neceſſary in it ſelf: God could have prevented *Man's* Fall, as he did that of an innumerable company of *Angels*: He could have kept off the Tempter, or have fortified man's Free Will with aſſiſting influences, and determined it, without any compulſion, to have rejected the inſinuations of Satan, and ſo have prevented the need of Chriſt's coming into the World and dying. No doubt, had God ſeen meet, he could have kept up his trading with man in the Covenant of Works, confirmed man in his Obedience, and ſo have made him happy for ever in that way.

(3.) *NOR was it neceſſary that man muſt fall, and ſo give occaſion for the Death of Chriſt, that way might be made for the manifeſtation of the attribute of Grace.* It is true, that the Glory of Grace was deſigned to be made known by the Death of Chriſt; but yet Grace might have appeared without it. *Mercy* indeed, in the ſtrict meaning of it, requires a Miſerable Object, no other being a Subject capable of mercy in the proper notion of it; but not ſo of *Grace*. The firſt Covenant was not ſo of Works, but that it was of Grace too. If God doth any thing freely for the creature, which it could not earn of him by an antecedent merit, it beſpeaks his Grace, according to the genuine notion of it. The Merit of that Obedience which was required in the firſt Covenant, was not ſuch as did exclude the demonſtration of Grace in the Reward. It was man's due, not for the worth of his obedience, but becauſe God promiſed it to him if he did obey. Had he given to man a Law without a Covenant, it had not been beyond his Prerogative. It was therefore Grace to promiſe Happineſs to this Obedience; and it would have been Grace to accept of the ſmall rent paid by it, in order to beſtowing eternal happineſs on him, according to the leaſe that was thus granted to *Adam*, his heirs, and ſucceſſors for ever. See, *Rom.* 11. 35.

(4.) *IT was not neceſſary, that if man fall, Chriſt muſt needs die to repair him.* Though man's making himſelf miſerable by ſin, gave the *Occaſion* for, yet it did not give the *Neceſſity* to Chriſt's Death. The Salvation of fallen man did not depend on God's *Nature*, but his *Will*. If it were neceſſary, he muſt then have ſaved *all*: He makes it appear to be but arbitrary, in that he ſaves but *ſome*; and thoſe according as he ſees meet, without reſpect to any Difference in the Subject. *Rom.* 9. 18. *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.* If God had ſeen meet, he could have left apoſtate

man under the triumphs of divine revenge: He might have forſaken men as he did fallen Angels, and never provided them with a Redeemer; and who could have charged him with wrong in ſo doing? Man's Apoſtaſy could not merit Chriſt's Dying; it made man miſerable, but it did not neceſſitate God to be merciful to him.

(5.) *GOD ſo tranſacted with man in the Covenant of Works, that if one Sinner be ſaved, Chriſt muſt needs dye.* Such was the frame and conſtitution of thatCovenant; that, upon the ſuppoſal of man's becoming guilty of ſin, this disjunction ſtands undeniable, that either all mankind muſt die for ever, or if ever any of them be ſaved, Chriſt muſt die for them; and there is no room for a third ſuppoſal. God indeed might have choſen whether he would have beſtowed Salvation upon any, and ſo have prevented his Sons dying: But ſuppoſing his purpoſe to ſave ſome, His giving of hisSon to ſuffer for them, neceſſarily follows. There are *three* things may be here look'd into, 1. *What foundation there is for this in the firſt Covenant?* 2. *How fallen man'sCondition doth neceſſitate it?* 3. *Why it muſt needs center on the Perſon of Chriſt?* Of theſe in order,

1. IT will appear *what foundation is laid for this in the firſt Covenant,* if *theſe* things be well pondered,

(1.) *THAT the thing poſitively threatned in that Covenant, on the ſuppoſal of man's diſobedience, was Death. Gen.*2. 17. The puniſhment of ſin was limited to one, and not left to arbitrement, whether any other penalty might be taken in the room of it. God did not only threaten man with puniſhment in general, reſerving to his Sovereignty the determination of the kind: nor needs there any diſpute whether he might have manifeſted another, or leſſer; in as much as it is certain that he did not, but ſet this down definitely, that if man ſhould be ſo daring, as to tranſgreſs the holy Law which was given him for his rule, he muſt forfeit his life for it, and become a ſubject of death.

(2.) *IT was a Covenant threatning, and ſo God brought himſelf under an obligation of fulfilling it.* For, a Covenant is a mutual Obligation between two parties, each whereof ſtands firmly obliged to the performing of what is his part in the Covenant. Now the conditional Promiſe and Threatning were God's part in this Tranſaction; ſo that if man fail of his duty, or depart from it, he dies by Covenant. And there is noObligation can be more firm, then what is made by Contract. If man had obeyed, God's word was paſt, to reward him with Life; and anſwerably, if he diſobey, his word is equally gone forth that he will puniſh him, and with that penalty which is ſpecified in the threatning, in as much as he hath ſo expreſt it. And if any ask, *Why God made this bond ſo firm, as to leave no room for a mitigation?* The Anſwer is, *It was his pleaſure in this way, to prepare for the manifeſtation of the riches of his ſuper-abundant Grace, in due time:* That man's deplorable miſery might be a foil to ſet off his wonderful mercy in and by Jeſus Chriſt. *Rom.* 5. 20, 21.

(3.) *THERE are diverſe Attributes which are in honour engaged to the fulfilling of this threatning.* God aims at his declarativeGlory in all his works; and that is by the manifeſtation of thoſe glorious Perfections of his, in which he would diſcover himſelf to the creature. Now there are ſeveral of theſe which are concerned in this. There is his *Truth:* He ſhould not act like a God, but like a ſorry man, if he ſhould do otherwiſe. Hence that, Numb. 23. 19. *God is not a man, that he ſhould lie, nor the ſon of man, that he ſhould repent: hath he ſaid, and ſhall he not do it? or hath he ſpoken, and ſhall not he make it good?* Nor doth it only reſpect the Promiſes, but the Threatnings too. So he, 1Sam. 15. 29. *And alſo the ſtrength of Iſrael will not lie, nor repent: for he is not a man that he ſhould repent.* God ſpake as he intended; and hereby he gives a proof of it. His *Faithfulneſs* ſtands bound to it; for he had uttered it with a note of certainty,and vehemency. He would not then be faithful to himſelf, to his own word, ſhould he not do it. His *Holineſs*, which is very dear and precious to him, would elſe ſuffer a blemiſh; for by this he ſtands bound for his own Glory, which is to be recovered, when violated by the ſin of man; and in nothing more is it diſplayed. *Hab.* 1. 13. His *Relative Juſtice* is alſo deeply here intereſted; which muſt do that which is right, and render to men according to their works; which reward is to receive its meaſures from the Covenant; for that was the rule of Relative Juſtice, which God had fixed, according to which he would make diſplays of that Attribute in his Governing the World. Now according to this foundation,there is a Death due to man, for his diſobedience; and it muſt take place on the offender, or his ſurety; elſe the *firſt Covenant* is vacated; whereas Chriſt aſſures us that it ſhall be *fulfilled* to the utmoſt, *Mat.* 5. 18.

2. *FALLEN man's Condition is ſuch, as, upon the forecited ſuppoſition, neceſſitates another to undergo this Death in his ſtead, if ever he be ſaved from it.* For,

(1.) *THERE is nothing but ſuffering that will anſwer theLaw.* That ſaith in ſo many words, Rom. 6. 23. *For the wages of ſin is death.* And, Ezek. 18. 4. *The ſoul that ſinneth it ſhall die.* If the man could, as it is certain he cannot pay all after-obedience to the Law, which it requires, and keep the commands, without failing in any one article, this would in no wiſe clear him; there is guilt lying upon him, and the curſe hath laid hold of him, and he muſt die, or ſome one muſt die for him. This is the Apoſtles remark, Heb 9. 22. *And alſo all things are by the law purged with blood: and without ſhedding of blood is no remiſſion.*

miſſion. Nor is it all his Repentances that can obtain an abatement of the ſentence; but there muſt be a full anſwering of the Law, and that muſt be by dying. Nor can any interceed or plead for him, but one that hath ſuch a Death to preſent the *Juſtice* of God withal, in order to the manifeſtation of his *Grace*, for *theſe* muſt agree in one. *Pſal.* 45. 10.

(2.) *THE man himſelf cannot both ſuffer and be ſaved.* Theſe two are utterly inconſiſtent, for the Sinner to bear his own puniſhment, and yet to obtain Salvation: for if we ſuppoſe ſuch a thing, we muſt ſuppoſe that he hath fully anſwered the Law, and diſcharged the Debt that he was obliged to in it, and alſo fulfilled the righteouſneſs of the Law, by perfect obedience to it; all of which is impoſſible. That *he cannot fulfill the righteouſneſs of the Law by active obedience, is evident*, becauſe he is *ungodly*, and conſequently *without ſtrength*; and if a good thought is too big for him, ſurely he cannot keep pace with the Law in its exceeding breadth. And *that he cannot ſatisfy Juſtice for ſin by ſuffering*, ſo as to expiate his guilt, and ſo get out of the hands of the Law, *is certain:* for though Eternity is not eſſential to the penalty of ſin; (elſe the man Chriſt muſt have ſuffered Eternally, for he could not have diſcharged his Suretiſhip, if he had not ſuffered what was eſſential) yet it is inſeperable from thoſe ſufferings, if they fall upon the man himſelf. Death muſt be born, and he that will both bear and get rid of it, muſt overcome it; for if he cannot overcome Death, it will hold him, an everlaſting Priſoner. Now there is no other victory to be gained over it, but only by ſatisfying the Law; for there is the *ſtrength of death*, 1 Cor. 15. 56. And the Law muſt be ſatisfied by Death; and that is by ſuffering proportionably to the merit of ſin, which fallen man cannot do in a ſhorter duration than Eternity. If the threatned Death ſhould fall upon him at once in its weight, it would *annihilate* him. Infinite wrath cannot take up leſs than an eternal duration to ſatisfy it ſelf upon a finite creature, becauſe of its impotency to bear it all at once; which is the true moral reaſon of the Eternity of the ſuffering of the damned.

(3.) *HENCE, except ſome undertake, and be accepted to dye for him, ſinful man cannot be ſaved.* Capital Crimes, are the ruine of him that ſuffers them: leſſer penalties may be gone through, and a man get up again; but if he muſt die, he is not like to live again. And therefore ſince there muſt be a Death ſuſtained on the account of ſin; whomſoever it is found to lie upon in its guilt, unleſs the man hath one that will put in to take his place, and God will take him in exchange for the ſinner, his eternal perdition is utterly unavoidable.

3. *THAT this muſt needs center on Chriſt, or fall upon him to dye.* It muſt of neceſſity be the lot of the Son of God in our nature. And this is a proper reſult from the former, and will be further made evident by theſe things,

(1.) *HE muſt be a* Man *that muſt die for us.* The proper ſubject of the firſt Covenant, was Mankind. *Adam* who appeared in it, did repreſent the whole ſtock that were to deſcend from him by natural generation. As it was man that ſinned, ſo it is man that muſt die for ſin. This is therefore taken notice of, Heb. 2. 14. *Foraſmuch then as the children are partakers of fleſh and blood; he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame, that through death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil.* And further commorated on, ver. 16. *For verily he took not on him the nature of angels: but he took on him the ſeed of Abraham.* And this was pointed to of old, by that law which made the right of Redemption belong to the next of kin. So that no *Angel*, or *Arch-angel* was capable of this, becauſe they are of another ſpecies of being; tho' he had been otherwiſe capable of ſuſtaining the puniſhment, and expiating the guilt, which yet the *Angels* were not.

(2.) *HE muſt be a man* capable *of ſuſtaining the place of a* Surety *for us.* For in no other way could he die for us, ſo that his Death might extend in vertue and efficacy unto us, but as he ſtood charged with our ſins. Hence they are ſaid to be *laid upon him*, Iſai. 53. 6. And he is ſaid to be *made ſin for us*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. which refers to the Sin-offering, on the head whereof, the ſins of Iſrael were laid; and it was for them, to expiate their guilt. And for this he could not be a man deſcending from *Adam* by ordinary generation: for they *are all ſinners*, Rom. 5. 12. and under death, 1 *Cor.* 15. 22. And therefore needing a Surety for themſelves, they could not be Sureties for others: Beſides, that no meer man could diſcharge the Suretiſhip to effect.

(3.) *HE muſt be a Perſon of* God's appointing *and accepting.* The caſe was Criminal; Mankind was fallen into the hands of Juſtice; the ſinner deſerved to die: God was not obliged to take a Surety in exchange for him; He therefore muſt chuſe the Perſon: And upon an impoſſible ſuppoſition, that any other could have ſufficed for the work, and had, in kindneſs to the unhappy Sinner offered himſelf in exchange, it was arbitrary with God, whether he would accept him or no: and therefore the Scripture takes notice of this: God calls him *his Choſen*, Iſai. 42. 1. and tells us that God is *well pleaſed* in him, *Mat.* 3. 17.

(4.) *HE muſt be ſuch a Perſon as could make* full ſatisfaction *to Juſtice by his Death.* Juſtice condemned the Sinner to die, and it was to ſatisfy the Law, it muſt therefore be a Law or Juſtice-ſatisfying Death, that muſt be profitable for us. It had been vain for any to die for us, if by ſo doing he could not ſtop the mouth of the Law, and take off the guilt lying upon us: He muſt therefore be in himſelf an innocent perſon, who had no ſins of his own perſonal: for he that muſt die for

his own ſins, cannot by it expiate the ſins of another: And therefore the Lamb of the Paſſover, was to be without blemiſh; and Chriſt's integrity, and ſinleſs purity is for this reaſon ſo celebrated, 1 *Pet.* 1. 19. 2. 22. *Heb.* 7. 26. And he muſt be ſuch an one, whoſe Death is ſo precious, and of ſuch a value, as to be an equivalent price, and give Juſtice a full ſatisfaction, as if all his redeemed had died in Perſon. It muſt therefore be a *precious blood* that was ſhed, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. elſe ſome of God's Attributes would be loſers by it, which muſt not be.

(5.) *THIS could be no other but Jeſus Chriſt, God-Man.* If any inferiour Perſon would have done, if a leſs worthy Blood would have anſwered the end; it had not then been neceſſary for Him, and he had done for us but an ordinary favour, and ſuch a kindneſs which if he had not, another perſon might have performed for us. But as there muſt Blood go for our ranſom, ſo none more vile, or leſs precious than that of the Eternal Son of God could be ſufficient. He muſt be *Man* to ſuffer, and he muſt be *God* to make his Sufferings of infinite worth: and this could be no other but the Son of God; it being only ſuited to his order and manner of ſubſiſtence in the God-head, to undertake in this affair, & take our nature into union with his Perſon, and in it to die for us. The Scripture therefore limits it, to him alone, *Act.* 4. 12.

USE. LEARN hence, *How infinitely we are beholden to God for giving his Son*, and *to Chriſt for giving Himſelf to Dye for us.* The Apoſtle ſets it forth as the higheſt expreſſion of kindneſs that can be conceived of, Rom. 5. 6, 7, 8. *For when we were yet without ſtrength, in due time Chriſt died for the ungodly. For ſcarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man ſome would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet ſinners Chriſt died for us.* And what can better ſerve to raiſe up our hearts to the greateſt admiration of, and ſtrongeſt endearments to him for this, than the conſideration, & enlargement of our tho'ts upon the *neceſſity of it.* They therefore who deny his dying to redeem us, and do ſay that it was only to ſet us an example, do greatly derrogate from his honour on this account, and weaken our acknowledgements of his kindneſs in it. Let us then contemplate this *Neceſſity*, and fill our Souls with melting thoughts upon it. Say then, It was not Neceſſary on *his* account who was God bleſſed for ever, but it was *our* extremity that brought him to undergo thoſe Sufferings: We were the ungodly perſons, whereas he was righteous: It was when we were without ſtrength to do any thing for our ſelves, that he dyed for us: It was when the Law roared upon us, and inexorable Juſtice demanded its full ſatisfaction, and would not bate us one ιωτα, when an Arm of revenge was lighting down upon us, and ready to hew us in pieces, and there was none appeared to ſave us; then did his bowels yearn, and his heart relent; then did his compaſſions boil over, and he put himſelf in our ſtead, and offered up his Soul a Sacrifice for our Sins: When we were caſt out to the loathing of our perſons, lay wallowing in our own blood, and there was none eye pitied us; then He, in his infinite mercy, interpoſed between us and a juſtly provoked God, and bare all his wrath upon himſelf; And had he not thus done for us, we muſt needs have periſhed, and been forlorn, miſerable, helpleſs wretches, through Eternal Ages. It was not *Judas*'s treachery, nor the *Prieſt*'s malice, nor *Pilot*'s power, that made him to die; He could with eaſe have evaded all theſe; but it was *our neceſſity*: And let theſe thoughts raviſh our hearts with endeared love to him.

[SEPTEMBER 29. 1696.]

SERMON CII.

II. WE proceed to conſider of the *Nature of Chriſt's Death*; an account whereof we may take up in the opening of the following Deſcription; *Chriſt's Death was the laſt part of his Humiliation, in which he voluntarily ſuffered the penalty of our Sins, and therein made Satisfaction to revenging Juſtice on our behalf.*

BY the *Death* of Chriſt, we are not barely to underſtand, the ſeparation of his Soul and Body each from the other, or thoſe outward ſufferings which he felt from the hands of ſinners, which were but a part, and the leaſt part of his Sufferings; but his whole paſſive Obedience, though more eſpecially thoſe which he underwent in the cloſe of his Life, and with which he ended it. And here is ſomething more *general*, and ſomething more *ſpecial* to be obſerved.

1. *MORE general*; *It is the laſt part of his Humiliation.* And here *three* things may be diſtinctly taken notice of;

1. *THAT Chriſt's Death appertains to his Humiliation.* This the Apoſtle takes particular notice of, Phil. 2. 8. *And being found in faſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf; and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs.* And this is of great weight to be remembred: for, we before obſerved, that Chriſt's Humiliation was his Abaſement, wherein he ſubmitted to the law for us. So that whatſoever belongs to his Humiliation, muſt be referred to his mediatorial Suretiſhip, and ſo reckoned as done in the name, and for the ſake of his Choſen, as ſtanding to anſwer the Law of God in their behalf. It was obediential, or an act of obedience to the Law, and ſo anſwered the Law for us, in that point wherein we were to have ſuffered. And except we look upon it under this conſideration, we miſs of the great deſign of Chriſt's dying. *Paul* put the emphaſis there,

Gal.

Gal. 2. 20. *Who loved me, and gave himſelf for me.*

2. *IT is a* part *of his Humiliation.* Some Divines, otherwiſe Orthodox, do make it to engroſs his whole Humiliation, and reſtrain his whole merit and ſatisfaction to his Death, and will allow nothing elſe of what he did to be ſatisfactory and meritorious for us, but only his Sufferings; accounting his habitual innocency, and active obedience, to be only preparatory, or qualities fitting him to merit by dying. But they err in this point. There is a *twofold* reſpect, or ſubſerviency, that fallen man bears to the Law of God, which requires anſwerably a *double* obedience from his Surety: one as he is a *man*, the other as he is a *ſinner.*

(1.) *AS he is a* man, *the Law is the rule of his happineſs.* It tells him what man muſt do, if he will be bleſſed; That active obedience which is required in the moral Law, is the very condition of man's felicity; and it is a ſtanding, perpetual, and unchangeable rule, *Math.* 5. 18. And what doth it ſay? See, *Iſai.* 56. 2. *Jam.* 1. 25. Now, though the fall of man hath diſabled him from doing what is required in the Law, yet it hath not diſengaged him from the Law, or releaſed the condition of it. Man was by creation, neither happy nor miſerable, but equally capable of either. The Law told him what he muſt do to be happy, and aſſured him of miſery upon his default: ſo that, let his impotency be now what it will, yet it ſtill remains a great truth, that if man would be happy, he muſt have an obedience to preſent the great Judge withal, which is commenſurate with the Rule, that ſaith, *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Soul*, &c. This perfect rule, muſt be perfectly attended; and if he have no ſuch Obedience of his own, he muſt have that of Chriſt's to ſtand for him. It therefore *became him to fulfill all righteouſneſs*, Math. 3. 15.

(2.) *AS he is a* ſinner, (which is the condition of all Adam's natural Poſterity,) *ſo the Law declares him miſerable*, and holds him under the ſentence of Death, having paſt it upon him. For man's diſobedience brought death into the World, and the Law hath curſed the diſobedient, and holds him bound over to ſuffer Death for ſin, ſo that he muſt needs die: And if Chriſt will free him from this curſed ſtate, He muſt become a curſe, and die for him. And as it was not enough for him to ſuffer Death for man without meriting life for him; ſo neither is it ſufficient to merit life, unleſs he withal undergo Death: for there is a curſe upon him which muſt be removed, elſe that merit cannot take place: and this is done by dying. So that there are *both* of theſe in Chriſt's Humiliation, and his Death is a *part*, and not the whole of it.

(3.) *IT is the* laſt *part.* There is firſt his active, and then his paſſive Obedience. It is laſt both in order of Nature: Active Obedience belongs to this life: it muſt be done whiles a man lives, or elſe it avails not: *there is no working* for a reward *in the Grave*, Eccl. 9. 10. there muſt be then firſt merit, and then ſatisfaction. And it is laſt in order of *Time*: for, though it is a truth, that Chriſt was a ſufferer from his Infancy, and his life was a dying life, as hath been obſerved in the ſeveral parts, and paſſages of it; *Herod* perſecutes him in his Cradle, and he was all his days a man of ſorrows; Yet his great Suffering, in which he finiſhed the work of man's Redemption, came at the laſt, after he had done his other work; and in which he laid down his life, according to, *Joh.* 17. 4.

2. *MORE ſpecially*; the Death of Chriſt is ſet forth in the remainder of the Deſcription; The principal whereof may be reduced to theſe *four* heads,

1. *THE* quality *of his Death*; viz. *it was the ſuffering of the penalty of our ſins.* And here *two* things are contained,

(1.) *THAT it was for, or upon the account of* ſin, *that Chriſt died.* There is an emphaſis in that, Rom. 5. 6. *Chriſt died for the ungodly.* It was not the malice of Satan, nor the ſpite of the Jews, that properly brought him to his Croſs, but the ſin of man. The Scripture acquaints us, that the demerit or *wages of ſin, is death*, Rom. 6. 23. And where there is no ſin, the Law inflicts no death. But we obſerved, that Chriſt's Death was in obedience to the Law, it being part of his Humiliation. Death is a puniſhment, and ſo cannot legally be inflicted, but where ſin is imputed. And this further appears, becauſe it was God who put him to this grief. *Iſai* 53. 10. If it had been only men, it might have been imputed to their injuſtice; but it was God, the righteous Judge, and therefore there muſt needs be ſin in the caſe: but there was no ſin of his own, for He had none, and therefore it muſt be the ſin of others. Beſides, the Death of Chriſt was a Curſe that fell upon him, as, *Gal.* 3. 12. And there is no Curſe but for ſin. Yea, the Prophet tells us that this was the procuring cauſe of all his Sufferings. *Iſai.* 53. 5.

(2.) *THAT Chriſt in his Death ſuffered the* deſerved *penalty of our Sins.* He not only died for ſin, but he bare the demerit of ſin in dying. His Death was the ſame, for the ſubſtance of it, that ours ſhould have been. It was proportioned to the threatning, Gen. 2. 17. *Thou ſhalt ſurely die.* When we meditate on Chriſt's Death, we are not to bound our thoughts to thoſe outward and bodily Sufferings which he felt from wicked men; for, tho' they were great, yet there are other of his Servants, who have met with as great in their ſuffering for his Name: but there was no *Grief* like that which he underwent. He put himſelf in the room of his Elect, and delivered himſelf up into the hand of divine Juſtice, that it might do to him, as it would have done with them for whom he undertook; and it did ſo. Hence he is ſaid, *to bear our grief*, Iſai. 53. 4. i. e. the ſame that

we

we ſhould have born: the Law had not elſe been anſwered; the threatning of it had not been accompliſhed; *Mercy & Truth, could not elſe have kiſſed each other* in our Salvation: God might have been merciful, but He could not have been juſt, in pardoning and ſaving us without this. If therefore we would know how much Chriſt ſuffered, we muſt conſider how much our Sin deſerved, and expoſed us unto; for Chriſt is ſaid to be *made Sin for us*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. i. e. a Sin-Offering: Now, the Prieſt was to confeſs the Sins of the Sacrificer, over his Offering, and lay his Hand upon the Head of it; and it was to bear the Guilt and Penalty in dying: Hence Chriſt is ſaid to offer *his Soul a Sacrifice for Sin*, Iſa. 53. 10. Now it was infinite Wrath which Sin deſerved; and therefore the moſt extreme Puniſhment was due to the Sinner; and ſo, whatſoever was the *Eſſence* of that Puniſhment, Chriſt underwent: What *that* was, will appear, when we conſider His Death in its Parts; but here in ſum, *It was what was due to us*. Only remember, that it was the *Eſſence* of our Puniſhment: For there were many things which were not eſſential; but only *Adjuncts* and *Conſequents*, which came upon Man, conſidered, either as a finite Creature, or as a Sinner, which Chriſt was exempted from: And they were ſuch as Chriſt's Holineſs and Dignity, rendered him incapable of. And this principally in *two* reſpects.

[1.] *IN regard of Duration.* To ſuffer *eternally* is not of the Eſſence of Puniſhment, but is an *Adjunct*. Infinite Puniſhment indeed is due; for the Merit of ſin infers it, being an infinite offence, and therefore expoſeth the ſinner to infinite wrath: but the reaſon of the *Eternity* of it is becauſe the Creature is *finite*, and ſo cannot bear it at once, and hence muſt anſwer the infiniteneſs of the weight of it, with an infinite Duration. But Chriſt was an infinite Perſon, and therefore, there was an infinite Value in his Suffering, and ſo Death could not hold him, *Act.* 2. 24. And but for this, he could not have redeemed us.

[2.] *IN reſpect of Deordination.* God puniſheth ſin, with ſin, in wicked men; but this is not of the Eſſence, but an Adjunct of puniſhment, and it makes them the more miſerable; whereas Chriſt was holy and ſinleſs, and ſo could not feel any moral miſery, but only natural; and ſo all the Sufferings that he underwent, were altogether without ſin. 2 *Cor.* 5. 21.

2. *THE* activity *of Chriſt in his own Death.* He voluntarily ſuffered all this. Though the Death of Chriſt be truly called his Paſſive Obedience, in regard of the Sufferings which he underwent, yet in reſpect to the principal efficient of it, it may be called an Act: for there is nothing more properly active, then what proceeds from the will; but here were both the elicit and imperate acts of the will of Chriſt in thoſe Sufferings, very active. There was an inward conſent, and an outward reſignation of himſelf to it. Hence thoſe expreſſions of his, Joh. 10. 17, 18. *Therefore doth my Father love me, becauſe I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of my ſelf: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.* Chriſt was not forced, and violently led to his Death by any external agent; but he did freely expoſe himſelf to theſe ſorrows, and ſubmit himſelf to the will of his Father, *Math.* 26. 39. He applied himſelf to the work, as a part of the buſineſs that he came into the World for. And this will appear if we conſider,

(1.) *HE knew his Fathers mind before-hand.* It was an agreement between them in the Covenant of Redemption. *Iſai.* 53. 10. And he was often ſpeaking of it to his Diſciples, before it came: Yea, and it being his Fathers will, though he fore-knew it, yet he was ſo far from uſing means to avoid it, that when the time drew near, he ſet himſelf ſolemnly to prepare for it, as hath before been obſerved.

(2.) *HE could, as he was God, have avoided it.* An evidence of this, we have in his Transfiguration. How ſuddenly could he have taken upon him, ſuch a glorious and aſtoniſhing aſpect, as ſhould have ſurprized his enemies with amazement? And did, *Joh.* 18. *begin.* So that if he had not given himſelf into their hands, they could not have ſurprized him. Yea, and he could with one word, have raiſed an Army of Angels, but that he was engaged in this work, and reſolved to go through with it. *Math.* 26. 53, 54.

(3.) *IT was an Act of Obedience to his Fathers will; and therefore it muſt needs be voluntary.* Chriſt, as he was the Son, promiſed it in the eternal Compact; and Chriſt, as Man, in the eſtate of Humiliation, owed it to the Law: Now there is no obedience but what is voluntary: If the heart and will be not in it, but it be a forced thing, it cannot truly be called Obedience. But Chriſt in this was *obedient*, Phil. 2. 7, 8: And therefore ſpeaking of it, he profeſſeth, that he came thus to *do the will of his Father.*

(4.) *IF it had not been voluntary, it had not been acceptable to God.* For God accepts of no ſervice but what is done with a willing mind. And hence all his actions about it, gave evidence to his Readineſs in it. He knew *Judas* had indented to betray him, and that he knew the place of his uſual reſort; and yet thither he goes, there he waits for him, and when arreſted, he reſigns himſelf up.

3. *THE* benefit *or fruit of Chriſt's Death and Suffering.* He by it made Satisfaction to revenging Juſtice. As there were *two* conditions in the Covenant, ſo relative Juſtice bare a diverſe reſpect to them; to the one as rewarding, to the other as revenging. As ſoon as man became a ſinner, this Juſtice was ſet againſt him for his ruine; and every ſinner that hath guilt on him, is expoſed to its fury. This held all *Adams* poſterity bound over to Death. Now Chriſt comes in, and pays a

Death

Death to Juſtice on his Peoples ſcore, and thereby it becomes fully ſatisfyed. They make a poor thing of Chriſt's Death, who think he died only to be a pattern of patience in ſuffering; as if God had been at all this coſt, to ſend his Son to take our nature, only to be an inſtance of bearing affliction. It is true, the Vertues which Chriſt expreſſed both in his Life and Death, were for our imitation, and we are bidden to learn of him: But this was not all, for, as his Life, ſo his Death was Mediatorial. Here then obſerve,

(1.) *THAT the whole current of Scripture, repreſents the Death of Chriſt, as a ſatisfactory Oblation to the Juſtice of God.* It is called *a Sacrificing of himſelf*, wherein he was the Antitype aimed at in the ſhadowy Sacrifices of the Law. Hence *John* calls him, *The Lamb of God*, Joh. 1. 29. And his Sufferings are called our *Ranſom*, 1 Tim. 2. 6. and we are ſaid to be *healed by his ſtripes*, Iſai. 53. 5. and to bear the *ſins of many*, Heb. 9. ult. And how did he bear them, but in reſpect of Guilt? He did not bear the moral Defilement, He was not polluted by them; but he bare the penalty of them, whereby Juſtice was atoned, and God reconciled, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19.

(2.) *IF Chriſt had not ſatisfied for us, we could not have been Pardoned.* We have before obſerved, that ſuch was the conſtitution of the firſt Covenant, that there was no room for pardon, till Satisfaction be ſecured. This muſt either be by the Offender himſelf, or ſome other for him: He cannot do it himſelf; for, being in the *fleſh*, it is impoſſible that he ſhould *pleaſe God*, Rom. 8. 8. Nor can any do it for him but Chriſt: the work is too big for any other to do but he: and he muſt do it by dying; for there was no other way in which Satisfaction could be made; whereas his Death had enough, that one Sacrifice was ſufficient to anſwer for all our offences. The Perſon was infinite, the Blood was precious: Juſtice had a compleat triumph, when it brought the Son of God to undergo that curſed Death: It then ſat in higheſt ſtate, when God ſmote his Fellow: this is enough to *perfect us*, Heb. 10. 14.

(3.) *THE Grace of God is not obſcured, but rendered the more illuſtrious by Chriſt's Satisfaction.* Chriſt indeed was ſubjected unto Juſtice, but his Redeemed are thus made the ſubjects of the greater Grace. A bare act of pardon, without any more ado, though it would as really have freed us from condemnation, yet it would not have ſo demonſtrated the riches of Grace, as do appear, when the caſe was ſo, that man could not be forgiven, except the Son of God did ſuffer; that God muſt make the way to his being reconciled to us, through the heart of his own Son, and He muſt die, that we may live; He muſt pay the whole price, that we may be diſcharged; He muſt bear the full weight of wrath, that we may eſcape it. Hence the emphaſis is put on it, Joh. 3. 16. *For God ſo loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son.* So, Rom. 8. 32.

4. *THE* Perſons *for whom Chriſt died.* It was on our behalf: it was not for all men univerſally, but for a *ſelect Company* that were known to him from Eternity; whoſe Names were given him in the Covenant of Redemption, who were ſet apart to be made partakers in this Grace, before the World was made, in the decree of Election. Though there are ſome Benefits which flow from the Death of Chriſt to the whole World, and there are yet ſome more peculiar ones afforded to all ſuch as belong to the viſible Church; yet the great end of Chriſt's dying, bare a reſpect to none but Chriſt's *choſen ones.* He ſo died for none but thoſe whom he had indented for, and on whoſe account he had undertaken to make ſatisfaction, to redeem them from their vain converſation, and make them partakers in Heavenly Glory. The Church of the *Jews* was a Type of the Spiritual Church of God: And it is obſervable, that there were no Sacrifices appointed to be offered for the Nations about them, but only for the Congregation. The Ram of the conſecration, was offered only for the ſins of the people of God. They were only the ſins of *Iſrael* that were confeſſed over the head of the Scape Goat, and ſent into the wilderneſs of oblivion. It was only *his Sheep* for whom Chriſt laid down *his life*, Joh. 10. 11. and *he knows them*, ver. 14, 15. and they muſt be converted, *ver.* 16. God's deſign in giving his Son, and Chriſt's deſign in dying, was not meerly to render mankind ſalvable, and yet to leave their Salvation at uncertainty, but He came to ſave. He, by Dying, made way for Application. The People of God owe to God the *Father* the acknowledgment of his ſpecial love in *chuſing* them, and to God the *Holy Ghoſt* of his ſingular love in *calling* them; but not ſo to God the *Son* in *redeeming* them, if he died alike for all. *Peter* in Heaven owes no more thanks to the Second Perſon, than *Judas* in Hell doth, on ſuppoſition that He died for both alike: Chriſt's love muſt be as great to the one as to the other. Chriſt's Death was a fruit of the greateſt love. *Joh.* 15. 13. But what love could it be to all, if having redeemed them from the Law, he doth thereby deſign them the greater damnation by the Goſpel? For it is certain, he never intended to ſave all; for then all ſhould certainly be ſaved; or otherwiſe he muſt loſe his end, and die in vain in reſpect of ſome. And why ſhould *Paul* make ſuch a ſignal remark upon Chriſt's *giving himſelf for him*, Gal. 2. 20. if he had equally given himſelf for all others as he had for him? Redemption is a Priviledge; but to buy a man from the Gallows, to put him to more exquiſite torments, is not a Priviledge but a Plague.

USE. *AND what a potent Obligation doth this Contemplation of Chriſt Death, lay upon all his Redeemed, to Love Him?* How ſhould the thoughts of this Dying Love of His to us, kindle and enflame our affection to Him? Could he find in his Heart to dye for us, and ſhould we think it too much to beſtow our

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beſt love upon Him? Think what manner of Love this is, how unparallel'd! There never was the like, that the Son of God ſhould not only plead, but die for us. Conſider how unworthy we were of this love. If the guilt of the higheſt rebellion, if the ſtain of the moſt loathſome pollution, if the practice of the moſt horrible treachery, and wilful obſtinacy, can render a creature unworthy of his love; ſuch were we. If a creature no way profitable, and every way harmful, that could do no good, and did all manner of evil, is worthleſs; ſuch were we. Think what muſt have become of us, if he had not thus died for us; we had been for ever without hope; the fiery indignation of a jealous God was juſt ready to conſume us, the Arm of his fury juſt falling on us with a downright blow, and we muſt have made our bed in flames for ever. Think how fully revenging Juſtice is ſatisfyed by this Death of his: what great Debts he hath paid, what vaſt Bonds he hath taken up, what an infinite Accompt he hath cancelled. Count up if you can, the innumerable ſins you have been guilty of, the leaſt whereof would have ſunk you into eternal miſeries; and then think of that precious word, Rom. 8. 34. *Who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died, yea rather that is riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh interceſſion for us.* There is not one ſin left. And now think, what a Difference he hath put between us and others, on this very account, that he hath died for us. To make Chriſt's Death common, is to make it contemptible. But when we look, and can ſay, *He died for me*, and not for the World, this renders it admirable to a rapture. We were no nearer to Him, as Creatures, than others: All mankind are of one Blood, of the ſame Parentage, as near a-kin to Chriſt in his humane nature: yea, and we had made our natures as vile by the Apoſtaſy as any. *Eph.*2.3. The Contagion was univerſal, *Adam's* ſin equally imputed, and his polluted Image equally imparted; all the trayterous Children of a Traytor; and it may be, in our lives, more vile than others: And that yet Chriſt ſhould dye for us, to ſave us from all our Abominations, what an unaccountable love is this? And ſhall we not love him above all? What reaſon had the Apoſtle to paſs a fearful curſe on all ſuch as do not *love* him, 1 Cor. 16. 22. *If any man love not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, let him be Anathema, Maranatha.*

[OCTOBER 27. 1696.]

SERMON *CIII.*

WE have taken a *General Account* of the Death of Chriſt, which was the laſt part of his Humiliation. It follows that we look more *Particularly* into the Parts of it.

AND in *General* let it be obſerved, that though the Excellency of Chriſt's Perſon, put an infinite value into his Sufferings, yet that did not excuſe him from ſuffering the *Eſſence* of the whole Curſe which the Law had declared againſt us: and therefore we read, Gal. 3. 13. *Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us: for it is written, Curſed is every one that hangeth on a tree.* Which Curſe is ſummarily comprized in the Threatning, *Gen.*2.17. In which there are *two* ſorts of *Death* contained, the *firſt* and the *ſecond*, or *bodily* and *ſpiritual*; both of which our Redeemer, muſt and did undergo. As for that which is called *eternal* Death, it doth not denominate a third kind; nor is it primarily, but only conſequentially contained in the Curſe; and ſo Chriſt could ſatisfy Juſtice, without ſuffering of it: For the ground of the *Eternity* of the ſinners miſery lies in this, *viz.* the Law muſt be ſatisfied, or the ſinner muſt lie in Priſon till it be; but ſins guilt is too big, the offence is too infinite, to be expiated by the temporary ſuffering of the Offender; he therefore ſuffers eternally, becauſe he is inſolvent: When therefore Chriſt preſented to Juſtice, a Price ſufficient; He dies and riſes again, and Death cannot hold him: But as for a *bodily* and *ſpiritual* Death, he ſuffered them both; Only inverting the Order: Sinners firſt ſuffer the Perfection of a bodily Death, before they undergo the utmoſt of that which is ſpiritual; but Chriſt compleated that which is ſpiritual firſt. The Sinner alſo, uſually ſuffers theſe Deaths, firſt in the Inchoation, and after in the Perfection; ſo alſo did Chriſt: Only let it be remembred, that in all that Chriſt ſuffered, there was nothing but Sorrow, there was no Sin at all; for in that he never became like unto us.

THE *Firſt* thing then we have to take notice of in the Death of Chriſt, is *the Inchoation of his ſpiritual Death:* And this is exhibited to us in that bitter Agony of his which he ſuffered a little before his bodily Death. And there is a particular account given of it by *Three* of the Evangeliſts. *Math.* 26.36, *&c. Mar.* 14. 32, *&c. Luk.* 22. 39, *&c.* out of which we may gather ſome Remarks, to ſet forth this part of his Sufferings. And here,

1. *THE* Name *put upon it, will give us ſome light into the nature of it.* It is called an *Agony*, Luk. 22.44. It comes of a word which ſignifies a Conflict, Strife, or Combat; and is uſed to expreſs the Anguiſh of ſpirit, which with Horror & Trembling ſeizeth one that is about to encounter his Enemy, and is juſt entring the liſts. It therefore tells us what a dreadful Engagement Chriſt had in the *Garden*: He now began to grapple with the Wrath of God, and enter a cloſe fight with the Powers of Hell. It muſt needs be a terrible thing, that could ſet the man Chriſt, united to the Perſon of the Son of God, into ſuch an amazing Conſternation. If his Sufferings had been no other but bodily, & meerly exemplary,

exemplary, and not pænal, as ſome pretend, his patience and reſolution had been but little compared with his Martyrs, who have with greateſt cheerfulneſs gone to and thro' the moſt cruel ſufferings: but it tells us, that his preſent combat, was horrible, which put him into ſuch an *Agony*.

2. HENCE, we may take notice, *that Chriſt's Death, and Soul Sufferings began with his Agony, and it was Spiritual.* They that were with him now, could ſee no more reaſon for it than before; but his Soul is now ſeized upon; and here ſpiritual Death began upon him, in both the parts of it.

(1.) *HERE was the puniſhment of* loſs. He was now debarred from that joy and delight, which the fruition of his Fathers comforting Preſence and Spirit, were won't to afford him; ſo that now, ſorrow, ſadneſs, and ſoul-heavineſs fell upon him, and had like to have killed him. He therefore ſaith to his Diſciples, Mat. 26. 38. *Then ſaith he unto them, My ſoul is exceeding ſorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here and watch with me.*

(2.) *THERE was alſo a puniſhment of* ſenſe. He taſted the bitter wrath of God, and felt the divine diſpleaſure lying very heavy upon him: this was the Cup which he now took the firſt taſte of, and was very ſhortly to drink off to the bottom. Now alſo he was in the hands of the powers of darkneſs; and on that account he ſaith, Luk. 22. 53. *But this is your hour, and the power of darkneſs.* And therefore it is ſaid, Luk. 4. 13. *And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed for a ſeaſon.* Now alſo the ſpirit of ſorrow and miſery ſeized upon him: Only let it be obſerved,

[1.] *THAT the Joy which Chriſt loſt, and the Sorrow which he felt, was only as to the activity of them, or his preſent ſenſe.* He now, and through all his Sufferings had the habit of ſpiritual joy in God, which He loſt not in the darkeſt time of his Sufferings, for He had now an habitual fulneſs of all Graces beyond meaſure. Though there was a preſent ſuſpenſion of the activity of his Joy, yet it was no way wounded or impaired by his ſorrow. Chriſt was holy ſtill, and therefore not without any part of Sanctification, of which ſpiritual Joy is one.

[2.] *THAT Chriſt underwent the wrath of God after a different manner from Sinners:* Or in another reſpect. For, Sinners, that dye and are damned, undergo the divine diſpleaſure, as they are the Objects of God's wrath and anger. *Pſal.* 7. 12. Whereas Chriſt was not properly or abſolutely the Object of God's wrath, but only the ſubject of this penalty, which is the effect of it. For, God was never diſpleaſed with Chriſt, ſo as He is with Sinners, but He loved him moſt entirely, even then, when he did actually withdraw the tokens of his love from him, and ſubjected him to the direful effects of his anger, when he ſtood as our Surety. Nay, indeed, His Father was never better pleaſed with him than now; it was that which he Covenanted with him to do, and made him a great promiſe in caſe he did it. *Iſai.* 53. 10. So that here was the higheſt and moſt eminent teſtimony of his obedience to his Fathers will, that he could poſſibly expreſs.

[3.] *AND Chriſt was ſubjected to the Powers of Darkneſs, after another manner than wicked men are.* They are, and it is part of their ſpiritual Death that they are, ſubjected to Satan in a way of ſervitude and ſlavery, who rules over them, and leads them *Captive at his will*, 2 Tim. 2. 26. They are his willing vaſſals; but Chriſt was never ſo, nor could the Devil ever by any temptations draw him into his ſnare; but he was aſſaulted by him, in a way of vexation, and ſore grief of ſoul, Satan being let looſe upon him, to put him to ſorrow and trouble.

3. WE may more *particularly* take notice of the *Combat which Chriſt was engaged in, in his Agony*; and that both in the *Nature*, and the *Effect* of it on him.

1. *IN the Nature of it*, let us obſerve,

(1.) IT is ſaid, that *He began to be ſorrowful*, Mat. 26. 37. The word is uſed for the ſorrows of a woman that is in travail, *Job.* 16. 21. Chriſt was now compaſſed about with ſorrows on every ſide, and theſe very bitter: All the waters and billows of the wrath of God began to come over his Soul; He was not only filled with them, but caſt into a flood of them, when his ſinking Soul could find no footing or bottom. *Pſal.* 69. 2.

(2.) 'Tis alſo ſaid, that *He was very heavy*, Mat. 26. 37. Some ſuppoſe that the word ſignifies, to be without the ſociety of People, as men that are in bitter ſorrows, love to be alone. Heathen Writers uſe the word to expreſs the moſt corroding and deadly grief that can be thought of. He was ſo oppreſſed with the terror and terrible anguiſh of his ſpirits, that he began to faint. And on this account we read of an *Angel* that was ſent *to ſtrengthen* him under it, *Luk.* 22. 43. All the faculties of his Soul were taken up with the apprehenſion of the bitter impreſſions of the wrath of God that he ſuſtained.

(3.) IT is further added that he was *ſorrowful to death*: They are his own words, who beſt underſtood his own burden & bitterneſs, *Mat.* 26. 38. The weight of divine Vengeance which fell upon him, drunk up his ſpirits, and almoſt overwhelmed and ſwallowed him up. Sorrow is in it ſelf a piece of Death, being one of the fruits of Sin, but for which it had never been heard of. Now ſo direful were the ſorrows that came upon him, that they drank up his ſpirit, and were ready to ſink him into his Grave, and had not a mighty power ſuſtained him, they had certainly ſo done.

(4.) IT is moreover expreſſed of him, that he was *ſore amazed*, Mar. 14. 33. which word is uſed to expreſs, both fear and wonder: and it is therefore improved to ſet forth the greateſt aſtoniſhment, of one that is beyond meaſure affrighted. All Chriſt's faculties

were ſeized upon by the ſuffering that he was now engaged in: the ſudden ſeizure of it upon him, was exceeding formidable and dreadful to him; His whole humane nature did, as it were, ſtart at, and fly back from it, not in rebellion, but in a deep ſenſe of the aſtoniſhing weight of miſery that he was now called to undergo, and combat withal. And from this heap of expreſſions uſed about it, we may ſafely infer theſe *four* Concluſions,

[1.] *THAT the Sorrows which Chriſt felt, did not only fall upon the inferiour faculties of his ſenſitive Soul, but on the ſuperiour faculties of his reaſonable Soul.* And that he intended theſe when he ſaid, Mat. 26. 38. *My ſoul*, &c. may be concluded, both becauſe he ſtood in our room, and bare our ſorrows, who were curſed in Soul as well as Body, whoſe rational powers were chiefly concerned in ſin, and therefore to be principal ſufferers in the puniſhment of it: as alſo, becauſe the inferiour powers in the Man Chriſt, were entirely ſubordinated to the ſuperiour, and were accordingly acted by them. He was not *ſorrowful & amazed* without reaſon, &c. *Joh.* 11. 34.

[2.] *THAT this agony and conflict of his Soul, was not meerly an act of ſympathy with his Body; but it had its proper and immediate ſufferings.* We may well ſuppoſe that Chriſt did not at this time ſuffer in his Body, any pain or torment; but the wrath of God fell upon his Soul itſelf, his Heart was oppreſſed, and the Soul within him was ſmitten with it: *that* was filled with trouble, *Pſal.* 69. 1. He was now fallen into the hands of God's Juſtice, armed with Vengeance, and it was very terrible to him.

[3.] *NOR was it in compaſſion to others that he was thus ſorrowful; but it was his own proper Paſſion that he underwent.* He had taken upon him to be our Surety, and put himſelf in our place; And now the Great GOD came to demand the Satisfaction of him which he owed to his revenging Juſtice; God himſelf now clapt the Arreſt upon him, and put the Cup into his hand, which was filled with all the bitter ingredients, the dregs whereof he was to drink. God now began to *make his Soul an offering for ſin*, Iſai. 53. 10. We may reckon him to be intended in the Antetype, making that bitter moan, Pſal. 40. 12. *For innumerable evils have compaſſed me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me: ſo that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of mine head, therefore my heart faileth me.* For though he had no ſin of his own, yet all the ſins of all the Elect, were his by Imputation, and they all took faſt hold of him.

[4.] *NOR was it the fear and horror of a bodily Death approaching, that made him in ſuch an agony and bitterneſs at the apprehenſion of it.* For, though Death it ſelf be that which humane nature reſents with conſternation, accounting it in itſelf a great evil, yet meerly as ſuch, the Grace of Chriſt beſtowed on his People, hath made them to overcome this fear, even then when it hath been ſet before them, with all the ſhame and barbarous cruelty attending it, that all the art and malice of Men and Devils could invent. Surely then, he in whom all this Grace was fountained, and who received the Spirit beyond meaſure, muſt needs be able to conquer it in himſelf; but it was the ſenſe of a ſpiritual Death ſeizing of him, and a felt ſeparation from the favourable preſence of God, that did thus *amaze him*: God now began to forſake him, and he is ſorely diſtreſſed, and dreadfully amazed at it.

2. WE may further ſee *the terribleneſs of this Agony*, if we conſider the *Effects* of it, which were *two*.

(1.) *THE earneſtneſs which it put him upon in Prayer to his Father about it.* How vehemently doth he deprecate this Cup? How importunately doth he requeſt of his Father, that if there were any other poſſible way for the ſatisfying of divine Juſtice, He might be excuſed from drinking off the bottom of this Cup of Vengeance? In this Prayer of his, He diſcovered a Soul deeply aſtoniſhed, and a nature extreamly averſe to the ſuſtaining of the indignation of God which was now coming out againſt Him: And this vehemency of his in it appears, both in the nature of that expreſſion, *if it be poſſible*; and the triplication of the requeſt in the ſame words, He went a *ſecond*, and a *third* time, Mat. 26. 39, 44. and in that he grew every time more intenſe in it. *Luk.* 22. 44. And doubtleſs it is to this Agony, that the Apoſtle hath reference, Heb. 5. 7. *Who in the days of his fleſh, when he had offered up prayers and ſupplications, with ſtrong crying and tears, unto him that was able to ſave him from death, and was heard, in that he feared.*

(2.) *IN that bloody ſweat of his, which fell from him in that Agony.* We have the account of it given, in *Luk.* 22. 44. *And being in an agony, he prayed more earneſtly, and his ſweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.* The word ſignifies concrete or thick blood, which was an argument and effect of an exceeding great and unparallel'd fear & amazement. Great dread hath often put perſons in a ſweat; but to ſweat congeal'd blood is not uſual, and therefore it muſt needs be a declaration, that the wrath of God was inconceivably dreadful to him, and that he could not tell how to endure it; and the Man Chriſt, had certainly broken under it, had there not been an everlaſting Arm underneath.

4. *WE may briefly reflect upon ſome Circumſtances accompanying this Agony*, which may not be unprofitable for us to contemplate.

1. *THE Time when he entered upon this Agony.* *Mat.* 26. 36. It was as ſoon as he had inſtituted and adminiſtred the Sacrament of the Supper, and finiſhed that excellent Diſcourſe with his Diſciples which followed upon it, and had commended himſelf and them to God in a pathetical Prayer, *Joh.* 17. The next thing that entertains him is this

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ſore conflict. God ſometimes calls his deareſt Servants from the neareſt Communion with Him, to the greateſt Trials; yea, and by ſuch Communion to prepare them for ſuch exerciſes. Such ſudden Changes therefore are to be expected, and not looked on as ſtrange things. The Captain of our Salvation was thus exerciſed, and well may we.

2. *THE Place where this Agony was.* It is particularly remarked, and it is not for nothing. We read, Mat. 26. 36. *Then cometh Jeſus with them unto a place called Gethſemane.* Some ſuppoſe the name to ſignify the place of a *Wine-preſs*; and it is certain, that Chriſt came hither to begin to tread the Wine-preſs of his Fathers wrath. Others think it to ſignify a *Valley of fatneſs*; which alluſion is alſo very ſignificant, in that the fruits of thoſe Sufferings which he entred upon here, are very rich. It is called a *Garden*, Joh. 18. 1. And Chriſt repaired hither, partly for retirement to be alone in his Agony; partly that he might be found by *Judas*, who knew it to be the place of his uſual reſort; partly that he might be taken without a tumult. *It was a Garden:* One of the Fathers commenting on it ſaith, 'As Sin began in a Garden, ſo did 'Chriſt's Sufferings. Another ſaith, 'It was 'meet that the Blood of the Phyſician ſhould 'be poured out, where the Diſeaſe of the 'Sick began. In a Garden *Adam* had his Sen'tence, and in a Garden Chriſt ſubmitted to 'that Sentence, and entred upon his Paſſion. Some think it was that called the *King's Garden*, Neh. 3. 15. The Kings of *Judah* had their Gardens for pleaſure at the foot of Mount *Olivet*; here did the King of Kings enter upon his Suffering. *They* came thither for pleaſure, and *He* for ſorrow. God can make the ſame place a place of comfort or ſorrow to his People as he ſees meet: Yea, it coſt the Son of God bitter ſorrow to purchaſe for us, all our comforts and delights.

3. *THE perfect and full Submiſſion of Chriſt, to his Fathers pleaſure, under all the reluctances of his innocent nature, againſt his Sufferings.* Though his conſternation was terrible, and his petition very vehement and importunate, his cries ſtrong and piercing, yet they did not any whit put him off from his duty of full reſignation to his Father in the determination of this affair. Mat. 26. 39. *Nevertheleſs, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* Earneſt deprecation of affliction is very well conſiſtent with a free ſubjection to God. It doth not neceſſarily argue, that we are not obedient to God, becauſe we pray hard againſt an affliction that looks terrible to us. We may, and ſometimes ought to pray againſt an affliction, which God hath purpoſed that we muſt ſuffer, for not the purpoſe, but the precept is our rule, which hath made it our duty. Our fears and deſires are then regular, when though never ſo earneſt, they leave the Soul finally reſolving its ſelf into God's will.

4. *THE great failing in the three Diſciples whom he took with him, to be more nearly converſant in his Agony.* Mat. 26. 40, 43. He had bid them to *watch* with him, but they fell aſleep, and inſtead of relieving him grieved him, though he pitied them. Thus God withdrew from Chriſt the creature relief. And it tells us, there is no ſecurity in the beſt and moſt faithful of men, to be our comforters in an hour of need: if God leave them, they ſhall prove miſerable comforters, as *Job*'s friends did to him, and theſe *three* Diſciples to Chriſt.

USE. I. *THE Conſideration of Chriſt's Agony, ſpeaks awful terror to all Sinners out of Chriſt.* And the very Hiſtory of it as it hath been now laid open before us, may be a ſolemn monitor to all impenitent ones. If Chriſt hath not born the brunt of God's anger for you, you your ſelves muſt certainly ſuſtain it in your own perſons; and little do you know what it is to enter into the liſts of contention with an angry God, armed with fury and revenge; to have all comforts taken away from you, and floods of ſorrow to overtake and overflow you at once, to loſe the preſence of God's favour for ever, and no more to taſte one drop of his Love. Would you have a glimpſe of what it is to meet an angry God in the field, fix your thoughts upon Chriſt in the Garden, ſee him combating with divine fury, behold the bitter ſorrows of his heart, thoſe amazing fears, that deep conſternation, thoſe deadly pangs of Soul, that ſore heavineſs, thoſe ſtrong cries that he uttered, thoſe congealed drops of blood, that fell from him to the ground; and remember, that all this was from the ſenſe of the juſt penalty of ſin, which he now began to undergo: they were the beginning of ſorrows. And could not he bear theſe ſcalding drops, without deadly amazement, how do you think to endure, when he ſhall meet you in fury, and come upon you armed in the almighty Power, and implacable Vengeance. And if all theſe things were done to Chriſt, who yet was all this while his beloved Son, and had never diſpleaſed him, what ſhall be done to you, who are perſons hated of God, and muſt expect that your miſery ſhall continue to perpetuity. Oh then! Let Sinners improve this thought, to put them upon uſing no delays in ſeeking to eſcape this Wrath, whiles there is a door of Salvation ſtanding open to them.

USE. II. LEARN hence, *how dear the Redemption of Souls is.* How much it coſt to ranſom poor ſinners from condemnation, and bring loſt man back to the enjoyment of peace and favour with God. If the beginning of thoſe ſorrows which Chriſt underwent for us, and the inchoations of that Death which He ſuffered on our account, were ſo deadly, and ſo amazing to him, certainly then, the going through the whole work of it, was unconceivable. None but the Son of God, could ever have undergone it: How vain then are they who think to obtain mercy at a cheap rate? Who ſuppoſe

that an empty, *God have Mercy upon us*, will command their deliverance, and procure their peace with Him, and their eſcaping from the wrath to come? If we go no further than the Garden, and there ſee and hear, the wreſtlings, the ſtruglings, the amazements, the horrors, and earneſt ſupplications of the Son of God in our nature, we ſhall not want ſufficient matter of inſtruction, to teach us that it was a terrible thing, to become man's Surety, and to engage in the bringing about of his Redemption. And let our Contemplation of theſe things, before we paſs to the more fearful ones that are yet behind, help us to get ſin more imbittered, and Chriſt to be more dear and precious to us: and bring our ſelves by it under the more potent Obligations to avoid the ſin that coſt him ſo dear, and to love and ſerve him in newneſs of life, all our days, who ſo loved us.

[NOVEMBER 24. 1696.]

SERMON *CIV.*

IT follows that we paſs from the Inchoations of Chriſt's *Spiritual*, to that of his *Bodily Death*. And, though the whole Life of Chriſt was full of Death, He being a *Man of Sorrows* from his Infancy, yet we are now upon the Conſideration of the laſt tragical part of his Life. And here his inchoative Bodily Death is obſervable in two things, viz. *His Arreſt*, and *His Arraignment and Trial*. The former of theſe is *his Arreſt*, which may at preſent be contemplated by us.

THE Son of God in our nature, was not only to dye for us, but he was to dye as a Criminal; He fell into the hands of divine Juſtice, God would proceed againſt him as an Offender. And though he fell immediately upon him, in that part of his Death which was Spiritual, yet in that which was Bodily, he made uſe of Men to be inſtrumental in it: who, though as they were voluntary Agents in it, they did wickedly, yet, as God made uſe of them as Inſtruments in executing of the Curſe on him, which he had undertaken, they fulfilled his determinate counſel in this affair. Hence that, Act. 2. 23. *Him being delivered by the determinate counſel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and ſlain.* He is therefore firſt Arreſted, in order to his Trial and Condemnation. And how great and grievous his Sufferings were on this account, may now be inquired into; which will help us in the view of the wonderful Love which he bare to us miſerable Sinners. The Evangeliſts do all of them give us the Hiſtorical account of this matter, out of which we may, for our inſtruction gather a few Remarks; which I ſhall liſt under two heads, 1. *How much there was of his Suffering in this paſſage of his Death?* 2. *How eminently his Love appeared to us, in his voluntary ſuffering of it?*

1. *THERE was no ſmall part of Death in this Arreſt that Chriſt underwent.* Not only, in that it was the firſt ſcene of his bodily Death, but alſo in regard to the high indignities, and very grievous affronts that were offered to him in it, and the many ſorrows that it brought upon him: And therefore we have him ever and anon typically brought in, in the Old-Teſtament, making heavy moan about every of theſe paſſages, as of ſuch things as were an heart-breaking to him. One of theſe is in, *Pſal.* 69. and ſee more eſpecially, ver. 20. *Reproach hath broken mine heart, and I am full of heavineſs: and I looked for ſome to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.* And if we would rightly conceive of them, we muſt look upon the Perſon that ſuffered theſe things, together with our conſidering of what things they were that he ſuffered. Now the Perſon, was the Son of God in our nature, and therefore a moſt glorious Perſonage; and we know, that generous and noble Souls, take vile affronts and contempts caſt upon them, as bitterly as, yea, they are more bitter to them than Death itſelf. To conſider of a vile and ignoble perſon, of a ſordid low ſpirit, as ſo dealt with, is comparatively but little; but to behold the King and Lord of Glory thus handled, will be a fit conſideration for us to carry through all his ſufferings for Sinners, to heighten the bitterneſs of the ſorrow which he underwent in theſe ſufferings. And the Apoſtle puts an emphaſis upon it, Phil. 2. 6,7. *Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of men.* Now we may obſerve the aggravations of theſe Sufferings in ſeveral reſpects,

1. *IN reſpect of* Judas *that Arch-Traytor, and Betrayer of him:* which made no ſmall additions to his Sufferings; and that in more circumſtances than one, viz.

(1.) *THAT ſuch an one as* Judas *ſhould be the ring-leader in ſuch a deſign as this was. Judas*, whom Chriſt had ſo much honoured and advanced, whom He had priviledg'd to be taken into his Family, had preferred him to the Apoſtleſhip, had made him privy to his ſecrets, had acquainted him with his Goſpel-miracles, had advanced him to be an Ambaſſadour of the glad tidings of peace, and ſent him forth to Preach the Goſpel of Salvation, and empowered him to caſt out Devils, and work many miracles in his Name, and betruſted him to be Steward in his Family: And that after all this was done for him, he ſhould betray him, ſell him, and deliver him into the hands of his enemies, and come in the head of ſuch a rout. We have the Pſalmiſt making bitter complaint, and greatly aggravating of this, in the perſon of *Achitophel*, Pſal. 55. 13, &c. And this is referred unto, in Pſal. 109. 4. And 41. 9. *Yea mine own familiar friend in whom I truſted, which did eat*

of

of my bread, hath lift up his heel againſt me. Which is applied to this by Chriſt himſelf, *Joh.* 13. 18.

(2.) *THAT he did this voluntarily.* The motion to it aroſe from himſelf. *Judas* indeed knew of the inveterate malice which the Prieſts and Elders bare againſt Chriſt, but they did not propoſe any ſollicitations to him, to draw him over to them, in a conſpiracy againſt his Lord, but he offered himſelf freely unto them, and made the firſt propoſal of a bargain with them about it. *Mat.* 26. 14, 15. Had he been drawn into it by Temptation, of great offers, and importunity, it had not been ſo much, though that alſo had been horrible ingratitude; but that notwithſtanding all the Obligations laid upon him by the peculiar favours of his Lord, he ſhould go and contrive in his own heart, how he might betray a Perſon, whom in his own Conſcience he knew to be innocent, into the hands of murderers; for this he afterwards, upon reflection, confeſſed, *Mat.* 27. 3,4. This added to Chriſt's grief; and of this it is, that *David*, in the perſon of Chriſt, makes his complaint, Pſal. 10. 7, 8. *His mouth is full of curſing, and deceit, and fraud: under his tongue is miſchief and vanity. He ſitteth in the lurking-places of the villages: in the ſecret places doth he murder the innocent: his eyes are privily ſet againſt the poor.*

(3.) *THE contemptuous Price that he ſet him at.* He not only baſely ſold the Lord of Glory, but he alſo ſet a very low, and inferiour value upon Him, when he ſold Him; it was *thirty pieces*, Mat. 26. 15. This was the eſtimate that was put upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and that by *Judas*, who had ſeen and known ſo much of his tranſcendent excellency: and ſee with what reflection our Saviour himſelf ſpeaks of it in the prophecy, Zech. 11. 12,13. *And I ſaid unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not forbear: ſo they weighed for my price thirty pieces of ſilver. And the Lord ſaid unto me, Caſt it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them: And I took the thirty pieces of ſilver, and caſt them to the potter in the houſe of the Lord.* He was ſold for next to nothing. Theſe *thirty pieces* were in probability Hebrew ſhekels, which was an ordinary Coin in uſe among them, and according to which, all Sums under a Talent, were wont to be rated. Now their ſhekels were of two ſorts, there was the common ſhekel, which weighed two drachms, and the ſhekel of the Sanctuary, which was twice as much as the other; if we ſuppoſe they were the former, it was *thirty ſeven ſhillings & ſix pence*; if the latter, *three pounds fifteen ſhillings*, of Engliſh money. And we ſhall find that this juſt Sum was in the Law to be reckoned as the price of a ſlave, Exod. 21. 32. *If the ox ſhall puſh a man-ſervant, or a maid-ſervant, he ſhall give unto their maſter thirty ſhekels of ſilver, and the ox ſhall be ſtoned.* So that in this Sale the great Redeemer of mankind, was reputed as a Vaſſal, and his Life was ſold, as a diſregardable thing. And how vile an ignominy was herein caſt upon him?

(4.) *THE baſe hypocriſy that he practiſed in betraying of Chriſt.* He was to bring them to him, and to give them a ſign, by which they might not be miſtaken, and ſeize another inſtead of him; and the way in which he is to be diſcovered, is by a traytorous *kiſs*. A pretence to the greateſt friendſhip, muſt be a cloak to cover the falſhood which he uſed. It was horrid and helliſh policy, that they muſt have ſuch a guide as *Judas*, to lead them the way, who knew his reſorts, and where to find him out; who alſo knew his perſon, ſo that they might be ſure not to be miſtaken in the dark: And it was a cunning deceit, that he ſhould come as a friend to detain him, leſt otherwiſe they might be ſuſpected, and He make his eſcape in the night. Chriſt alſo took ſpecial notice of this, and thereupon upbraids him with it, Luk. 22. 48. *But Jeſus ſaid unto him, Judas, betrayeſt thou the Son of man with a kiſs?* And of this paſſage the Pſalmiſt complains, as a Type of Chriſt, Pſal. 55. 20, 21. *He hath put forth his hands againſt ſuch as be at peace with him: he hath broken his covenant. The words of his mouth were ſmoother then butter, but war was in his heart: his words were ſofter then oyl, yet were they drawn ſwords.*

2. *IN reſpect of the* Chief Prieſts, *and* Rulers *of the People, this alſo greatly added to the reproach of Chriſt's Sufferings.* This aſſault that was made upon him, when he was Arreſted, was not done only by their countenance of, or connivance at it, which yet had been a vile affront offered him, but it was by warrant and authority from them. See, Joh. 18. 3. *Judas then having received a band of men, and officers from the chief Prieſts and Phariſees, cometh thither with lanterns, and torches, and weapons.* If it had been only a popular tumult and fury, ariſing and deriving meerly from the rabble, though it had been troubleſome, yet it had not been ſo ignominious, but when all this was done by Order and Warrant granted from thoſe who were in chief Authority, and ſo was authorized by them; this reflected all the diſgrace upon Chriſt that could be, & rendred him in account or eſteem of the Law, a man guilty of ſome horrible Crime, and not worthy to live or draw his breath among men. It did give men to ſuſpect and believe, that he was to be accounted the worſt of men; He was in this very act of theirs, declared to be one reputed as a publick enemy both to Church and State, as a notorious and intollerable diſturber of them both; for both Civil and Eccleſiaſtical Powers ſigned the Warrant, and commiſſioned *Judas* and his Accomplices to ſeize him after this manner; and they were ſuch alſo as profeſſed themſelves to be the people of God, and carried out with an earneſt zeal for his Glory.

3. *THE manner of his being Arreſted, and*

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the actions accompanying of it; represented Him as one looked upon as a Thief, and a great Malefactor, and one that was unworthy to live: And hence, there was not only the greatest violence used in this act, but it was performed after the most disgraceful manner; as will appear in several passages attending of it, viz.

(1.) *THE Quality and Number of the Company that came as Attendants and Assistants in it.* They are said to be *a great multitude*, Mat. 26. 47. It is true, there were *Officers, and a band of men*, Joh. 18. 3. Yea, there were *Chief Priests*, and *Captains of the Temple*, and *Elders*, as, *Luk.* 22. 52. whose coming was not to put any respect on him in this seizure, but to shew their own inveterate malice; but there were gathered together all the rabble, and raskally multitude, filling of the streets with tumult and uproar, as they were wont to do, when an Officer goes to hale some drunkard, or debauched person before the Magistrate. He was set upon by the very scum of the City, and this is very intollerable contumely in man's account. And we have Christ represented in *David*, as taking an affectionate notice of it, Psal. 22. 12,13. *Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening, and a roaring lion.* Psal. 69. 12. *They that sit in the gate, speak against me; and I was the song of the drunkards.* And the more, because they were such whom he had shewn so much kindness unto. Hence that moan, *Psal.* 35. 11, *&c.*

(2.) *THE Time when they chose to come and seize him*; it was *late at night*: And thereupon they come with *Lanterns* and *Torches*, to make the greater rout, and greater discovery of their spleen against him, *Joh.* 18.3. Thieves are wont to wake and do their pranks in the Night time, and to lie hid all the Day, left they should be seen & taken. Herein therefore they acted as those that were in pursuit of some Felon or seditious Person. And so also our Saviour resents this action, and accordingly expostulates with them about it, Mat. 26. 55. *Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me?*

(3.) *THE Provision that they come furnished with, for the taking and securing of him*: they went armed *with swords* and *staves*, Mat. 26. 44. Likely, the band of men came in their military equipage, but the rabble that were gathered up in their going, every one snatching up something that he found next at hand, to appear in the more hostile way against him, as though he had been one that went about to raise some insurrection, or make a tumult or riot among the People: they go as provided against a common enemy. And this also is part of Christ's expostulation, *Mat.* 26. 55.

(4.) *THEIR Dealing with him in this seizure*, was also full of violence and insolence,

For,

[1.] *THEY all fall upon him at once, and with many hands they lay hold of him.* Mat. 26. 50. They resolve to make sure of him, if possible. They were afraid lest by any means he should escape away from them, looking upon him as a dangerous person, and therefore they rudely clap in, and beset him about as so many bees, encompassing him on all hands, as a company of ravening wolves that had gotten their prey in their paws. And of this also we have that complaint, Psal. 22. 16. *For dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet.*

[2.] *THEY bind him.* Joh. 18. 12. They counted they could not make too sure of him, and thought it not enough they had him in their hands, and had so strongly guarded him with so many armed men, but must also put gins and manicles upon him: wherein also they treated him as a Robber, or runaway Slave. It was contrary to the custom, yea and looked upon as a casting the vilest disgrace that could be upon a man, to bind him; and for that reason it was a thing that free-men were exempted from by law or custom, before such time as they had been tryed and condemned. Act. 22.25. *And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, & uncondemned?* It was therefore an act of great contempt & despite, and carried with it horrible indignity.

4. *IT also added greatly to his affliction, and was a piece of Death to him, that in this juncture his Disciples forsook him and fled.* Mat. 26. 56. It is true, at the first one of them began to show his great zeal, and precipitantly drew his Sword; and began to lay about him; but very quickly his spirit also fainted, and mis-gave him; and all of them one after another deserted him: he was now exposed to scorn, and rage, and abuse from his deadly haters. And there is not so much as one appears to own his cause, or stand up for him; so that whiles his enemies malice vents itself against him, all his friends are run away, and he is deserted, to bear all himself alone; herein they discovered their fear and cowardize, in that they durst not be seen to take his part, yea, and their shame too; as is pointed unto, Isai. 53. 3. *He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.* Christ was now exposed to suffer all manner of ignominy, and abuse; and none of his friends will acknowledge him, but reckon it both dangerous and reproachful for them so to do: so that he was here at once, both persecuted by his enemies, and deserted by his friends: And it was no little part of the bitterness of his cup, and augmentation of his sorrow, that they thus dealt by him. Hence he so bemoans himself, Psal. 69. 8. *I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my*

my mothers children. And Pſal. 80. 20. And 142. 4. 88. *ult.* 38. 11.

II. WE may obſerve how eminently his Love to us diſcovered itſelf in that he voluntarily ſuffered all this. Here two thihgs,

1. *HE was voluntary in it.* Whatſoever of Violence was uſed againſt him; yet he freely expoſed himſelf to it. For,

(1.) *IT is certain, that he could with greateſt eaſe have eſcaped out of their hands.* He had often done it before, when his time was not come. He could have avoided the place; he knew that *Judas* knew it, and would come hither after him. He had the advantage of the Night to make a ſecret retreat, had he had a mind to it; nay he could have nailed them to the ground with a word, as well as threw them there: in which he gave a ſpecimen of what he was able to have done. *Joh.* 18. 6.

(2.) *IF he had needed them, all the Angels were at his command.* And he could have called them in to his help: and one of them had been more than enough to have dealt with all that rabble; whereas for a word ſpeaking, he could have called in *more than twelve legions*, Mat. 26. 53. All God's Angels obey him; the Heavenly Hoſt acknowledge him to be their Lord, and they worſhip him.

(3.) *HE reſtrained his Diſciples from helping him, and rebuked him who attempted it.* Mat. 26. 52. And he gives the reaſon why he did ſo, *ver.* 54. becauſe nothing which the Scripture had revealed, and God had therein promiſed for his people, ſhould be in the leaſt withſtood by him. He was engaged to do his Fathers will, and reſolved to do it effectually.

(4.) *HE went out to them, and readily reſigned himſelf up into their hands, to do what they would with him.* He ſtood ſtill, he made no reſiſtance at all. Joh. 18. 4. *Jeſus therefore knowing all things that ſhould come upon him, went forth, and ſaid unto them, Whom ſeek ye?* Though he told them of their ſin, and ſignified how vilely and reproachfully they carried to him, without any reaſon, yet he withſtands them not, but ſuffers them to lay hands on, bind, and carry him away, and do with and to him, whatſoever they ſaw meet. And what greater evidence could he give of his voluntarineſs and readineſs in it?

2. *IN this voluntarineſs of his, he expreſſed his wonderful Love to us.* Which that we may underſtand, we may endeavour to get the right conception of theſe things. The generality labour under great miſtakes, when they read this Hiſtory. When they obſerve the affronts that were offered to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and all the abuſes and wrongs, which he ſuffered from them, who was an innocent Perſon, and a great Benefactor, who healed their diſeaſes, and relieved their wants, and went up and down doing good, their bowels relent, and they pity Chriſt, and are full of anger at this cruel, inhumane, and ungrateful people, and charge them high: and now they think they have ſhewn their zeal for, and love to Chriſt ſufficiently: whereas theſe are but carnal affections, flowing from carnal conceptions of things. But let us obſerve, that though the wickedneſs of theſe inſtruments appeared in all this, yet Infinite Wiſdom, and Sovereign Providence ordered it all for the bringing about of our recovery from Hell, and deliverance from Condemnation. Here then obſerve,

(1.) *THAT God's Elect, together with the reſt of Mankind, were fallen under Guilt, and ſo expoſed to the righteous Judgment of God.* In this condition Chriſt found all his, when he came into the world on their account: Iſai. 53. 6. *All we like ſheep have gone aſtray: we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* Sin is a Tranſgreſſion of the Law, which hath denounced a curſe againſt all that are found breakers of it. By ſin therefore, all *Adam's* progeny are become men of Death. The *Law* condemns them, and they *are found guilty*, Rom. 3. 14.

(2.) *HENCE, in order to their trial and condemnation, they are to be arreſted, and dragged before God's Tribunal.* For God's Judgment is orderly. He firſt tries, before he condemns. He did ſo by *Adam*, and *Eve*, and the *Serpent*, before he paſt their doom upon them, *Gen.* 3. So that God's Elect, being Sinners, were in danger of being laid hold of, and faſt bound as priſoners of Juſtice, to anſwer as Criminals, at the great Bar.

(3.) *IN this Warrant, they were chargeable with all manner of the vileſt Abominations.* There is no kind of ſin, but they have it in their nature. Original Sin is a body of Death, to which belong all the members: Nay, there is ſcarce any ſin to be named, but ſome of Chriſt's redeemed, have actually, and ſcandalouſly fallen into. I am ſure, when the Apoſtle reckons up a number of the moſt hateful, he finds ſome of his converted Corinthians, to have been under the guilt of them, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10, 11. *Know ye not that the unrighteous ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abuſers of themſelves with mankind, Nor theeves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners ſhall inherit the kingdom of God: And ſuch were ſome of you, but ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

(4.) *HENCE they deſerved to have this Warrant ſerved on them, and to be arreſted with the greateſt opprobry and contempt.* It was no more than their due, to be purſued as Thieves and Robbers, and ſeditious Perſons; and the vileſt Varlets, with ſwords and ſtaves; and tumult, and to be dragged to priſon, as a company of runaway ſlaves: ſhame and confuſion of face belongs to them. *Dan.* 9. 8.

(5.) *THE Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ſtanding our Surety, was to bear all this in our ſtead.* This

was

was one part of our griefs, which if we be delivered from, he muſt undergo in our name. *Iſai.* 53. 4. For, though he was innocent in himſelf, and deſerved none of this treatment from men, yet, being in our place, all that guilt which was before ours, now became his, and was tranſlated on him; and if we go free, he muſt undergo it. 2 Cor. 5. 21. *For he hath made him to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.*

(6.). HENCE, *not meerly man's unrighteouſneſs, but mainly God's righteouſneſs is to be eyed in this.* Chriſt muſt not only die, but it muſt be in a legal proceſs. He muſt not be violently cut off, but in form and courſe of Law; and though men covered their malice with pretences of equity, yet God in infinite Wiſdom ordered it, that one might die, and the whole nation of God's Elect eſcape. This made him to reſign himſelf, not becauſe men bloodily deſired his Death, but becauſe God righteouſly appointed it. Therefore he ſubmitted to be *numbred with Tranſgreſſors*, Iſai. 53. 12.

USE. LABOUR we then, *to ſee our ſelves in this Glaſs, and look upon Chriſt as Suffering our part in this Tragedy.* And how vile ſhould this render us in our own eyes, and how admirably lovely ſhould it make Jeſus Chriſt unto us? When we look upon Him in our thoughts under this horrible diſgrace, it ſhould make Him appear honourable and adorable to us. Think then in your reflection upon this ſtory; I was the curſed Caitiff, that deſerved to be laid hands upon, and to be made a very ſcorn of men, to have been purſued with hue and cry, laden with chains and fetters, and brought forth to be made a ſpectacle of ſcorn and diſdain: but behold, the Son of God, in pity and tender compaſſion to me, though he did no ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth, willingly offered himſelf to the contempt, and reſigned himſelf up to have his precious hands manicled, and feet fettered; to have a vile rout fall upon him in fury, and bring him to the bar, that I might be juſtifyed, and my Soul ſet at liberty. What inſuperable Love was this, that would endure to be betrayed by *Judas*, ſold as a Slave, laid hold on by wicked hands, forſaken of his friends, and led in triumph by his vileſt enemies? And let all that have believed in him, take encouragement from hence, to anſwer their own Conſciences, when they give them trouble, and acknowledge all the freedom you have from the fears of divine arreſt, to this humbled Saviour, who thus underwent it in your ſtead.

[DECEMBER 22. 1696.]

SERMON CV.

II. WE proceed to the Conſideration of the other part of Chriſt's Inchoative *Bodily Death*, viz. *His Arraignment and Trial.* And here we are to obſerve, that Chriſt was *twice* arraigned and tried: Once before the Eccleſiaſtical Council, and after that before the Civil Magiſtrate; both of theſe are hiſtorically recorded by the Evangeliſts; in each of them there was a great deal of Sorrow, Diſgrace, and Death, that our Saviour underwent. We may therefore take a brief view of them ſeverally,

1. *IN His Arraignment and Tryal before the Eccleſiaſtical Council.* Obſerve,

(1.) *THEIR inſolent manner of carrying him from the Garden to the place of his Trial.* He was *led away* by the rabble, *Mat.* 26. 57. He is there brought *bound*, *John* 18. 12. Thus they dealt by him, as by the moſt dangerous Malefactor. To ſee the King of Glory girded, and manacled, and led through the City, with the houts and cries, and tumultuous noiſe of a rout of miſcreants, with the greateſt ſcorn and triumph, barking at him like ſo many Dogs, and gaping upon him like ſo many evening Wolves, muſt needs be bitter to him.

(2.) *HIS ſtanding thus bound before the Council, as a Criminal*, there to be accuſed of the higheſt, and moſt capital Crimes, that Malice and Cruelty could deviſe againſt him, *John* 18. 14. And that innocence itſelf muſt be thus diſgraced, that he who never did harm, muſt be in the condition of the moſt nocent, ſtand to be charged with the baſeſt villanies, and have things caſt upon him of the blackeſt die, muſt needs cut him to the very heart.

(3.) *THE manner of the proceſs of the Council with him.* And here let it in *general* be obſerved, that they had already contrived, and concluded upon his Death. They were unanimouſly reſolved, whether by right or wrong, to take away his precious life; and ſo they uſe a legal proceſs againſt him, no other than as a cover for their malice, or cloak of their wickedneſs. And that his Death may have the greateſt ignominy to attend it, that was poſſible, they will not bring it about by open violence, but in a courſe of pretended Juſtice: that he might not be thought to die a Sacrifice to private revenge, but be taken from the Earth as one not worthy to live. Which thing, though it expreſt the height of their malice, yet was ordered in infinite wiſdom to be for our Juſtification, and Salvation. Chriſt muſt die by the hand of Juſtice, becauſe we had deſerved to die. The Jews will not kill him, but in a form of Law, becauſe they would make his Death as ignominious as poſſible. But let us purſue this in the particulars, and we ſhall ſee how inventive their ſpite was, to find out tricks to get ſomething againſt him, for which to condemn him. And here are three ſteps they took,

1. *THEY begin with Examination.* *Joh.* 18. 19, *to* 23. And herein they dealt injuriouſly and illegally with him. Examination may be proper upon an accuſation, in order to an indictment;

Indictment, but firſt to arraign a perſon, and then to ſeek for the matter of it, is baſe: for now charges are to be made, and not traps laid for men. In this Examination obſerve,

1. *THE things about which he was Examined*, viz. *His Diſciples, and His Doctrine*, ver. 19. *His Diſciples*; thinking to make an argument of charging him with Sedition, for gathering followers, and being followed by numbers, as if he deſigned to make a change in the Government: and his *Doctrine*, thinking to find him guilty of Hereſy, in bringing up a new Doctrine, contrary to, and ſubverſive of the Tradition of the Elders: and thus they would have made him an innovator and ſchiſmatick, both in Church and Common-wealth.

2. *OUR Saviour's reply to this Examination.* In which he wholly waves an anſwer to the former, and for the latter, he refers them to his publick teaching. He had *taught openly*, and if they could convince him of any thing Heretical, let them alledge it. By which anſwer he alledged againſt their illegal proceeding, and how injurious it is to ſeek to entangle men in words, where there is no ground of Charge againſt them.

3. *THE abuſe offered him upon this Anſwer, with his own defence of it.* ver. 22,23. *And when he had thus ſpoken, one of the officers which ſtood by, ſtroke Jeſus with the palm of his hand, ſaying, anſwereſt thou the high Prieſt ſo? Jeſus anſwered him, If I have ſpoken evil bear witneſs of the evil: but if well, why ſmiteſt thou me?* The abuſe was great; it was high injuſtice that the Rulers ſuffered it: and it was unworthy dealing with Chriſt, and very reproachful. Hence the Scripture takes particular notice of it, Mich. 5. 1. *They ſhall ſmite the Judge of Iſrael upon the cheek.* For the Son of God to be baſely *ſtricken* in the face of the Council, by a ſordid fellow, a contemptible Officer, was a grievous thing, and great was his patience, that he did but gently reprove him.

2. FROM *Examination*, they proceed to that which was more orderly; tho' they manage it as irregularly as the former, and that was *to produce Teſtimony againſt him.* The legality of this proceeding was, that by God's Appointment, all matters depending in Judgment, were to be determined by ſufficient witneſſes. *Deut.* 19.15. But we may ſee how unworthily they carried on this buſineſs in the manner of their procedure. And here obſerve,

1. *THE right order of legal proceeding is, firſt to alledge, and then to prove.* There is no fair arraigning a man, till there be ſome Crime to charge him withal; and then it is to be witneſſed againſt him: Whereas they call him forth, ſet him bound before them, and firſt ſeek ſomething againſt him by Examination, and when that fails, make an outcry, if any body could ſay ought againſt the Priſoner at the bar. So that he is firſt arraigned, and then a reaſon for it is *ſought* for. Mat. 26.59.

2. THEY not only *ſought for witneſſes*, but *falſe witneſſes*; *ibid.* And how malicious, and wicked was this? God had commanded in his law, that the Judge ſhould carefully detect and puniſh falſe witneſſes, whereas theſe ſought for Knights of the Poſt, encouraged, and poſſibly feed them to ſpeak lies againſt their own Conſciences.

3. *WHEN they could find none that would fairly bear, they are not ſo content*, but ſeek further, ver. 60. *Though many falſe witneſſes came, yet found they none.* It intends not, that no falſe witneſſes did appear, but none ſo teſtifyed againſt him, that with any face, they might accept of it, or judge their Evidence ſufficient againſt him. Partly becauſe they were but ſingle; partly, becauſe where there were more, they manifeſtly diſagreed in the moſt material points of their evidence, and they were deſirous to carry all as fair as might be.

4. WHEN no *witneſſes of the people could agree*, two of his Judges give *a falſe teſtimony againſt him.* Mark 14. 57,58. It was bad to tempt others, but worſe to add the debauching of their own Conſciences. And in this there was falſhood: Compare, Joh. 2. 19. *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto them, Deſtroy this temple, and in three days I will raiſe it up.* And diſagreement, Mar. 14. 58. *We heard him ſay, I will deſtroy this temple that is made with hands; and within three days I will build another made without hands.* And yet the high Prieſt, who was Prince of that Council, puts Chriſt upon his defence, as if the Evidence had been good; ver. 60. *And the high Prieſt ſtood up in the mids, and asked Jeſus, ſaying, Anſwereſt thou nothing? what is it which theſe witneſs againſt thee?* And what was this but oppreſſing the innocent?

5. *NOW let us obſerve our Saviour's Deportment.* He bears all that they ſay, and is ſilent; returns never a word to all their calumnies; but is dumb. This was foretold, Pſal. 38.12; 13,14. *They alſo that ſeek after my life, lay ſnares for me: and they that ſeek my hurt, ſpeak miſchievous things, and imagine deceits all the day long; But I as a deaf man heard not, and I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth.* Now its needleſs to ſeek what reaſons of prudence Chriſt had to hold his peace, as becauſe he knew in their Conſciences he was innocent, and that it would be to no purpoſe to plead, where they were already reſolved: the true reaſon was, becauſe he ſtood now to ſuffer for ſinners, on whom lay the guilt of all the ſin, that they were able to charge him withal, and being now at God's bar, where he was guilty by imputation; he therefore pleads not. We have the reaſon, in Iſai. 53. 6. *All we like ſheep have gone aſtray: we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

3. *WHEN this ſecond project failed, they go to a third, which they doubted not of:* And that was, the *high Prieſt's Adjuration*, Mat. 26. 63. *But Jeſus held his peace. And the high Prieſt anſwered and ſaid unto him, I adjure thee by the*

living God, that thou tell us, whether thou be the Chriſt the Son of God. And this is that which is wont to be called the Oath *Ex Officio.* And this was not done for their own conviction and ſatisfaction, but to find matter againſt him. How far ſuch an Oath may be impoſed, I diſpute not. To be ſure, when a Priſoner is at the bar, and the witneſs cannot make the fact evident, much more when no fact can be produced againſt him, now to put him upon an Oath and a Curſe, to declare againſt himſelf, contradicts the very light of nature. Had the Prieſt done this for his light and teaching, it had not been ſo much, but to do it, for to lay a ſnare for the innocent, was abominable. Here obſerve,

1. *THE Queſtion it ſelf*; *Whether* He *were the Chriſt the Son of God?* The Jews acknowledged, both that Chriſt ſhould come, and that he ſhould be the Son of God, and were now in expectation of him, and ſo the Queſtion lookt fair and laudable: but bad intentions ſpoil things that are materially good.

2. *THE manner of propounding it:* with the greateſt ſolemnity. And coming from ſuch a perſon, it had higheſt authority. The word, I *adjure* thee, is as much as, I charge thee upon thy Oath, as in the preſence of God, and as thou wouldeſt not be accurſed, to ſpeak the truth.

3. *OUR Saviour anſwers directly to it, and comments upon it:* Mat. 26. 64. *Jeſus ſaith unto him, Thou haſt ſaid: nevertheleſs I ſay unto you, Hereafter ſhall ye ſee the Son of man ſitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.* q.d. I am the Chriſt, and though you believe it not now, yet you ſhall be experimentally convinced of it ere long. Why he anſwered to this, and not to the other Queſtion, was, becauſe this was the very truth, that he came into the world, to bear witneſs unto; as he after told Pilate. And it was God's ſingular Providence, that the very thing which they found him guilty for, was the great Goſpel-truth on which man's Salvation depends. So that Chriſt dyed a Martyr to men, when he was made by God an offering for ſin. But thus we ſee, that their malice ceaſed not, till they had wrought their deſire, and gained what they ſought for. And thus far we have this proceſs in his Tryal.

4. *WE have an account of his Condemnation before this Court.* Mat. 26 65,66. *Then the high Prieſt rent his clothes, ſaying, he hath ſpoken blaſphemy, what further need have we of witneſſes? behold now ye have heard his blaſphemy. What think ye? They anſwered and ſaid, He is guilty of death.* And that in an orderly and ſolemn proceſs.

1. *THE high Prieſt, who was Chief Judge of this Court, declares his reſentment of Chriſt's Anſwer.* And that,

(1.) *IN Geſtures:* the moſt ſolemn, and to Chriſt the moſt diſgraceful: *He rent his Clothes.* A ſolemnity frequently uſed among thoſe Eaſtern Nations, upon two accounts; to expreſs extraordinary grief, or to teſtify bitter indignation at ſomething that is ſaid or done, uſually on the hearing of ſome execrable blaſphemy. And the end of doing it, was to ſtir up the indignation of others, and render the perſon moſt odious and abominable. It was now lawful for the high Prieſt to do it on the firſt account; what he might do on the latter, is not expreſt in Scripture: but for ſuch a perſon ſo to do, was the greateſt ignominy that he could caſt.

(2.) *IN Words:* Where, firſt as a Judge, he declares his opinion, and declares it *blaſphemy*, a capital Crime, and that for which a man was, by their law, to dye. And we are to obſerve, that which he calls blaſphemy, is his ſaying, *that he was Chriſt*; which was not blaſphemy in their eſteem, if he were Chriſt; *Caiphas* did not doubt, but that he who was Chriſt, was the Son of God. And then he calls for the ſuffrages of the reſt of the Council, or asks their concurrence or conſent with him.

2. *THE Council with one accord, vote him guilty*, ver. 66. And this was the farthe**ſt** they could proceed; the power of Life and Death being taken away by the Romans: but thus they prepare him for a farther Trial and Sentence; and vote a concurrence to proſecute him to Death. And how great a Suffering was this? For him who had done no ſin, to be voted a chief Sinner, by ſuch as pretended to the greateſt ſanctity? For the Son of God to be voted a blaſphemer againſt God, and that by the Prieſts and Elders of the then viſible Church?

5. *WE may obſerve what was conſequent upon this Condemnation.* Mat. 26. 67,68. *Then did they ſpit in his face, and buffetted him, and others ſmote him with the palms of their hands, Saying, Propheſy unto us, thou Chriſt, who is he that ſmote thee?* Where there was a double indignity put upon him, viz. Cruelty, and Mockery. *Cruelty*, they *buffet* and *ſmite* him with their *Hands*, and *Mockery* was interwoven into the whole; yea, the Mockery itſelf was great Cruelty, as it was managed againſt ſuch an one; the vileſt of Men could not be more vilely affronted and abuſed. *They ſpit in his Face*, even the very Rulers and Judges; a very uncivil part of men in Authority; it was a cuſtom to expreſs Contempt and Abhorrence. *Numb.* 12. 14. *They buffeted him*, i. e. ſmote him with their double fiſts: and the *ſervants* did this. *Mar.* 14. 65. And no wonder when their maſters ſet them an example. Thus was our precious Redeemer abuſed, knockt up and down, and every baſe fellow get a blow at him. Yea, not thus content, they alſo *blindfold* him, &c. Thus they make a ſcoff at his Prophetical Office; *thou Chriſt:* q.d. Thou that wouldeſt perſwade us that thou art Chriſt, the Son of God, and thou that wouldeſt make thy ſelf a Prophet, tell us, &c. As if the Sacred Office of a Prophet were of no better uſe than to ſerve the plays, and ſarcaſtical inſultations

inſultations of a company of rakehells. And yet to all this we find him not making any reply, but he bare it with admirable patience, though his holy Soul deeply reſented it. Hence that complaint, Iſai. 50. 6. *I gave my back to the ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that pluck off the hair: I hid not my face from ſhame and ſpitting.* And how much of Death was there in all this? An ingenious mind, that reads or hears it, cannot but ſay, that the Lord of Life was barbarouſly dealt with. But this is not enough: There are ſome Leſſons that we are to learn hence alſo. Every ſyllable & circumſtance of Chriſt's Sufferings hath a peculiar reſpect to every Believer. And there are theſe three Leſſons here to be learnt.

1. *WE ſhould learn to ſee our own faces in this Glaſs.* We are taught our merits by Chriſt's miſeries. When we are amazed at the Providence that ſuffered all theſe indignities to be offered to the Son of God, then ſee how neceſſary it was for us, and what our ſin deſerved. When we ſee Him bound, and led Priſoner, to be tried for his life, think, it was becauſe we were Priſoners of Juſtice, fettered with chains of Guilt, to be dragged to God's Tribunal. When we ſee a whole Council ſitting upon Him, reſolving his Death, remember, we were children of death, and deſerved to have the whole Creation, implacably ſet to ruine us. When we ſee Him ſmitten for ſpeaking in his own vindication, conſider how we were bereft of any plea for our ſelves at God's bar. When we obſerve what multitudes came in to accuſe Him, remember, we had made the whole Creation witneſſes of our ſins; and every creature we ever had to do with, is able to teſtify againſt us. When we ſee Him *dumb* to all that was abuſively imputed to him, think, it was becauſe he knew that I, in whoſe place he ſtood, was guilty; and he bare the charge of my ſins, that they might not fall upon me to my condemnation. When we ſee Him found guilty in the Church, and charged with blaſphemy, think, we had ſinn'd againſt the Covenant of God, and had been blaſphemers of his Name. When we conſider how the High Prieſt rent his Garments, conſider, how execrable and abominable our ſin was. When we obſerve all the abuſes that followed, let it put us in mind how we deſerve to be made the ignominy and contempt of the whole Creation.

2. *LET us view the great Love of God and Chriſt to us in this affair.* Had he not born incomparable Love to wretched ſinners, he had never ſtooped to this. The Man Chriſt was deeply ſenſible of affronts and injuries: experiencing not only the rage of men, but alſo the wrath of God in all this. God himſelf putting Him to ſhame and diſgrace; and yet his Love to us carried him through it, with invincible patience. Thoſe fetters that manacled him, thoſe affronts and contumelies that were caſt upon him, thoſe bruiſes and wounds, and ſpittings, & ludibrious mockings, ſhould all make him look the more beautiful to us; and that which makes others deſpiſe him, ſhould render him more amiable to us.

3. *LET this proſpect we have of Chriſt, fortify us to a more cheerful readineſs to ſuffer for him, when called to it.* We may ſee in the worſt, that we deſerved them, when He, who is worth ten thouſand of us, deſerved none of them. Remember that, as it puts a glory into our Sufferings, when they are for Him, ſo it cannot but put life into our hearts, and make us with all alacrity endure all that can come in that way, to think that it is for Him, who for our ſakes, endured all the contradiction of ſinners, and to be moſt vilely handled by the worſt of men.

6. WE may here take notice of one obſervable paſſage attending on this *Arraignment*, and *Trial* of Chriſt, and which added no little to his Sufferings, viz. *Peter's denial of him*; which is taken notice of by all the Evangeliſts; and ſets before us a very awful example of ſinful infirmity in the beſt. And here briefly obſerve,

1. *HOW much* Peter *had to have kept him from this fall.* He was without doubt, a godly man. He had *faith*, Luk. 22. 31. Chriſt had called him to Diſcipleſhip, and Apoſtleſhip, by which he had highly honoured him. He had made an eminent profeſſion of Chriſt, and was the moſt forward of the Diſciples in it. *Mat.* 16. 16. Yea, he had more apparent Teſtimonies of his endeared love and fidelity to his Lord, when many went away; yea he profeſſed, Joh. 6. 69. *And we believe and are ſure that thou art that Chriſt the Son of the living God.* When the multitude arreſted Him, he drew his Sword in His defence, *Joh.* 18. 10. Yea, when the reſt fled, he could not leave, but followed Chriſt at a diſtance to ſee the event. Mat. 26.58. *But Peter followed afar off unto the high Prieſts palace, and went in, and ſat with the ſervants to ſee the end.* He had alſo been ſufficiently forewarned of this very ſin, both in general, *ver.* 31. and in particular, *ver.* 34. Which ſhould have put him on avoiding the Temptation; and yet, when it comes to the ſhock, he is wounded.

2. *WHAT were the leading temptations or occaſions of his falling into this ſin.* He had an overweaning opinion of himſelf, truſting in his own faith, and confiding in his good purpoſes, and ſuppoſing himſelf more reſolute then any of his fellows, ver. 33. *Peter anſwered and ſaid unto him, though all men ſhall be offended becauſe of thee, yet will I never be offended.* Yea, he perſiſted in this confidence, notwithſtanding the kind warning given him by Chriſt, ver. 24, 35. *Jeſus ſaid unto him, Verily I ſay unto thee, that this night before the cock crow, thou ſhalt deny me thrice. Peter ſaid unto him, Though I ſhould die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.* q.d. I know the worſt of it, and I have counted the coſt, and can chearfully undergo it. Add to this his precipitant zeal, in drawing his Sword, and wounding one of

the company, without any order or command, thinking thus to purſue his former reſolution; whereby he expoſed himſelf to the greater danger afterwards. And after this, he very indiſcreetly follows into the very *Palace*, and thruſt himſelf among the crowd of Chriſt's bitter enemies, where he had all reaſon to expect to meet with the moſt opprobrious and ſcurrulous language; and on any ſuſpicion of him, to be affronted not a little, in this concourſe of ſo many, who were maliciouſly ſet againſt Chriſt, and all his followers.

3. *THE immediate provocations offered him, on which this ſin followed*, viz. his being queſtioned by ſome, about the relation he bare to Chriſt, as being one of his diſciples and followers. The inſtruments of it are ſet forth; the two firſt are ſaid to be *maids*, Mat. 26. 69, 71. The third was the Company that ſtood by, *ver.* 73. though begun by a kinſman of *Malchus*, Joh. 18. 26. The matter of the temptation was, they ſpake reproachfully of Jeſus, and there were none to ſpeak for him, and he look'd to be laugh'd to ſcorn if he ſhould take his part, and ſo is aſhamed of his Maſter. He might alſo be afraid of being called in queſtion for reſiſting of lawful Authority, and making of a riot in drawing of his Sword.

4. *THE denial itſelf, with the aggravations of it:* And they are eſpecially two; viz. *the iterations of it*; he did it thrice following, yea, as often as the temptation was offered, ſo often he acted in it. And all this was contrary to his knowledge, and therefore his conſcience was ſtunned: And then the *gradations of it:* he roſe higher & higher every time; he roſe from the poſitive to the ſuperlative; firſt a bare denial, and then he proceeds to an Oath, and finally to curſing and ſwearing.

5. *HIS Repentance is alſo recorded:* And that both as to the occaſions leading; two whereof are recorded, viz. *the Cock's crowing*; which was a remembrancer to him of Chriſt's prediction; and then there was *a gracious look*, which Chriſt caſt upon him, which reached his Soul, and ſet home the conviction. Luk. 22. 61. *And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter: and Peter remembred the word of the Lord, how he had ſaid unto him, Before the cock crow, thou ſhalt deny me thrice.* And the event. Now he is led to a ſoaking repentance; he bethinks himſelf, and goes forth from the company, and bitterly bewails his folly.

NOW this Circumſtance was no little addition to the Suffering of our Saviour; His heart was with *Peter*, as once *Eliſha's* was with *Gehazi*. And it muſt needs increaſe his affliction, that *Peter* ſhould by his denial, ſhew himſelf aſhamed of him; that ſo dear a Diſciple ſhould abjure him, and at ſuch a time, and in ſuch a place, where he gave occaſion to his bitter adverſaries to caſt ſo much the more contempt upon him, by throwing in his diſh, that even his own Diſciples & Followers were aſhamed of him, and refuſed to own him. And this he complains of, Pſal. 38. 11. *My lovers and my friends ſtand aloof from my ſore: and my kinſmen ſtand afar off.* And from this Example of *Peter* we may learn,

1. *THAT inherent Grace will not ſecure us from falling under temptation, unleſs we have the aſſiſting Grace of Chriſt added unto it.*

2. *THAT carnal confidence, wofully expoſeth the beſt of God's people, to falling into ſome ſins.* It makes them bold and daring, and preſumptuous, and unwatchful, &c.

3. *THAT if good men begin to fall, they often fall a great way.* One ſtep leads to another; one ſin puſheth us on to the next. What need then of watchfulneſs?

4. *THAT Chriſt is a great ſufferer, by the ſcandalous ſins of his own.* It is more reproachful to him, for a *Peter* to deny him, than for others to blaſpheme him.

5. *THAT Chriſt hath a pity for his own, then when they do by their ſins diſhonour and grieve him.* He could not but give *Peter* a look, and it was a tender one.

6. *THAT the apoſtacies of God's Children coſt them bitter ſorrow.* Chriſt brings them out of them, by ſoaking repentance. When therefore he gives that, it is a token of his favour to them.

[JANUARY 19. 1696.]

SERMON CVI.

2. IT follows to take an Account of *Chriſt's Arraignment* and *Trial* before the Civil Magiſtrate. Where He was alſo Judged and Condemned.

IT was now a time when the *Jews* had not the power of Life and Death in their own hands, but being under the Juriſdiction of the *Romans*, they were neceſſitated to bring all matters Capital, before the Governour whom the *Roman Emperor* had ſet over them. The *Sanhedrim* therefore, who now retained but a ſhadow of their ancient Power, having proceeded againſt Him, ſo far as the Liberty left them did extend, in voting of him a Blaſphemer, and conſequently a Man that ought to die by their Law, they reſt not here, but ſet their malice on work to contrive and effect his Death; and what they could not do by themſelves, they conclude to bring about by *Pilate*, who was then their Governour. And having thus determined, they forthwith put in execution. And this was properly his *ſecond* Arraignment. For, although the *Jews* could not condemn Him formally, yet they could indict thoſe of their own Nation, and bring them before the Civil Tribunal, and proſecute them there; which was a liberty granted them, to increaſe their bondage; hereby affording the larger advantage to help to the ruine one of another. We may here firſt take notice of the *Arraignment*, and then of the *Trial*.

1. TOUCHING His *Arraignment* briefly obſerve, 1. *THE*

1. *THE Time when it was* : It was as ſoon as ever it was *morning*. Mar. 15. 1. It was late in the Night when they had finiſhed their own proceſs, and preſently, as ſoon as it was light, they fall to work again. Malice is haſty, and reſtleſs till it hath wreaked its revenge upon the ſubjects of it. It breaks mens ſleep, till they have gotten their deſires anſwered.

2. *THE Perſons engaged in it* : the *Chief Prieſts* and *Elders of the People*. Math. 27. 1. Thoſe who were peculiarly concerned to have acquainted themſelves with Scripture predictions, and obſerved the fulfilment of them, by which they might have diſcerned that he was *the Chriſt*, and have directed the people to Him. And needs muſt the Cauſe of Chriſt be in a ſuffering Condition, when thoſe who ſhould be Pillars, endeavour to undermine it.

3. *THEIR Unanimity in it* : All were combined. *Math.* 27. 1. It is true, *Joſeph* of *Arimathea*, and *Nicodemus*, were not conſenters in this act, and poſſibly they did on purpoſe abſent from this meeting, knowing the reſolution of the reſt : but all that were there, which were the *Body of the Council*, were as one man. And it is lamentable to ſee, that there is more agreement between wicked men, in their deſigns againſt God and Chriſt, than among God's own People in the managing of the Affairs of Chriſt's Kingdom. Unity alone, is no ſure ſign that men have the Truth on their ſide.

4. *THEIR deliberation in this buſineſs* : *They took Counſel*. Mat. 27. 1. There is this difference between *Anger* and *Malice* ; Anger being a ſudden motion, grows cold upon ſecond thoughts, whereas malice uſeth deliberation, and gathers ſtrength by conſulting, and this heightned their wickedneſs, in that it was a debated, and conſulted act of theirs.

5. *THE thing deliberated* : *How to put Jeſus to Death. ibid.* They had before concluded that he ought, and now reſolve that he ſhall dye ; and accordingly they lay their heads together to bring it about. Thus mens wickedneſs, is oftentimes improved to further and ſerve to the accompliſhment of God's holy purpoſes. One world cannot hold Chriſt and wicked men, to dwell quietly together.

6. *THE reſult of this Conſultation put in practice*. Their actions declare, what it was they deliberated about. The ſum is they bring Chriſt to *Pilate* to be judged as a Malefactor. And there are three paſſages obſerv'd about this. Mat. 27. 1, 2. *When the morning was come, all the chief Prieſts and Elders of the people took council againſt Jeſus to put him to death. And when they had bound him they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governour.*

(1.) *THEY bound Him.* Whether they looſed him from his former bonds, in which he had been brought before them, during his Examination, and till they had voted Him guilty, or whether they added more ſhackles to his former, as they were wont to lade notorious Criminals with chains ; to be ſure, they endeavoured to throw all the ignominy on him they could, and make him a ſubject of greateſt reproach ; for they were reputed, not only Malefactors, but Villains too, that were bound.

(2.) *THEY led Him away*. In all likelihood, ſtill followed with the rout and rabble of the ſcum of the People, together with the inſolent Officers and Soldiers of the band, whereby they added to his diſgrace, heaping upon him reproach upon reproach, giving envy its full ſcope, which never knows when it hath inſulted enough.

(3.) *THEY delivered him to Pontius Pilate the Governour* : i.e. They put him upon his Trial, reſigning him up to his power as a perſon made a priſoner, and by them found guilty of Capital Crimes, demanding of him to paſs a ſentence of Death upon him, as one who by their Law was worthy of Death. And herein was that prediction of his concerning himſelf accompliſhed, Mat. 20. 18, 19. *Behold, we go up to Jeruſalem, and the Son of man ſhall be betrayed unto the chief Prieſts, and unto the Scribes, and they ſhall condemn him to death. And they ſhall deliver him to the Gentiles, to mock & to ſcourge, and to crucify him.* And herein alſo Chriſt purſued the work of Redemption, in which he was engaged. This was one piece of that Death which he ſuffered for us. And if we would make a right improvement of it, we muſt ſo conſider it. We ſtood guilty before the Judgment Seat of God, being there found heinous tranſgreſſors. He therefore muſt occupy our place, and ſuffer that ſhame, diſgrace, and ſorrow, which was our due, in order to our being delivered from that ignominious Trial, we were in danger of. Every Tribunal of God's appointment, is God's Tribunal ; and Chriſt was here arraigned at God's Judgment Seat, and they were uſed as inſtruments in executing of his appointed Judgment on his Son. They did it falſely, but He righteouſly. Chriſt, our Surety, ſtood guilty before him, of our ſins, which were made his by imputation. Let Sinners then, under the humbling ſenſe of their guilt, look hither with hope. And Believers, when the thoughts of their ſins terrify them, ſtrengthen their Faith in this : Look upon *Jeſus* ſtanding at *God's* Bar, in your room. It is the advice, Heb. 12. 3. *Looking unto Jeſus the author and finiſher of our faith, who for the joy that was ſet before him, endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

7. WE may here obſerve one notable Circumſtance attending this *Arraignment*, viz. *Judas's Repentance*. It hath pleaſed the Holy Ghoſt to inſert this paſſage in this part of the Hiſtory, *Math.* 27. 3, &c. We have formerly obſerved how this Traytor, treacherouſly betrayed his Maſter into the hands of his blood-thirſty enemies. And it was meet that we ſhould have an account of his tragical end, that he may ſtand to the Worlds end

for

for a warning to ſuch as have made a plauſible profeſſion, to beware how they prove falſe to it, & betray the Intereſt they have eſpouſed. There had been two of *Chriſt's Diſciples* that had been eminently inſtrumental in aggravating his Sorrows, *Peter* and *Judas*; the fall and merciful recovery of the former, we glanced at in the laſt Diſcourſe. We may now take notice of the others ruine. In the one we have an inſtance of God's rich Grace; in the other of his righteous Severity. A few Remarks here may be profitable.

1. IT is aſſerted, that *Judas Repented*, Mat. 27.3. The word ſignifies to be *perplexed* and *troubled* at a thing done; and is ſometimes uſed for *true Converſion*, ſometimes for *hypocritical Repentance*, as that which is at moſt but *legal:* it amounts to ſo much, that the man is ſorry for what he hath done, and tormented in his ſpirit about it, and bitterly wiſhed he had never done it.

2. WE have the *Repentance it ſelf* deſcribed. Partly, by the occaſion of it, *when he ſaw*, &c. It ſeems, he diligently attended the Proceſs, and obſerved the Iſſue, from which he gathered the grounds of his *penitence*. Divines hence think, that *Judas* did not betray his Lord of Malice, but meer Covetouſneſs, hoping to get a little money by him, and that yet he would make his own eſcape, as he had often known him to do, when ſought for; but finding it to fall out otherwiſe, and that the Council had condemned him, and were purſuing his Life, which he ſaw like to go for it, his heart ſmites him, and tells him what a wretch he had been: Partly, by the ſeveral parts of it; where we have both his *Contrition*, he was broken in his heart, filled with bitterneſs, and ſorrow, inwardly condemned himſelf for his baſeneſs, as is intimated in the word, *be repented:* and his *Confeſſion*, which is very full, ver. 4. *I have ſinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood.* He not only acknowledged himſelf to be a ſinner, but particularly confeſſeth this great Crime, that he had been a leading Inſtrument in expoſing an innocent Perſon as nocent, in which he avouched Chriſt's innocence, and by it aggravates his own fault: and his *Reſtitution*, ver. 3. *Then Judas which had betrayed him, when he ſaw that he was condemned, repented himſelf, and brought again the thirty pieces of ſilver to the chief Prieſts and Elders.* Tho' his maſter ſin was Covetouſneſs, and he loved his money as his life, yet he cannot keep the wages of his iniquity, but muſt return them back to thoſe that hired him: his Conſcience cannot digeſt, but muſt vomit up his *ill gotten morſels.*

3. OBSERVE the cold comfort he receives from the Prieſts and Elders. They by Office were obliged to offer relief to diſtreſſed Conſciences, to have compaſſion on them, and give them counſels and encouragements; but they abandon him, and leave him wholly up to his remorſe, not regarding what became of him, when he had ſerved their turn in this affair, ver. 4. *And they ſaid, What is that to us? ſee thou to that.*

4. HERE is his Tragical end. ver. 5. *And he caſt down the pieces of ſilver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himſelf.* The horror ſo ſeized him, that in deſpair of God's mercy, and under the inſupportable burden of an accuſing and condemning Conſcience, he can no longer live, but to eaſe himſelf of his preſent diſquiet, he rids himſelf of his life, and diſpatches himſelf out of the World.

5. AN account is given of God's over-ruling Providence, ordering the diſpoſal of the reſtored Money, in buying the *Potters Field*, &c. which was done by them deliberately, and yet is accompliſhed exactly, according to what had been propheſied, *Zech.* 11.13. And hereby became a further evidence that Chriſt was the *Meſſiah.* And from this circumſtance we may obſerve,

(1.) THAT there may be a *ſtrong* Repentance on men, and yet not *ſaving.* *Judas's* was very formal and diſtinct. There is more ſaid of it then of *Peter's*; but the event tells us what it really was; for all he periſhed in his iniquity. Men had need then beware how they place their confidence on their Repentances: See not only that you have repented, ſo did *Judas*; but that it be the Repentance unto life.

(2.) LEARN hence an inſtance, how wofully ſin cheats men. *Judas* thought it a fine trick to get a little money, by betraying his Lord, not doubting but he would ſecure himſelf well enough; but by this means he became guilty of betraying the Glorious Redeemer into the hands of wicked men, which ended in his Death. How fearful then ſhould we be of Sin? Let it look never ſo gainful and innocent, it hath a ſting in it. We may ſee the entrance into it, but little know whither it will lead.

(3.) IF men, to get gain, will do violence to their own Conſciences, they will ſooner or later, lay violent hands on them. They may ſwallow, but ſhall never digeſt, the morſels of wickedneſs. *Judas* had a ſtrong ſtomach, &c. Beware then how you give way, to the cravings of your greedy minds, after the wages of ſin, they will be bitterneſs in the end.

(4.) MEN in trouble of Conſcience, had need beware whom they apply to for counſel. Had *Judas*, inſtead of, &c. gone to *Jeſus*, and fallen down, confeſſed, &c. it might have been well with him: but he went to his Accomplices, who mock & inſult. And let us take ſolemn warning by his Example.

(5.) God, when He ſees meet, makes wicked men, their own Executioners. He can let looſe Conſcience ſo far, as to make the life an intollerable burden, and puſh men on to that unnatural ſin, of laying violent hands on themſelves; and this ſhould make us afraid of ſecret ſins.

(6.) God uſeth ſome to their own deſtruction, to be inſtrumental in bringing about the Salvation of others. Thus was *Judas*, by,

by being an inſtrument in Chriſt's Death. And learn we hence to adore the Sovereignty of God, and his diſtinguiſhing mercy, by comparing the inſtance of *Peter* and *Judas*; and the more admire his love to us. But this may ſuffice for this neceſſary digreſſion.

2. *PROCEED we to the Trial or Proceſs againſt him.* We have now the Lord of Glory ſtanding before man's Tribunal: And for the *Judge* of the whole World to ſtand a Priſoner at the Bar, before an Heathen Ruler, muſt needs be a great ſuffering. And though *Pilate* for a while treated him more civilly than the *High Prieſt* had done, yet afterwards he did his part in it too.

HERE then, I ſhall not obſerve all the Circumſtances recorded in this affair, but only ſuch as are moſt proper to the preſent purpoſe, as preparatory to his Death, that followed upon it. Conſider then,

1. *HIS Examination about his State and Quality.* Mat. 27. 11. *And Jeſus ſtood before the governour; and the governour asked him, ſaying, Art thou the king of the Jews? And Jeſus ſaid unto him, Thou ſayeſt.* And this was to make way for what followed. And that which is here ſpecially to be noticed, is *Chriſt's* freedom, and readineſs, upon demand, to own the great Truth which he came into the World to bear witneſs unto, viz. His *Meſſiaſhip*, or that he was the *predicted Saviour*, tho' he knew it would expoſe him. This we obſerved, he plumply owned, upon the *High Prieſts* adjuration; and now when *Pilate* inquires about it, he confeſſeth it: and to this refers that, 1 Tim. 6. 13. *Chriſt Jeſus, who before Pontius Pilate witneſſed a good confeſſion.* *King* of the *Jews* was one of the Titles put upon the great *Redeemer* in Prophetical Scripture; the Jews expected their King: and Chriſt was he; which he denies not, but aſſerts. They counted it Treaſon, Joh. 19. 12. *Whoſoever maketh himſelf a king, ſpeaketh againſt Ceſar.* But he matters not for that. He was called to make this confeſſion; and when the Glory of God calls for it, he baulks it not. And if we would approve our ſelves his Diſciples, learn we herein to imitate him, by a readineſs to confeſs him too, to be our only King and Saviour, when called to it, whatſoever it may coſt us for ſo doing: this is the meaning of that, 1 *Pet.* 3. 18.

2. *THE Trial it ſelf following upon this Examination.* In which we may obſerve a threefold ſubject, with their ſeveral deportments, viz. the *Jews* his Accuſers, *Pilate* the Judge, and *Jeſus* the Priſoner at the Bar.

1. CONCERNING the *Jews* his Accuſers, theſe were of two ranks, the *Chief Prieſts and Elders*, and the *Multitude*.

(1.) *CHEIF Prieſts & Elders.* And that which is in ſum laid to their Charge, is in, Mat. 27. 12. *They accuſed him.* i. e. They laid many Crimes to his charge, and offered to make them good againſt him. What they were, the ſeveral *Evangeliſts* give us light to underſtand; the ſum is in, Luk. 23. 2. *And they began to accuſe him, ſaying, we found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Ceſar, ſaying, that he himſelf is Chriſt a king.* He who never did any evil in all his life, is here charged to be the moſt faulty. The Crimes objected are referrible to two heads, 1. *Sedition:* as if he had been a diſturber of the State, going about to withdraw men from their *Civil Obedience* to *Ceſar*, and raiſe tumults among them, by adviſing them to refuſe to pay their dues. 2. *Treaſon:* accuſing him for affecting the Kingdom, and endeavouring to uſurp the power over the People; whence they urge him to be *Ceſar's* enemy, and for that reaſon, neither Juſtice nor Safety, could ſuffer him to live. Joh. 19. 12. *The Jews cried out, ſaying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Ceſars friend.* Thus malicious ſpirits can make a vice of innocency, and put a gloſs of wickedneſs upon the moſt harmleſs words and actions. And this was a ſore affliction and provocation, which Chriſt takes notice of, Pſal. 56. 5, 6. *Every day they wreſt my words: all their thoughts are againſt me for evil. They gather themſelves together, they hide themſelves, they mark my ſteps when they wait for my ſoul.* Let us not then wonder, if ſometimes the moſt harmleſs and ſincere actions of ours are beſpattered, and men ſeek to calumniate us without reaſon; remember, Chriſt who was perfectly holy & blameleſs met with this; well then may we, who are imperfect in all we do.

(2.) *THE Multitude:* who acted by their Leaders, and take their meaſures from them, joining with them in the great deſign of taking away his Life. And that eſpecially in three things,

[1.] *IN their preferring* Barabbas *before Him.* The hiſtory is plain, both as to the cuſtom of releaſing a *chief Malefactor* at the Peoples deſire: and as to the character of *Barabbas*, who, and what he was, not ſeditious only, but a murderer too; him they choſe on the Elders perſwaſion. Mat. 27. 20, 21. *But the chief Prieſt & Elders perſwaded the multitude that they ſhould ask Barabbas, and deſtroy Jeſus. The governour anſwered and ſaid unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I releaſe unto you? They ſaid Barabbas.* Yea, and ſo perſiſt as to refuſe him, Joh. 18. 40. *Then cried they all again, ſaying, Not this man, but Barabbas.* So impetuous is prejudice, to prefer the worſt of men before the moſt innocent. *Maligned Piety* is more criminal, and perſecuted more violently by ungodly men, than the *worſt of Immoralities.* Think it not ſtrange then to meet ſuch entertainment in the world.

[2.] *IN their demanding of* Chriſt *to be Crucifyed, and implacably purſuing that demand.* Mat. 27. 22, 23. *Pilate ſaith unto them, What ſhall I do then with Jeſus, which is called Chriſt? They all ſay unto him, Let him be crucified. And the governour ſaid, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, ſaying, Let him be crucified.* Joh. 19. 6, 7. *When the chief Prieſts therefore and officers ſaw him, they cryed out, ſaying,*

Crucifie

Crucifie him, crucifie him. Pilate ſaith unto them, Take ye him, and crucifie him: for I find no fault in him. The Jews anſwered and ſaid, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die. How induſtriouſly did *Pilate* endeavour to ſtill their rage; but the more did the fury of it increaſe, till it grew to a tumult. The worlds hatred againſt Chriſt and his Cauſe, is as *implacable*, as it is *unreaſonable*. There is no pleading with men, when their ſpirits are thus up. And ſuch meaſures may God's Children expect at the worlds hands, when they get an advantage; but it is enough, our precious Redeemer bare it for us! Let us then do ſo for Him.

[3.] *IN the horrible imprecation which they uttered againſt* themſelves. Mat. 27 25. *Then anſwered all the people and ſaid, His blood be on us, and on our children.* Expoſing, not only themſelves, but their poſterity with them, to the direful vengeance of Heaven, ſo that they might but accompliſh the bloody deſign they had on foot; which curſe they have now more than *ſixteen hundred years* ſuffered under: in which, they have been a contempt to the world, and expoſed to all barbarous uſage almoſt wherever they come; and alſo held under a doleful obſtinacy, in rejecting the only Saviour to their eternal ruine; and it is not removed to this day. Hatred grown into malice, matters not what miſchief it brings upon it ſelf, ſo it may wreak its revenge on thoſe whom it is ſet againſt! Learn then, how little a wicked World is to be truſted. They that can ruine themſelves to undo others, are dangerous to be confided in. And let it be here obſerved, that the People did all this at the inſtigation of the Rulers, and Elders. *Mat.* 27. 20. *Joh.* 19. 6. Men in high places of Power, have a great influence to perſwade the Subjects either to good or evil. Miſerable then muſt be the condition of that People whoſe Leaders are corrupt, and bend themſelves againſt Chriſt and his Intereſt.

2. REFERRING to *Pilate* the *Judge:* We have him preſented as uſing of many endeavours, to ſtop the fury, and divert the rage of Chriſt's enemies, and defend his innocence againſt their accuſations, and after attempts uſed that way to no purpoſe, profeſſing his Conſcience to juſtify him, and more peculiarly in theſe two paſſages, viz. His bringing him forth after ſcourging, as a ſpectacle of pity, to have moved their compaſſion towards him, Joh. 19. *begin Then Pilate therefore took Jeſus and ſcourged him. And the ſouldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, And ſaid, Hail king of the Jews: and they ſmote him with their hands. Pilate therefore went forth again, and ſaith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jeſus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, & the purple robe: and Pilate ſaith unto them, Behold the man.* And in that ſolemn and formal proteſtation, before he proceeded to the Sentence, Mat. 27. 24. *When Pilate ſaw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and waſhed his hands before the multitude, ſaying, I am innocent of the blood of this juſt perſon, ſee ye to it.* Piety and ſincerity many times gain a better teſtimony from a meer Heathen, than from the higheſt Pretenders to Religion. And obſerve, Chriſt muſt not dye till he is juſtifyed by his Judge; becauſe he was to ſuffer the juſt for the unjuſt.

3. RESPECTING *Jeſus* the *Priſoner:* He makes no reply for, or defence of himſelf againſt all the clamorous accuſations made againſt him, nor ſeeks to juſtify himſelf: whereas nothing was more eaſy for him to have done than this; and had he ſtood upon a perſonal account, he ought to have done it: ſo then, in this he acted as our Mediator, and is not to be imitated by us. He ſtood as the Surety for Sinners, and was to have all their ſins thrown upon him; this makes him dumb. This very ſilence wonderfully beſpeaks his Love to his Redeemed: and he was *ſilent* that we might *plead*; had he pleaded, there had been no plea left for us; but now we may fill our mouths with arguments, and cry aloud for mercy.

3. WE may finally obſerve the *Condemnation of Chriſt*, in the End of his *Trial*. Where obſerve,

1. *THE ground of it.* Mat. 27. 24. *When Pilate ſaw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made.* He is at laſt, overborn by importunity. A natural Conſcience is ſoon tired in reſiſting preſſing temptations. Beware then of truſting in our ſelves, and our own purpoſes.

2. *THE Condemnation it ſelf.* Mat. 27. 26. *Then releaſed he Barabbas unto them: and when he had ſcourged Jeſus, he delivered him to be crucified.* Where obſerve,

(1.) HIS *Condemnation is in conjunction with* Barabbas's *Enlargement.* And what greater indignty could be offered to Chriſt, than that ſuch an one as *Barabbas* muſt ſtand in competition with, and be preferred before him?

(2.) *THAT before he was condemned, he was cruelly ſcourged. Pilate* did this to prevent, &c. However as it was unjuſt ſo to deal by one, whom he judged innocent, ſo it was a great piece of Death, both painful and reproachful; it was a publick contempt caſt on him, in the Judgment-Hall, and by the *Roman* Laws only to be inflicted on Fools or Varlets. And the pain of it was great, as is evident to any that know what the *Roman* ſcourging means, in which every blow takes skin and fleſh from the bones.

(3.) *THAT after all this he was delivered to be Crucifyed.* i. e. *Pilate* paſſed a formal Sentence upon him, in which he declared him *accuſed, and found guilty, and now adjudged for this to die upon the Croſs:* and ſo is delivered over into the hands of his Executioners, to handle him with all ludibrious and cruel uſages. Thus we have followed our Lord from

from one Court to another, till we find him condemned to dye in both, yea ſentenced to that which was the moſt vile and accurſed Death of all; and ſilently ſubmitting him to all this. And what doth it ſpeak to us?

1. *LET Sinners here read their own Doom and Deſert. If theſe things were done in the green tree*, &c. If God thus condemned ſin in his own Son, where ſhall thoſe that are found Sinners at laſt appear? It loudly calls Sinners to Repentance.

2. *LET a* Barabbas *gather hope from hence.*

3. *LET Believers from theſe Conſiderations acknowledge the bonds lying upon them, chearfully to ſerve* Chriſt, *and readily to ſuffer for Him when called to it, and ſupport themſelves from fainting, by due reflections hereon. Heb.* 12. 3.

4. *LET the Children of God gather abundance of Conſolation from hence.* Chriſt's Condemnation is a ground of our Comfort. And let all ſuch as are entitled to Chriſt's Redemption by faith in him, ſtrongly argue to your ſelves, that your Condemnation is paſt over, and there can henceforth be no accuſation brought in to bear againſt you; becauſe the Son of God in our nature, hath born it for us: our Sin was condemned in him, that ſo we might be counted for ever righteous in him.

[FEBRUARY 16. 1696.]

SERMON *CVII.*

WE have conſidered the Inchoation of *Chriſt*'s Death both Spiritual and Corporal, we are now to proceed to the Perfection, or Conſummation of it. And this is to be obſerved in his Crucifixion, and the Concomitants of it; or all that followed from *Pilate*'s paſſing the Sentence on Him, till he gave up his Spirit on the Croſs.

And here obſerve,

1. *THERE were ſome things that went before His* Crucifixion. Account whereof ſee particularly, *Mark* 15.16, to 22. The *Prætorian* Band, which waited upon, and were a Lifeguard, to the Governour, were uſed alſo to do execution on capital Offenders, and tho' in many reſpects, the *Romans* were a civil Nation, yet they had one very barbarous Cuſtom, viz. That ſuch Perſons as were condemned to the Croſs, were alſo left to the Will of the Soldiers, to ſhew them what Inſolence they pleaſed: this Liberty did theſe towards *Jeſus Chriſt*: and, as if it were not enough to take away His Life by the ignominious Croſs, they kill Him before Hand with contumely, and opprobrious Carriage; repreſenting Him as a Mock King, cloathed in a Purple Robe, & wearing a thorny Crown, both painful and ludibrious: they bow to Him in Scorn, and mix pretended Honours, with manifold Abuſes, bowing the knee, and then ſmiting him on the Head; ſpitting on him, and then worſhiping him; and all this to ridicule his Kingly Office, and expoſe his royal Dignity to the greateſt Diſgrace; which yet he bears with admirable Patience!

2. *THE* Crucifixion itſelf, *with the* Concomitants *of it.* Of which we may for the preſent, only gather up the more remarkable Paſſages, in which the Conſummation of His both ſpiritual and bodily Death are repreſented. Here obſerve two things,

(1.) *THE* Manner *of His* Crucifixion. The Croſs was a Tree or Poſt, with a croſs bar affixt to it; to which the Perſon to ſuffer was faſtned, and on which he was nailed, and made to hang till he died by a lingring Death. And *Chriſt* was uſed after the uſual Manner. Being therefore brought to the Place appointed, viz. *Golgotha*, an emblematical Place, and fitly intimating that *Chriſt* died to reſtore dead Sinners to Eternal Life; here they treated Him after this Manner.

[1.] *THEY offered Him to drink*, Wine *mingled with* Myrrh, (*Mar.* 15.23.) *but He refuſed it.* The giving this drink was in favour to the Perſon ſuffering, that it might intoxicate him, and ſo abate the Senſe of the intollerable Pain, which that ſort of Death was attended withal. *Chriſt* therefore would not drink it, being appointed to bear our Griefs for us, Iſai. 53. 6. *The Lord hath laid on him the Iniquity of us all.*

[2.] *HE was ſtript* naked *before the whole* Multitude. For his Garments were taken from Him, and divided, and caſt Lots for by the Soldiers, whiles he was hanging on the Croſs, *Mark* 15. 24. And this was the cuſtom in crucifying, to put the more diſgrace on the Perſon by ſhewing him ſtark naked; this *Chriſt* bare, becauſe we, by Sin, had made ourſelves naked.

[3.] *THEY laid his* Body *on the Croſs; and nailing his* Feet *to the Tree, they ſtretched his* Hands *on the Croſs-bar, and nailed them faſt to that.* This alſo belonged to the manner of Crucifying. And of this we have him complaining, Pſal. 22. 16. *They pierced my hands and my feet.* Hence that, Joh. 20.25. *But he ſaid unto them, Except I ſhall ſee in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thruſt my hand into his ſide, I will not believe.* And thus is he cruelly faſtned to his ſorrows, becauſe we deſerved to be ſtaked down under the wrath of God.

[4.] *BEING thus faſtned, he is lifted upon the* Croſs *into the Air, where it is let fall into a Socket, and ſo is he left hanging.* This was typed by the *Brazen Serpent*, Joh. 3. 14, 15. The firſt *Adam* ſinned by eating the fruit of a Tree, and the Second *Adam* expiates this Guilt on a Tree, 1 *Pet.* 2.24. He ſuffered in the Air; partly becauſe it was the Devils Kingdom, that Satan might have all poſſible advantage againſt him, and yet be conquered by him; this hour is therefore called the *power of darkneſs*, Luk. 22.53. Partly, to be made a ſpectacle of ſhame & diſgrace to the World. Here obſerve,

(2.) *THE* ſhame *and* miſery *that he ſuffered in this kind of Death.*

[1.] *THE* ſhame *was very great.* Though he deſpiſed it for our ſakes, *Heb.* 12. 2. It was a very ſhameful thing to be ſtript naked in the ſight of all ſorts of ſpectators, and a multitude of lookers on. And the very kind of Death that he ſuffered, was a very curſed, & ſhameful thing. Gal. 3. 13. *Curſed is every one that hangeth on a tree.* Hence that, Heb. 13. 13. *Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.* Hanging was in the repute of men, the moſt villanous ſort of Death; and that on the Croſs, of all hanging was the moſt ignominious. Shameful it was alſo, in the concomitants of it, ſpecially, in that he ſuffered between two Thieves, as though he had been the greateſt Thief of all. Thus was he numbred with Tranſgreſſors. *Mar.* 15. 27, 28. And it added to his ſhame, that ſuch Varlets as theſe joined in railing at him, *ver.* 32. Shameful it was in the many reviling taunts and opprobrious carriages towards him on all hands whiles he was alive on the Croſs; almoſt every one caſting gall and wormwood into his Cup, to make it ſo much the more bitter; they that paſſed by, *ver.* 29, 30. the chief Prieſts, Scribes, & Thieves themſelves, *ver.* 31, 32. Thus was that verifyed, *Pſal.* 69. And 22. 7, 8. Yea, they that gave him vinegar and gall, (*ver.* 36.) added a taunt to it, of which he complains, Pſal. 69. 21. *They gave me alſo gall for my meat, and in my thirſt they gave me vinegar to drink.*

[2.] *THE* miſery *was alſo great.* It was a torment that he ſuffered: for having the moſt noble temper of Body, and exquiſite Senſes, he was, more then other men, liable to ſuffering: and the Death of the Croſs is very torturing; for, the palms of the hands, and ſoles of the feet, having the greateſt concourſe of the nerves, which are the inſtruments of the ſenſe of feeling, being pierced with great nails, by which they were broken, could not but be in extream pain. It is probable alſo that the Crown of Thorns remained on his Head, which by the force of the Croſs, muſt add to his wounds, & bruiſes, beſides the whole weight of his Body hanging on thoſe nails, and ſuffering both a violent concuſſion by the force, &c. and a continued extenſion upon them, made it a rack, by ſtretching all his nerves and ſinews to the uttermoſt; and becauſe none of his vitals were wounded, but abode ſound, it was by this very pain that he was to die a lingring Death: ſo that his continuance on the Croſs added to his tortures, which was at leaſt three hours. All which while, the Sun alſo withdrawing its light, and leaving him in darkneſs, added to the horror of it, *ver.* 33, 34. Thus of the Crucifixion it ſelf.

2. NOW let us obſerve in it, *How Chriſt ſuffered both the* firſt *and* ſecond *Death in their perfection.*

1. *HE ſuffered the perfection of the* ſecond *Death:* and this was whiles he was alive on the Croſs. For, we formerly obſerved, that the Order was inverted in Chriſt, he being to finiſh the work of Redemption in his Bodily Death. It was on the Croſs, and not after he was taken from it, that he was made a curſe for us. It was there that he drank the dregs of the Cup of divine Fury, it was there he finiſhed his Satisfaction. Joh. 19. 30. *When Jeſus therefore had received the vinegar, he ſaid, It is finiſhed: & he bowed his head & gave up the ghoſt.* His Soul no ſooner left his Body, but it went to *Paradiſe*, Luk. 23. 43. And we cannot with reaſon conceive, that while his Soul was happy and glorifyed, there remained any Satisfaction to be made. Here then he wreſtled with the wrath of an angry God, encountred the powers of darkneſs. All thoſe three hours of darkneſs was Chriſt wreſtling with the wrath of his Father, and ſuffered the pains of Hell for us.

NOW he ſuffered the perfection of the *ſecond* Death,

(1.) *IN the puniſhment of* Loſs. This is ſhadowed to us, partly in the three hours darkneſs, *ver.* 33. Herein the Sun was miraculouſly eclipſed, and denied him its beams, and no creature-comfort, was in the leaſt afforded him to refreſh himſelf withal: partly in that mournful expreſſion of his, *ver.* 34. ſhewing that he ſuffered a total privation of the ſenſe of his Fathers love, and the ſweetneſs of it, for the reality of it, he loſt not; His Everlaſting Love never ceaſed, but the comforting applications of it, were totally ſuſpended. For the God of all Glory, the Fountain of Life & Light forſook him, He from whom all Conſolation comes, departed from him. The Man Chriſt was a creature forſaken. God the Father hid his face away from him, deprived him of the beatifical Viſion, drew in the light of his Countenance from his Soul. Pſal. 13. 1. *How long wilt thou forget me (O Lord) for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me?* Nay, God would not ſend any meſſage of comfort unto him. In the Garden an Angel is ſent to ſtrengthen him, (*Luk.* 22. 43.) but now the whole Creation ſtand off in a deadly fright, and there was none to comfort him. *Pſal.* 69. 20. Yea, God hid himſelf from him, & though he ſought him, he could not find him, though he cryed he would not be entreated, *Pſal.* 22. 1, 2. God left him, and all comfort departed from him.

(2.) *IN the puniſhment of* Senſe. He was not only forſaken, but accurſed, i. e. filled with the apprehenſion of all the bitterneſs of God's wrath, *Gal.* 3. 13. He grapled with Satan, *Luk.* 23. 53. The Devils had now power to vent their malice upon him. Now was that great battle fought, *Col.* 2. 14, 15. Here the Devil would have driven him to deſpair. *Pſal.* 22. 8. And he ſtrove with the immediate wrath of God; He was ſmitten by him, *Iſai.* 53. 4. He cauſed a confluence of miſeries to ſettle upon him. He was made a *Curſe* in the *Abſtract*, Gal. 3. 13. Was in the very depths of woes and miſeries, *Pſal. 69. begin.* This

was

was a Death of sorrow, and not of sin; but his sorrows were unconceivably great.

2. *NOW follows the* perfection *of this Bodily Death:* In which two things are observable, viz. the *Death* it self, and the *Dominion* of it over him.

1. HIS *Bodily Death* its self is expressed, in, Luk. 23. 46. *And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.* Where,

(1.) *HE commended his Soul into his Fathers Hands.* After this manner he dyed, and therein testifyed the free resignation of himself unto Death, or a voluntary willing Dying: that it was no fear nor terror to him to dye. The phrase is fetch'd from, Psal. 31. 5. *Into thy hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.* By *God's Hands*, understand his mighty power and protection: And this resignation intimates, that he died in full assurance of being received into Heaven, yea, that his Soul should forthwith go to Glory; not to descend to Hell, to shew himself to the *Damned*, and triumph over the infernal Spirits, but go into his Fathers Bosom.

(2.) *HE gave up the Ghost.* He could by his power have drawn out his Life a great deal longer; nay, he died sooner than was ordinary or expected. *Pilate* wondred at it, *Mar.* 15. 44. Christ was not meerly passive, but active too, in his very dying; He dyed by his own free and voluntary consent, *Joh.* 10. 18. He resigned himself to the natural causes of Dea h. Concerning which observe,

1. *THAT it was a* real Death *that Christ suffered.* He truly dyed. For,

(1.) *HIS* Humanity *was deprived of all its senses.* These are the instruments of the reasonable Soul, by which it acts the Body, and in which it communicates itself thereto; these were dissipated: and this was typed by the taking down the Tabernacle, *Num.* 10. 17.

(2.) *ALL his* Bodily Organs *totally ceased from their Operations.* His merciful Hands moved not; His compassionate Eyes were closed; His attentive Ears were stop'd; His Feet that were wont to travel for the good of Sinners, were shackled with the fetters of Death; His gracious Tongue was now tied, and his sweet Lips were now shut up.

(3.) *HE was deprived of all the Excellency of* Life, *which the presence of the Soul with the Body is wont to give.* He lost all his Bodily strength, nor could he move himself; but is taken by others, and laid in his Grave, Mat. 27. 59,60. *And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linnen cloth. And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.* He lost that glorious beauty and majesty of his Countenance that was wont to appear in it, and became an Object of astonishment to the beholders. *Isai.* 52. 14. His Body was deprived of honour, and filled with shame. A dead Body is an ignominious spectacle, being a spectacle of the dismal effects of sin. 1 Cor. 15. 43. *It is sown in dishonour.* He was deprived of all the comforts, and good things of this Life; of food & raiment, of pleasures and delights. He was *cut off*, Dan. 9. 26. i. e. from Life it self, and all the enjoyments of it.

2. *THAT it was a most* miserable Death. And that,

(1.) *BECAUSE it was a* part *of the punishment of our sins:* For this also is contained in the threatning, Gen. 2. 17. *Thou shalt surely die.* Though it be not all. And to die for sin, or be a reputed Sinner, is a misery. Christ was cut off as a Malefactor, by the Judgment of God, and the stroke of divine revenge. *Isai.* 53. 8.

(2.) *IT was a* seperation *of the union of his blessed Soul and Body.* These two intimates, which were made to dwell together, were now parted asunder. And Death it self is a very bitter thing to nature, because, by the snapping asunder of this union, the communion of these integrating parts of man is dissolved.

(3.) *HE retained his* Understanding & Sense *in their vigour, to the moment of his Death.* The other that were Crucifyed, lost their senses by degrees, their Spirits failed, and the apprehension of their pain abated; whereas his was on the increase; as appears by his loud cry at last, *Matth.* 27. 50. which very thing convinced the Centurion, Mar. 15. 39. *And when the Centurion which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.*

(4.) *HE was cut off by a violent and cruel Death, in the* midst *of his days.* When all his senses were most vigorous & active. The Sacrifices were many of them, to be of the first Year: Christ died about the middle of that which is called the Age of a Man, when there was no decay in any of his natural powers. There were indeed glorious Concomitants of this Death, that were evident tokens of the excellency of his Person, and efficacy of his Sufferings. *The vail of the Temple was rent*; to shew that he opened a living way to God. *Heb.* 10. 20. And that the Ceremonies were abolished. *The Earth quaked, and Rocks rent*; to testify his Majesty and Divinity; and how dreadful he should be to a wicked World. *The Graves opened, and the Bodies of Saints rose*; to shew that by his Death he had procured a glorious Resurrection for his Redeemed. But still, his Death it self, by which he made way for all those benefits, was therefore miserable, that it might procure these Everlasting Mercies for us.

2. CONCERNING the *Dominion* of this *Bodily Death* over him: Of which our Catechism saith, that *He continued under the power of Death for a time*; and our Creed, that *He descended into Hell*; being dead and buried: And the Scripture informs us of his being dead three days; His Body being in the

Grave, and his Soul in a ſtate of Separation. This we may call a Complement of his Death, or an Adjunct to it, being the utmoſt bound of his Humiliation. Here obſerve,

1. *THAT the continuation of Chriſt's Death, was not properly a* puniſhment, *or a* part *of his Satisfaction for Sin.* For of that he ſaid, *It is finiſhed*, when he gave up the Ghoſt, and his Soul went to Heaven; but it was, as it were, a Concluſion of his ſtate of Humiliation, or a ſtately Adjunct of it: And had he riſen the next hour, Satisfaction had been fully made.

2. *THAT the* grounds *of his abiding in a ſtate of Death ſo long, might be,* (beſides the Sovereign pleaſure of God)

(1.) *TO ſhew that he ſubmitted to the* Power *and* Authority *of Death:* That he did voluntarily give himſelf up to bear our Puniſhment. And,

(2.) *TO make it appear, that he was* indeed *Dead:* That it was no fictitious Death that he underwent; that it was not only a deliquium, or fainting of his ſpirits. There have been many that have lain in a ſwoon for many hours, ſo that by-ſtanders ſuppoſed them to be really dead, till afterwards they recovered again. And it was needful that he ſhould give proof of his being dead, becauſe it is by his Death that we live.

(3.) *THAT Death might* triumph *over Him.* For though he was to gain a victory upon Death, 1 *Cor.* 15. 55, *&c.* Yet it was by dying, and Death was firſt to lead him as a Conquerour; and wherein could it more apparently triumph, then by holding him for ſome ſpace of time in the Grave? Hence,

3. *HIS* Body *mean while lay in the Grave.* He was put into a Tomb. It was the *Roman* cuſtom to burn their dead Bodies, and gather up their Aſhes, and put them in an Urn; but he was buried after the manner of the Jews, who embalmed their Bodies, and put them in Sepulchres: And this is all we are to underſtand by that expreſſion in the Creed, *HE deſcended into Hell.* The word *Sheol*, ſignifies both the Grave and Hell. And that, Acts 2. 31. *That his ſoul was not left in hell, neither his fleſh did ſee corruption:* is tranſlated from, Pſal. 16. 10. *For thou wilt not leave my ſoul in hell; neither wilt thou ſuffer thine holy One to ſee corruption.* Where this word is uſed, and intends, that his Soul was not left in a ſtate of Separation; and that his Body did not lie ſo long as to putrify in the Grave. And touching his Burial, we have an account given of it, in the Prophecy, Iſai. 53. 9. *And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death.*

4. *HIS* Soul *was all this time in a ſtate of ſeparation from his* Body. Theſe two Companions were kept ſevered each from the other; which was Death's triumph over him: and this was at leaſt a ſuſpenſion of his perfect felicity, and an appendix of his ſtate of Humiliation: For his Body, which was the Tabernacle of this our High Prieſt, was at preſent unſerviceable to thoſe noble Operations of his in it: His Soul alſo wanted his Body to dwell in, and ſo the felicity of it, was ſo far incompleat, one part of his Humanity being parted from the other: yet it is not neceſſary to annumerate it to his Puniſhment for Satisfaction properly: He was bleſſed from the inſtant of his Death, though his ſacred Body could not, for the while ſenſibly partake in that felicity. Thus was his Body kept for a ſeaſon in the Grave, that he might ſanctify the Grave to all his Redeemed, and make it leſs formidable.

TOUCHING the *Adjuncts* of Chriſt's Burial, much need not be ſaid. Three Paſſages are remarkable,

1. *HE was laid in a* Tomb. Partly to fulfil the Prophecy, *Iſai.* 53. 9. Partly to ſignify the manner of his Sepulture: His Body was not corrupted or waſted, but kept whole and entire, *Pſal* 16. 10.

2. *IN a new Tomb. Mat.* 27. 60. One in which none had been before buried. *Luk.* 23. 53. Divine Providence wiſely ordered this, to prevent all Objections that might elſe have been made, that none might have any pretence to ſay, that it was not this individual Body, but ſome other that was raiſed.

3 *THE* Prieſts *and* Phariſees *ſecured his Tomb, that none might open the Grave without their knowledge. Mat.* 27. 62, &c. And hereby the Providence of God, wiſely ordered it, that what they did to prevent forgery, ſhould be a very convincing Argument to prove the certainty of his Reſurrection to the Worlds end; ſo making their malice ſerve to his Glory.

USE. I. *THE Conſideration of theſe things, may ſerve to convince us of the great evil and danger there is in* Sin. It may be too many, and particularly Young Ones, think it a ſmall and trifling matter to tranſgreſs the holy Law of God; and can with a great deal of Liberty, and without remorſe commit Sin: But if you would be perſwaded well to ponder the preſent Subject, here is that which will help to make you think otherwiſe. Let ſecure Sinners go to *Golgotha*, ſee, and ſeriouſly meditate on what Chriſt Suffered, and remember, all that was for Sin; and then ſay, whether you can maintain your former thoughts of it. Here you may find heart-breaking and melting Conſiderations of it, and ſuch as may well ſet the ſtoureſt Sinner on trembling. Do not take your meaſure by the ſeeming pleaſure, that Sin now affords you, but rate it according to Chriſt's Sufferings for it, and there you will ſee that is is bitterneſs in the latter end. View Him bearing his Croſs, ſtript of his Veſture, and made naked; ſee his ſacred Hands & Feet torn with nails, His bleſſed Body hanging on the Tree, made a Spectacle of ſhame and ſorrow. Hear Him groaning under his miſery, and look upon him as relinquiſhed or forſaken one, the God of Glory turning away his face from him, refuſing him any comfort, and letting the whole weight of Divine fury fall

upon

upon him: See infinite wrath poſſeſſing him, and the damned Devils ſeizing and afflicting him; the Sun hiding up its light from him, and Men flouting and reviling of him; God all the while, looking as if he had no regard for him. And then ſay, all this was on the account of ſin, becauſe the iniquity of his people was laid upon him. Yea, follow Him, till you ſee him breathing out his Soul, and becoming a Dead Man under all: And then think, What am I doing, whiles I am purſuing mine iniquity with greedineſs? And one would think, this ſhould never ſuffer you to entertain one kind thought for the leaſt Sin any more. What Chriſt ſuffered, witneſſeth what you alſo muſt undergo, and what will certainly be your portion, if you repent not. And remember, what he himſelf hath given you to chew upon when he was going to theſe Sufferings, Luk. 23. 30, 31. *Then ſhall they begin to ſay to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do theſe things in a green tree, what ſhall be done in the dry?*

USE. II. *LET every Believer here ſee, what Reaſon you have to admire and be aſtoniſhed at the* Love of Chriſt *in Redeeming you.* Of all the Wonders that ever were heard of, this is the moſt Wonderful of all; that ever the Eternally Beloved Son of God, ſhould take upon Him to undergo all this ſhame and ſorrow, which exceeds the utmoſt of our Conception, that he might expiate the Guilt of our Sins, and ſo ranſom and deliver poor ſelf-deſtroyed Sinners, from eternal Deſtruction; and let all that have had this Redemption applied to them, be often enflaming of their Affections unto Chriſt, by reflecting upon it. Follow him from the Garden to his Croſs, and commorate upon every Paſſage as you go, and ſee how many tranſcendent Expreſſions of heart-alluring Love you ſhall find therein; and be ſure you ſtand ſtill when you come to Golgotha, and make particular remarks upon thoſe uncountable Sorrows, which he there underwent; what his Body, and eſpecially what his Soul endured. Look upon this bloody Saviour, and ſee him undergoing, not only the Rage of Men, and Fury of Devils, but the Wrath of God too, and the Puniſhments of Hell, to the wounding of his Soul, and making it an Offering for Sin, and all this in your Room and Place, and then ſay, what Love is comparable to his? This ruddy Saviour herein appears altogether lovely; loſe your Hearts in this Contemplation, and look yourſelves into Raptures: Meditate, till you find your ſelves tranſported, and your Affections all on a Blaze, making you, in a chearful readineſs to do, yea, to die for him, when called to it.

MARCH 16. 1696.

SERMON *CVIII.*

QUESTION XXVIII.

Herein conſiſts CHRIST's Exaltation?

ANSWER.

CHRIST's Exaltation conſiſts in His riſing again from the Dead on the Third Day, in aſcending up to Heaven, and in ſitting at the Right Hand of GOD the Father, and in coming to Judge the World at the laſt Day.

WE have been taking a View of the firſt Part of Chriſt's Redemption, conſiſting in His *Humiliation*, in which he made Satisfaction to the Law and Juſtice, in his Life and Death. We proceed now to the ſecond Part of it, which is His *Exaltation*. This is wont to be called a Part of Redemption; not becauſe there was any thing now to do in point of Payment for us, for that was compleatly done in the former; but becauſe in it, not only did the Lord Jeſus receive high Advancement in his Perſon, with reſpect to his Humane Nature, but alſo becauſe therein he did accompliſh ſome neceſſary Circumſtances of our Redemption, which will be taken notice of in the Sequel.

THAT we may take a more full & diſtinct account of this great Article in the Chriſtian Religion, and wherein ſo much of the comfort of God's Children is concerned, I ſhall in the firſt place ſpeak to it more generally, and then proceed to lay it out in the ſeveral parts of it.

IN the general Conſideration of it we may obſerve, 1. *The* Order. 2. *The* Neceſſity. 3. *The* Nature *of it.*

I. *TOUCHING the* Order *of Chriſt's Exaltation*; two things,

1. *IT was* upon, *and* after *his finiſhing his work of Redemption.* This order the Apoſtle takes notice of, *Phil.* 2. 7, 8, 9. And the Hiſtory of the four Evangeliſts confirms it: He was firſt Humbled, and then Exalted; firſt brought down into the duſt, and made as low and contemptible as the curſe of the Law, armed with Divine Juſtice, could make him; and then he was taken from the Pit, and Priſon, and ſet above Principalities and Powers.

2. *IT was when*, in & by *his Humiliation he had wrought out compleat Redemption for us.* For this end he was humbled, and this was the reſultancy of it. It was as our Surety that he fell into the hands of revenging Juſtice, and was made a prey unto Death, and therefore he could not be ſet free from theſe bonds till he had made full Satisfaction for us. The Exaltation of Chriſt as He was our Redeemer,

Redeemer, was the Reward of his great Work; it must therefore first be finished and perfected by him, before he could receive the Recompence. And that work could not be compleated, till the whole price of Redemption was paid to the last farthing. Mat. 5. 18. *For verily I say unto you, Till heaven & earth pass, one jot or one title shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.* But now, He hath fully accomplished it; and his Father remembers the promise he had made unto him, and most gloriously exalts him; He exalts him above all Exaltation, & every conceivable Excellency; as the word in *Phil.* 2. 9. intimates. And we have a parallel expression in *Act.* 2. 33. The word signifies heightned and extolled. He was lifted up to the highest pinnacle of honour and dignity. And this is it which Christ himself made his demands of, upon his finishing of his work, in that Prayer of his, Joh. 17. 4, 5. *I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*

II. *AS to the* Necessity *of His Exaltation, or why it was requisite that Christ, after he had humbled himself, should be thus Exalted:* There are these grounds of it,

1. *FROM the* Covenant Agreement, *or* Contract *that passed between God the Father and Son about it.* His Father promised him, that if he would suffer and satisfy for Man, he should have a glorious Recompence, *Isai.* 53. 10. That if he would drink of the torrent in the way, he should lift up his head on high, *Psal.* 110. *ult.* And the Man Christ had an eye to this in all his Sufferings, and bore up his Spirits from sinking under them, by the consideration of it, and his confident expectation to receive it. *Heb.* 12. 2. As God the Father engaged his Son to dye, and it was therefore needful that he should dye, that he might do his part in this Everlasting Covenant, so he engaged to him a Crown of Glory for dying, and it was as requisite that he should bestow it upon him.

2. *FROM the reference which Christ had, in his state of Humiliation, to the* Law of Justice. He was in it, a Surety for his People; and it was on the account of his being under that Obligation, that Justice had arrested him as an Offender, charging on him the guilt of all our sins, and made a demand at his hands of full Payment and Satisfaction, resolving not to let him go, till it had received it in full. When therefore he had answered all that could righteously be claimed of him, and Justice had received from him to the utmost of what is required; when it had triumphed over him with the greatest state, and could not require any thing further of him, it was all reason that he should receive an acquittance from it, and be honourably discharged: that it might as manifestly appear, that he had Satisfyed, as that he had before made himself a Debtor. And this is that which is intended, in that reason which the Apostle giveth for it, in Act. 2. 24. *Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.*

3. *IT was also needful for the help of the* Faith *of the Children of God.* The reason why we believe in Christ for Justification, and Salvation, is because he did, in his Satisfaction, and Merit, procure for us, Pardon and Peace. Our hope of Life is founded upon his Death: and the Exaltation of Christ is the very reason why we believe on his Death: It is because he once was dead, and now lives; was once in the power of Justice to recover its own of him, and is now set at liberty. And therefore, when he recommends himself to the Faith of his People, he doth it on such a consideration, Rev. 1. 18. *I am he that liveth, and was dead: and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keys of hell and of death.* And but for this Exaltation of his, we could never have known that his Sacrifice was accepted, and his Father well pleased in it; but when we see the Glory that he is advanced to by his Father, this puts all out of doubt, and our Faith is helped to triumph on the consideration of it. *Rom.* 8. 34.

III. *LET us now make a general Enquiry into the* Nature *of this Exaltation of his.* For our full understanding whereof, let us take account of this Description of it: *It is that glorious Triumph which our Lord Jesus Christ made, over his and our Enemies, after he had gained a perfect Conquest of them.* It was a custom among the *Romans*, to bestow a Triumph upon their Generals, who had compleated any War, in bringing into entire subjection any People, with whom they had been in hostility; wherein they were made to ride through the City in a Chariot, attended on by the whole Nobility and Senate, Crowned with Laurel Garlands, and the chief of their Captives being carried before them in Chains; the whole City mean while clapping their hands, and in the shouts applauding them; and so attended to the Capitol, where they hung up the Trophies of their Victory, to be kept in remembrance of it. To this custom the Spirit of God alludes, in speaking of Christ's Exaltation, Col. 2. 15. *And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.* The Exaltation of Christ was not the Victory it self, for that he accomplished on his Cross, but it was the Triumph following upon it: it was a declaration and manifestation of the Victory. In the Description observe,

1. *SOMETHING of the* Victory *it self which he hath obtained.* And here we may take notice of,

1. *THE* Subject *on which it was gotten, viz.* His *and* our *Enemies.* Now we had by Sin procured, and incensed against us, these four Enemies,

(1.) THE *Law.* And this is our greatest Enemy,

Enemy, inaſmuch as we had made it to be ſo by our Sin, on account whereof, it had a terrible quarrel againſt us, as being Covenant-breakers. And hence being armed with Divine Revenge, it purſues us to Death, being mortally incenſed againſt us.

(2.) *DEATH:* As it is envenomed by Sin, is a fiery Serpent, putting forth its deadly ſting, bearing the nature of a Puniſhment. And it is the very penalty threatned, *Gen.* 2. 17. And it is both bodily and ſpiritual. Hence called an Enemy, 1 Cor. 15. 26. *The laſt enemy that ſhall be deſtroyed, is death.*

(3.) *SATAN:* As he bears the denomination of a Jaylor, and Executioner, into whoſe power the ſinning creature is delivered up, for ſin, by the righteous Judgment of God: Who is therefore ſaid to rule over ſuch, *Eph.* 2. 2. & 6. 12.

(4.) THE *World:* As it is an Inſtrument in the hand of Satan, to hold the Sinner faſt, and keep him at a diſtance from God, by its blandiſhments and ſnares. We therefore read of a Victory over the World, 1 *Joh* 5.4.

2. *THE* Manner *how Chriſt overcame theſe.* And this was done after a diverſe manner, according to the different Conſideration on which theſe are our Enemies. And here,

(1.) *HE overcame the* Law *by obeying and ſatisfying it.* By his active and paſſive Obedience he gat a Victory upon it; and that was by making it a Friend, which we had made our Enemy; by fulfilling of the Righteouſneſs which it required of us, and bearing the penalty which it had devoted us unto; He ſo ſtopped its mouth, He delivered us from the dominion of it, Rom. 6. 14. *For ſin ſhall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.* By being made a curſe for us, he ſo redeemed us from the curſe of the Law that was out againſt us. *Gal.* 3. 13. He ſtood between, &c.

(2.) *HE overcame* Death *by ſuffering it for us.* For, Death being armed by the Law, and gaining its power by Sin, according to 1 *Cor.* 15. 56. could be no otherwiſe reconciled to us, but by his taſting of it in our room. He therefore by bearing the puniſhment of ſin, and ſuſtaining the wrath of God for ſin, took out the ſting of Death, and turned it into a friend to his People, according to *ver.* 54.

(3.) *HE overcame* Satan, *by ſpoiling him of his Principality, and taking of his Prey out of his clutches.* He came upon him by force, and took him Captive, *Col.* 2. 15. diſpoſſeſs'd this ſtrong man, *Mat.* 12. 28,29. And this he did in his Death, *Heb.* 2. 14.

(4.) *HE overcame the* World, *by making all in it to ſerve for the Good of his People.* There was a Curſe fallen upon the creature, *Gen.* 3. 17. And every thing here was become to him a ſnare and a trap; but Chriſt by dying took out that Curſe, and hath made both Proſperity and Adverſity to ſerve them that are his called, and turn to their real advantage. *Joh.* 16. 33. and *Rom.* 8. 28.

2. *WE may conſider the* Excellency *of this Victory*, in two things,

1. *IT is the* greateſt *Victory that was ever heard of.* This will appear, if we conſider the Subject of it, or what he overcame. There is the World, which neither *Alexander*, nor any of the famous Conquerors, who raiſed the Monarchies, could ever accompliſh. But this Chriſt did, and by vertue of his Conqueſt, hath enabled his People alſo ſo to do. 1 Joh. 5. 4,5. *For whatſoever is born of God, overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jeſus is the Son of God?* And there is the God of this World, ſo is the Devil called, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. Theſe powers of darkneſs which are inſuperable by man; but he hath trampled upon them; yea and bruiſed them under the feet of his People. *Rom.* 16. 20. And there is the Empire of Death, that great Conquerour, which leads the whole World captive, and triumphs over the whole progeny of fallen man; He hath the dominion over it, *Rev.* 1.18. *And have the keys of hell & of death.* And he helps his people to make that triumphant challenge, 1 Cor. 15. 55. *O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory?* And there is the ſtrength of the Law, which no created power is able to cope withal; but he hath diveſted it of the Curſe, ſo far as reſpects his Redeemed ones; ſo that by vertue hereof, they are free from it. Rom 8. 2. *For the law of the Spirit of life, in Chriſt Jeſus, hath made me free from the law of ſin & death.*

2. *IT was the moſt* perfect *Conqueſt.* Though thoſe Enemies were great and ſtrong, yet he gained an entire Victory, ſo that they are not only diſarmed, but are ſo ſcattered, that they ſhall never recover their power and force again, ſo as to get the Victory over his People. He hath broken Satan's head, *Gen.* 3. 15. His plot, with reſpect to the choſen of God, is utterly daſht. Death hath now no more dominion over him. Rom. 6. 9. *Knowing that Chriſt being raiſed from the dead, dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him.* And therefore it cannot hurt his. The Law is fully pacifyed, and his People are forever free from the Curſes of it, *Rom.* 8. 1. And the World is at his Command, and he poſſeſſeth it in the right of his Victory, *Pſal* 2.8. This was his Victory, which though gotten on the Croſs, yet was glorioufly manifeſted in his Exaltation. *Pſal.* 68. 1.

2. *NOW let us conſider the* Triumph *it ſelf which followed on his Victory*; Which is properly his Exaltation. For, though Chriſt triumphed on his Croſs, as in a field of Conqueſt, he therefore dyed with that exclamation, Joh. 19. 30. *When Jeſus therefore had received the vinegar, he ſaid, It is finiſhed: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghoſt.* q. d. The Buſineſs is accompliſhed, the Enemies are vanquiſhed, the Redemption of God's Elect is compleatly obtained: Yet the open ſhew of it was reſerved for his Exaltation, in which he rode into the Great City not made with hands, in a Triumphal Chariot,

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leading Captivity Captive; which is pointed to, *Pſal.*68.18. Compare, *Eph.* 4. 8.

And here,

1. *FOR the* matter *of his Triumph, it was exceeding Glorious.* For he is advanced to the moſt illuſtrious Dignity. It is therefore called, *His glory*, Luk. 24. 26. And that is ſurpaſſing all the Glory, which either the Angels enjoy, or juſt Men made perfect are priviledged withal. See, *Phil.*2.4. *Pſal.* 48.7. WhichGlory may be diſcovered in two things,

(1. NEGATIVE; Or, *that which he laid aſide in his Advancement to it.* He put off that *Form of a Servant*, that abject & debaſed Condition in which he appeared, during his ſtate of Humiliation,and whiles he was doing the work of it. He put off that Mortality, he laid aſide all thoſe Infirmities, which for the time he took upon him. Theſe were proper for him whiles he was anſwering the Law for us, and bearing the Wrath of God in our ſtead. But now he laid them aſide for ever; and His next Appearance will be after another manner. According to *Heb.*9.28.

(2.) POSITIVE; *He took upon him the higheſt Perfections, and the moſt tranſcendent Heavenly Glories.* In which obſerve,

[1.] *AS to his* Divine Nature, *it was only declarative.* The Perſon of Chriſt is the Son of God, and ſo God. Now theDivineNature enjoys it ſelf everlaſtingly, in fulneſs of perfection, which can never be augmented. The DivineNature of Chriſt was never abaſed,and ſo could not be in it ſelf exalted; although He who is God, was in his other Nature humbled, and after that glorified. His Divinity indeed was eclipſed as to the knowledge of men, and there were but few that ſaw it,or believed that he who was under ſuch a debaſement was indeed the Son of God,and King of Iſrael, *Iſai.* 52. 14. 53. 2, 3. But now it was declared moſt excellently, and he was made to appear, to be the Eternal Son of God, *Rom.* 1. 4.

[2] *AS to his* Humane Nature, *this was the proper Subject in which his Humiliation was acted. Gal.* 4. 4, 5. This therefore was that on which theExaltation was nextly beſtowed: though ſtill, it was not meerly the Nature, but the Perſon in this Nature,which received it. But yet it was his Humanity, that did really exchange an abject ſtate,for a glorified one. Concerning which in general obſerve,

1. *HIS* Humane Nature *received all the Perfections, that a created Nature was capable of, in the higheſt degree.* In his Soul there was the perfection of Grace in act & exerciſe, with the moſt compleat ſatisfaction: and his Body was glorifyed as his Soul. Hence the glory of the Bodies of the Saints, is ſaid to be after the ſimilitude of his, *Phil.* 3.20. He is advanced to the moſt elevated degree of happineſs; about which we have been ſpeaking. Pſal. 16 *ult. Thou wilt ſhew me the path of life: in thy preſence is fulneſs of joy, at thy right hand are pleaſures for evermore.*

2. *THIS* Glory *of his is Eternal & Unchangeable.* He is now ſet down in it,and ſettled upon it. His Debaſement was but for a little while, and it was over, but his Exaltation is for perpetuity. His Death held him but a while,but his Life is endleſs. *Rev.*1.18. Heb. 7. 25. — *He ever liveth to make Interceſſion for them.*

3. *BUT yet, both his* Body *and* Soul *retain their own Nature and Eſſential Properties.* The Humanity of Chriſt, is, and for ever ſhall be a Humanity, nor doth it in thisGlory receive any of the Divine Properties. Luk. 24. 39. *Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I my ſelf; handle me, and ſee, for a ſpirit hath not fleſh and bones, as ye ſee me have.* They go a ſtrain too high, who, to ſet forth the Dignity put upon the *Man Chriſt*, will have his Body to participate in any of thoſe Perfections, which the Divinity only is capable of; particularly, that of *Ubiquity*, on which the Doctrines of *Trans*-and *Conſubſtantiation* are founded. The Man Chriſt is of that Perſon who hath all theſe Perfections, which is a ſurpaſſing honour put upon our Nature: but theſe are not transfuſed into it.

2. *AS to the* form *of his Triumph:* it was either,

(1.) *EXTERNAL*; Accompanied with Trophies and Monuments of his Victory; with honourable Titles, and glorious Encomiums,and teſtimonies of the higheſt eſteem. Col. 2. 15. *And having ſpoiled principalities and powers, he made a ſhew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.* Theſe are recorded in the Scriptures, and ſhall remain there to his Praiſe ſo long as this World ſhall ſtand. *Pſal.* 72. 17. His Name is precious and honourable in the eſteem both of Men and Angels, *Phil.*2.10,11. He hath ſuper-eminent Honour put upon him; and the moſt noble of Creatures do adore him, *Heb.*2.7,9.

(2.) *INTERNAL:* Which conſiſts in that entire ſatisfaction, which the Man Chriſt takes, in the Glorious Reward which his Father hath beſtowed upon him. Not only doth or ſhall the whole intelligent Creation admire and ſtand aſtoniſhed at the unconceivable Excellency of it; but the Man Chriſt himſelf is filled with it,rejoyceth & glorieth in it for ever. It is that, the forethoughts whereof did ſo raviſh him, that it carried him with abundant reſolution, through all the hard things that he met with in the way to it. *Heb.* 12. 2. Yea, when he was entring upon the Tragedy of his Laſt Sufferings, it gave him inward joy, *Pſal.* 16. 10,&c. And doubtleſs, now he is inveſted with, and in full poſſeſſion of it, he takes up compleatly ſatisfyed in it. So that the heart of the Man Chriſt in Heaven boaſts itſelf, and rejoyeth with an unconceivable Joy, in that higheſt honour and Glory which it is exalted unto; beyond which, neither can its deſires, or fruitions extend. What this is in particular, we know but little of it; but there are ſome Diſcoveries of it to be made in the particulars, whereof the Goſpel gives us the Account.

USE.

USE. I. *LET the Conſideration of the* Exaltation *of Chriſt, eſtabliſh the hearts of thoſe that believe in Him, againſt Temptation to be afraid of any thing, that ſhould offer to hinder your Salvation.* The ground of our Faith was laid in his Humiliation; there he conquered for us; but here we have our great Encouragement. Hence that emphaſis is put on it, Rom. 8. 34. *Who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died, yea rather that is riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh intercеſſion for us.* Be not terrifyed at the Laws threatnings and curſes; but ask, if that hath any thing againſt you, why did it diſcharge him, when he ſtood to anſwer for it? Why did the Law acquit him, if my ſins, which were charged upon him, had not been fully ſatisfyed for? Let not the apprehenſions of Death frighten us, remembring that the ſting and curſe of it fell upon him; and he drank all the poyſon that was in it: but he hath overcome, and gotten above it. And hath he lifted up his head out of the Grave, and conquered Death it ſelf, what ſting can it now retain to poyſon us withal? Death is one thing that he hath led Captive in his Triumph, why then ſhould we be afraid of it? Nor let us be diſcouraged, becauſe we have ſuch an adverſary as the Devil to cope withal, who is repreſented ſo formidably, as may well terrify ungodly ones. Reject him, reſiſt him, look upon him as a captived and chained enemy. Look upon all his temptations as the eſſays of a conquered enemy, more ſpiteful than powerful. Nor be diſmayed at any thing in the World, that offers either to entangle or diſhearten you, remembring that Chriſt hath overcome and triumphed upon them all. Remember then, that it was for us, that he might make us *more than Conquerors.*

USE. II. *LET the thoughts of Chriſt's* Exaltation, *quicken & animate us to an Heavenly Converſation.* Labour we by this Meditation to have our hearts in Heaven, to ſet our affections on things above. *Col.* 3. 1,2. To lay up our Treaſure there, *Matth.* 6. 20. to maintain a Trade there, *Phil.* 3. 20. Is He Exalted? Let us follow him, that we may be with him. Let it encourage us to be faithful in his ſervice, patient and chearful in ſuffering whatſoever he calls us to in the courſe of our lives. Let us then from hence be confirmed in our believing that we ſhall not loſe our reward. Chriſt once ſuffered, and then entred into his Glory. He was obedient in all things, and therefore God highly exalted him. And remember, that as God promiſed to his People, that if they follow him in their faithful obedience here, they ſhall enjoy Glory with him in the end, (*Rom.* 2. 7,8. 2 *Tim.* 2. 12. *Rev.* 2. 10.) ſo Chriſt is in this not only the fore-runner, but is alſo entred for us, *Heb.* 6. 20. *Whither the forerunner is for us entred: even Jeſus.* And as he was humbled, ſo he is exalted on our account, and therefore left that as an encouragement to perſeverance to all his diſciples and followers, Joh. 14. 19. *Yet a little while, and the world ſeeth me no more: but ye ſee me: becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo.*

[APRIL 13. 1697.]

SERMON CIX.

FROM the General Conſideration of Chriſt's *Exaltation*, we paſs to take a more diſtinct Account of it in the ſeveral ſteps. And theſe are comprized under two heads. They are either thoſe degrees of Triumph, which he is already exalted to; or ſuch, the manifeſtation whereof is reſerved for the Day of Judgment. God hath already highly lifted him up, and will yet, more conſpicuouſly make known his Glory, at the end of the World. The Saints in Heaven ſee his face in Glory, and are happy in that ſight. Believers upon Earth, ſee him with an eye of faith, and rejoyce in it, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *Whom having not ſeen, ye love: in whom though now ye ſee him not, yet believing, ye rejoyce with joy unſpeakable and full of glory.* But his enemies alſo muſt ſee it. They ſaw him dead & buried, and that was the laſt ſight they had of him; but they muſt ſee him glorifyed, to their eternal confuſion. Rev. 1. 7. *Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye ſhall ſee him, and they alſo which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth ſhall wail becauſe of him: even ſo, Amen.*

TO begin with the Glorification which Chriſt hath already arrived to: It conſiſts in two things, *viz.* His Reſurrection from Death, and his taking poſſeſſion of the Kingdom of Glory. And we may take an Account of the former of theſe at preſent, viz. His *Reſurrection*, which was the firſt ſtep of his Glory, after he had humbled himſelf to Death.

THIS Article is a main Pillar of the Chriſtian Faith, and we had need to be well built on it. As the Apoſtles were appointed to be witneſſes of it, (*Act.* 1 22.) ſo they preached of it diſtinctly, wherever they came. We may then take a brief Account of it, under ſeveral heads.

I. *THE proper Nature of Chriſt's* Reſurrection *conſiſts in two things*: There is ſomething *Internal*, viz. the re-union of his ſeperated Soul and Body: And there is ſomething *External*, viz. His coming out of his Grave after his re union. Both of which are pointed at in the words uſed in the New-Teſtament to expreſs it. That in Mat. 28. 6. *He is riſen.* ἠγέρθη, ſignifies both to wake out of ſleep, and riſe out of bed. And when Chriſt's Soul came into his body, he then awaked, and when he left his Sepulchre, he then left his bed. It is alſo expreſſed by ἀναστασις which ſignifies a riſing from a fall, and ſtanding up again. Chriſt fell down into the duſt when he died, and roſe and ſtood up again when he aroſe. The former of theſe was properly his Reſurrection, and the latter the manifeſtation of it.

II. *THE* Subject *of this Reſurrection may be diſtinctly conſidered, in two Concluſions,*

1. *THE proper ſubject of this Reſurrection, was the* whole Humane Nature *of Chriſt.* Chriſt is ſaid to die, and to riſe again, 1 *Cor.* 15. 14,15. It is aſcribed to his Perſon in reſpect of his humane Nature; for the divine Nature is not in it ſelf capable either of Humiliation or Exaltation. But the Perſon was in regard of one of his Natures. But it may be attributed to his whole humane Nature, in as much, as both his Soul and Body were ſharers in it. His whole Humanity fell by Death, in ſome ſenſe, his Soul therefore aroſe by a deliverance from the ſtate of ſeparation, by its re-union, and his Body by a reſtauration to life, and being brought out of his grave.

2. *THAT hence, the Reſurrection is aſcribed to his* Body, *to his* Soul, *and to his* Perſon, *in divers reſpects,*

1. *TO his* Body *as that which was moſt properly raiſed.* For that only fell down; whiles his Soul went upward to Paradice, *Luk.* 23.43. That only lay in the grave, his Soul aſcended to Heaven. That only was wholly deprived of all its operations, his Soul, as it went into, ſo it was actively happy in the preſence of God. Now in reſpect to his Body,

(1.) *IT was the* ſame *Body that fell, which was raiſed again.* Mat. 28.5,6. *And the angel anſwered and ſaid unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye ſeek Jeſus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is riſen, as he ſaid: come ſee the place where the Lord lay.* He did not aſſume another to be exalted in, but the ſame in which he was humbled.

(2.) *HIS* reaſonable Soul *came from Heaven into the Sepulchre, where his Body lay, & was there re-united to it.* Pſal. 16. 10. *For thou wilt not leave my ſoul in hell.* Which muſt be underſtood of the ſtate of ſeparation.

(3.) *HIS* animal Spirits, *which had been diſſipated by Death, were now again reſtored, and ſo made way for the re-union, and helped to knit his Soul & Body together.* On which account he is ſaid to be revived, Rom. 14. 9. *For to this end Chriſt both died, and roſe, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead & living.*

(4.) *HIS* Senſes *were alſo reſtored to his Body.* The Organs of them had been deprived of their power, by his Death, and were for the preſent uſeleſs, but now his eyes, ears, and other inſtruments of ſenſe were made again to receive their power of operation, and ſo fitted every way to ſerve his reaſonable Soul, according to the natural uſe of them: and they were the evident proofs of his being again alive. *Act.* 1. 3.

(5.) *AND now the priſon doors were opened, and he came out of his Grave.* His Body was now raiſed a glorious Body, *Phil.* 3.21. 1 *Cor.* 15. 43. Tho' the glorious ſplendour of it, was for a while vailed, while he ſaw meet, for a few days to converſe with his Diſciples, before his Aſcenſion, that they might be ſo capable of ſuch communion with him.

2. *IN regard of his* Soul. It is more improperly ſaid to riſe, but yet there is much of a Reſurrection to be obſerved in it.

(1.) *IT came into, and was re united to his* Body, *after ſeparation:* Elſe his Body would not have riſen. Its Death was procured by that ſeparation, and therefore its Reſurrection muſt be made by ſuch a re-union.

(2.) *HEREBY it was delivered from that* Separation, *which was contrary to the natural inclination of it; and was made again to enjoy the deſired and delightful company of it.* The ſeperate Soul being but part of the man, is not at reſt till it be reſtored to the other part, for which it was made, and ſo undergoes a ſort of Death whiles ſeperate.

(3.) *IT came out of the Sepulchre* with *and* in *his Body, and ſo it joined with it in the ſecond part of his Reſurrection.* For it was hereby that his Body was enabled to come forth, which before was altogether lifeleſs.

(4.) *IT now enjoyed its ancient & full liberty of exerciſing its operations* upon *and* in *his glorious Body.* It had again the uſe of all his ſenſes and members, which had been for the while ſuſpended.

(5.) *BOTH together took poſſeſſion of the* Glory *which he had merited with both in his Humiliation. Pſal.* 16. 9, 10, 11. His mediatorial Glory was not compleated, till he was thus raiſed.

3. *AS to his* Perſon. It is certain, that he who roſe was Chriſt, the Second Perſon in the Sacred Trinity. And although, as was before hinted, the divine Nature, being unchangeable, could neither die, nor riſe, yet, the declarative glory of his divine Nature, was before obſcured in the days of his fleſh, ſo it began to beam out, and ſhine forth eminently in his Reſurrection. Hence that, Rom. 1. 4. *And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holineſs, by the reſurrection from the dead.* And in this reſpect it was a declarative begetting of him, Act. 13. 33. *God hath fulfilled the ſame unto us their children, in that he hath raiſed up Jeſus again, as it is written in the ſecond Pſalm, Thou art my ſon, this day have I begotten thee.* Chriſt as Mediator was now glorifyed, in purſuance of the promiſe made to him in the Covenant of Redemption.

III. *THAT Chriſt did* really *Riſe again.* The Scripture gives abundant teſtimony thereunto. And it being a matter of fact, ſufficient witneſs is a good evidence for Faith to entertain it: though there is alſo cogent reaſon to make it appear. Here then, beſides that Scripture ſaith it,

1. *THERE is the Teſtimony of two glorious* Angels *for it, Mat.* 28.5,6. *Luk.* 24.45,6. And this is enough both for number and qualification.

2. *THE Teſtimony of the* Women *that went to the Sepulchre, where they ſaw & ſpake with him. Mat.* 28. 9.

3. *THE divers Apparitions which he made to his* Diſciples. He was firſt and laſt, before his Aſcenſion, ſeen of at leaſt five hundred perſons,

persons, who had his Resurrection confirmed to them by many sensible & convincing proofs of it, 1 *Cor.* 15. 5,6,7,8.

4. *ESPECIALLY the Testimony of the* Apostles: Who because they were to carry this truth, and witness it to the World, had frequent communion with him at times, for *forty days* after he was risen, *Act.* 1. 3 during which time, they *saw & handled the word of life*, 1 Joh. 1. 1, 2. He gave their senses the proof of it. Hence that, Luk. 24. 39,40. *Behold my hands & my feet, that it is I my self; handle me, and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have* Joh. 20. 27. *Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing.*

5. *NAY the very* nature of the thing *saith, that he must needs be risen.* For, being the Son of God, and having by his Death satisfied for sin, and answered all the demands of Justice, on the score of his redeemed, it was impossible that the Grave should hold him. When therefore he had lain in it long enough to confirm the reality of his being dead, there was no reason for his lying any longer there. So he argues, Act. 2. 24. *Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.*

IV. IF it be demanded, *by what* Vertue *he rose, or who was the* Efficient *of his Resurrection?* it may be replied, *that it was not by any other adventitious power, but he* Himself *was the Author of his own Rising.* This he clearly testifyed before-hand, *Joh.* 2 19. & 10. 17,18. It is true, the work is ascribed to God the Father, *Act.* 2. 24. For he, being the Creditor, and now fully satisfyed, in the discharge of the debt, which his Son undertook to pay, sent his Angel, as an Officer, to discharge him with glorious state and majesty. This also is ascribed to the Spirit, *Rom.* 8 11. Because he was raised by a glorious and almighty power, which did not so much appear in raising his Body from the Grave, though nothing short of Omnipotency was able to do that, as in loosing the bands of the second Death which were upon him in his state of Humiliation, and discharging him from the sentence of the Law, by which he was condemned to dye as our surety, and representative. And indeed it, being a divine work, belongs to the Deity, and consequently to the Trinity. But yet Christ ascribes it to himself, because his divine Nature exerted it self mightily in his Resurrection. As it was by a voluntary act of his own, that he laid down his life, else none could have taken it from him; so, by an act of mighty power, he took it up again. Death it self could not stand against him, but he became a Conquerour over it, and so in his own Person fulfilled that threatning, Hos. 13. 14. *I will ransom them from the power of the grave: I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction; repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.* The Angels which were present at it, were not instruments of it, but only waited on him their Lord, and did him honours in this passage of his Exaltation.

V. *AS to the* Time *of Christ's Resurrection, it was on the* Third Day *from his Death and Burial.* *Luk.* 24. 7. This was foretold by Christ himself, *Joh.* 2. 19. Mat. 16. 21. *And be raised again the third day.* And in this regard he proposed *Jonas* to be a type of him, *Mat.* 12. 39,40. He continued thus long in a state of Death, that it might appear that he was verily dead; and it was no longer, that his Disciples might not faint in their spirits, and be discouraging about the corrupting of his Body, it being forerold that it should not see corruption, *Psal.* 16. 10. It is true, he lay not three whole days, but some part of three distinct days: for he was buried on the sixth day before Sun-set, and he lay the whole seventh day, and the night of the first day; reckoning the day to begin with the evening: for if we begin it with the morning, there is no part of the third day in the account: and the beginning of it at midnight is meerly Astronomical, and never came into a Theological computation.

VI. *IT was* requisite *that Christ should rise from the Dead.* As he must dye, so he must rise and live. And there are several things wherein this appears necessary,

1. *HE rose again to give a proof & declaration, that he was the* Son of God. *Rom.* 1. 4. During his Humiliation, and especially in his Death, his Divinity was clouded under a veil of manifold infirmities attending his humanity; but in and by his Resurrection, he made proof of his eternal Power & Godhead. It is true indeed, others have been raised, and shortly all shall rise; and therefore meerly to be made to rise, is not a proof of the divinity of the subject: but yet to raise himself up by his own power, was a sufficient proof for this. He gave evidence of it by raising others in his own name; he must needs do so in raising himself, this being a divine prerogative. But there was a further evidence of his Deity in his Resurrection, for he dyed by the Law and Justice of God, sentenced as our Surety to suffer the whole weight of the wrath of God; and for him to get out from this sentence, and after he had born it, to live again, having fulfilled all the demands of Justice upon him, proves him to be God. The weight of that wrath would have broken the whole Creation, and they could never have evaded.

2. HENCE, *herein he gave a testimony of his perfect Victory over* Death, *and our* spiritual Enemies. It was not enough that Christ should die for us, but in dying he must be a Conquerour, else his Death could not profit us. Yea, he suffered, that by it he might overcome. Heb. 2. 14. *That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil.* And this comes to be known

and proved by his Reſurrection. *Paul* therefore, after he had by manifold argument proved him to be riſen, and ſhewn what was the glorious efficacy of it, determines all in that triumph, 1 Cor. 15. 57. *But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* It is true, Chriſt conquered all on his Croſs; there the battle was fought, and the victory gained: But this victory encreaſed into a triumph in his Reſurrection. Now all his enemies fled, and quitted the field. Pſal. 68. 1. *Let God ariſe, let his enemies be ſcattered: let them alſo that hate him flee before him.* He made a conqueſt of Death it ſelf, and it lay dead at his feet. Chriſt had never been known to be a Conqueror, but for this. If Death had detained him her Captive, where had been his Victory?

3. *HE roſe for our* Juſtification. *Rom.* 14 25. As he died to pay our debt, ſo he roſe again that he might acquit or abſolve us from it. Chriſt's Reſurrection was both his and our diſcharge: His, as he ſtood our Surety bound for us, and ours, as thoſe for whom he was ſo. As Chriſt, by dying, was made vertually, ſo by riſing he becomes actually the object of our juſtifying faith. He became a ſufficient object of faith, not meerly by undertaking to reſpond for us, but by actually finiſhing tranſgreſſions on our account, in paying our whole debt. If he had not ſatisfied for us, we could not in Juſtice have been pardoned. If he had not fully reconciled us to God, and compleatly anſwered the Law's demands, we could not have been ſaved. And if he had continued dead, it would have argued the continuance of the payment; which would have diſcovered the imperfection of it, and conſequently its invalidity. Chriſt could not riſe till Juſtice acquitted him. His bond was in for us, and it muſt be taken up, and that by a full payment of it: But when he aroſe, this bond was returned to him, and that cancelled. So that here is ground for our Juſtification. Our debt is paid, and our bonds taken up. It is therefore his Reſurrection that ſtands of force againſt all that can be laid to our charge, *Rom.* 8. 34. This therefore is one argument by which the Apoſtle proves that he muſt needs be riſen, 1 Cor. 15. 17. *And if Chriſt be not raiſed, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your ſins.*

4. IT *was to put him into a* fit condition *for the compleating of what remained to be done in the execution of his Offices.* We before obſerved, that he executes them both in a ſtate of Humiliation and Exaltation. As Prieſt, he was to ſatisfy Juſtice for us, and afterwards to intercede, *Heb.* 7. 25. As a Prophet, here he taught with his Mouth, but there belongs to it, the ſending forth of his Spirit, and for this he muſt go to the Father, *Joh.* 16. 7. As a King, he here commanded his Diſciples, and gave them laws, but he muſt alſo govern them by his power, and ſway the Scepter over the World; and this was eminently accompliſhed at his Reſurrection, *Pſal.* 2. 6, *&c.* compare *Act.* 13. 33. Yea, there was the glory of a Mediator promiſed to him, upon his Obedience, and it was neceſſary that he ſhould riſe to take poſſeſſion of it, Luk. 24. 26. *Ought not Chriſt to have ſuffered theſe things, and to enter into his glory?*

5. *HE muſt riſe, that he might be the* firſt fruits *of our Reſurrection, both ſpiritual and bodily.* See, 1 *Cor.* 15. 20, 21, 23. Where, by *firſt fruits*, we are not to underſtand the firſt in order of time, but only of cauſality. Thoſe that roſe at his Death, of whom we have an account, *Mat.* 27. 52, 57. aroſe by the vertue and influence of his Reſurrection. And it is a ſure pledge of the Reſurrection of all his members. When the *firſt fruits* were offered to God, under the Law, he accepted of them, & gave to his People by this pledge, an aſſurance of an harveſt. And the Apoſtle proves this, *ver.* 21. from the order of the Covenant in which God had ſet him. As *Adam* in the firſt Covenant ſtanding for us, procured us to dye, ſo *Chriſt* in the new Covenant, being our Surety, hath purchaſed a Reſurrection for us, and his Reſurrection is the earneſt of ours. In ſum, Chriſt as God, is the efficient; as in our nature ſatisfying for our ſins, is the meritorious; as riſing from the dead is the enſuring cauſe of our Reſurrection. Hence that, Joh. 14. 19. *Yet a little while, and the world ſeeth me no more: but ye ſee me: becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo.*

USE. I. *LEARN hence, that it concerns all thoſe, that would have a joyful triumphant Reſurrection at laſt, to get and ſecure a title to Chriſt's Reſurrection.* There will be a general riſing again of all that die, both juſt and unjuſt, but none ſhall riſe in Glory, but ſuch as are under the ſaving efficacy of the Reſurrection of Chriſt. Others ſhall only riſe, to receive an everlaſting ſecond fall into the bottomleſs pit of never-ending miſeries. And ſo long as men are out of Chriſt, the thoughts of the Reſurrection may well be a dread to them; and it is that which truly makes Death to be a ground of terror; for if Death put an end to the being of men, it would not have ſuch terror in it, as the conſideration, that after it comes a dreadful Judgment, and a *Reſurrection to Condemnation*, put into it. To think that I muſt be reſtored to an incorruptible ſtate, on purpoſe to be fitted to ſuffer in eternal torments, and lie in everlaſting burnings, is a moſt amazing thought. This is enough to put us on ſolemn inquiring, How may we eſcape this, and be happy in that day? And we have it, let us get the vertue of his Reſurrection applied to us, firſt to raiſe us up from ſin, which is done in this life; and then to raiſe us up to glory, which will be in the laſt day; which latter hath a dependance on the former. Make ſure then, that he roſe for our Juſtification, by being in him by Faith, ſo ſhall we be both juſtified and glorified by him at that day.

USE. II. *LET us labour to get our* Faith *ſtrengthned on, and eſtabliſhed by a right Meditation*

dition of the Reſurrection of Chriſt. Let this ſatisfy us, that he hath wrought out a compleat Redemption. So the Apoſtle argues, *Heb.* 7. 25. Juſtice had him in its hands, it put him to Death, but it hath diſcharged him. A riſen Surety muſt needs be a ſufficient Saviour; nor can there be any reaſon after that to queſtion whether the Juſtice of God be ſatisfyed. Let it encourage us to go to Chriſt, to perfect all that is wanting, to our being fitted for Eternal Life, remembring that he is riſen, and exalted for this very end, to finiſh what he began in his Death and Merit. And then, let the conſideration of our intereſt in his Reſurrection, help us to triumph over Death and the Grave, remembring, that he is riſen, and gone to Heaven as our fore-runner, to take poſſeſſion in our name, & make ready for our entertainment: Let us chearfully follow him, rejoycing in the hope of an happy riſing, and being with him for ever.

[JUNE 8. 1697.]

SERMON CX.

WE proceed from the firſt ſtep of Chriſt's *Exaltation*, conſiſting in his Reſurrection, to the next, which is, his taking *Poſſeſſion* of the Kingdom.

THERE were two things which Chriſt, as our Surety, was to do for us, viz. *To pay our debts, by making ſatisfaction for our offences; and to purchaſe our forfeited Inheritance of bleſſedneſs.* Both of theſe he fully accompliſhed in his ſtate of Humiliation, the one by his paſſive, the other by his active Obedience; thus complying with all the demands of the firſt Covenant. But to make all this ſure for us, there was ſomething more to be done by him on our account, as our Attorney, *viz.* to take out an Acquittance upon the payment of the Obligation, and to take poſſeſſion of the Inheritance which he had purchaſed; and this was retained for his Exaltation. The former of theſe he did in his Reſurrection, in which regard, as hath been obſerved, he is ſaid to riſe for our Juſtification: the latter he did in taking poſſeſſion of the Kingdom, which is under our preſent conſideration. And of this there are two parts or degrees, *viz.* His Aſcenſion up to Heaven, and his Seſſion at the right hand of God. And we have them both aſſerted, Mar. 16. 19. *So then after the Lord had ſpoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and ſat on the right hand of God.* The former of theſe may come under our preſent enquiry.

AS Chriſt dyed, ſo he roſe again; as he deſcended into the Grave, ſo he aſcended into Heaven; ſo that in theſe points, his Exaltation correſponds with his Humiliation.

TOUCHING the Aſcenſion of Chriſt we may take this brief Deſcription of it; *It was that whereby he left the Earth, as to his Manhood, and was carried by vertue of his God-head, into the higheſt Heavens.* Aſcenſion in propriety of ſpeech, ſignifies *a motion, from the center towards the circumference*; and ſuch was this of Chriſt. He went away from this Earth, which is ſuppoſed to be the Worlds center, in which he was born, and where he abode till he had gone through the whole buſineſs of his Humiliation, and where alſo his Reſurrection had been accompliſhed; and he went to Heaven, which is in the Worlds circumference. He went from the Earth which is beneath, to the Heaven which is above, and that not to the lower Heavens, but the higheſt, which is in Scripture called the third Heaven. So we are told, Luk. 24. 51. *And it came to paſs, while he bleſſed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.* I ſhall not here curiouſly Diſcourſe about this Aſcenſion; but only give this account of it in the following Remarks.

1. *WE may conſider that the Perſon aſcending, was Jeſus Chriſt*, God-Man, *with reſpect to his* Humane Nature. That he was God that aſcended, the Scripture teſtifies, *Pſal.* 68. 18. which the Apoſtle applies directly hereto, Eph. 4. 8. *Wherefore he ſaith, When he aſcended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.* But, though the divine Nature, which was veiled, and obſcured in his ſtate of Humiliation, ſo as to be little obſerved by men, did break forth with radiant beams of Glory, as in his Reſurrection, ſo in his Aſcenſion to Heaven; whence it may improperly be ſaid, as to ariſe, ſo to aſcend; yet, in *propriety of ſpeech*, his Divinity is Omnipreſent, and therefore can neither aſcend nor deſcend, but it then filled all Heaven, with its glorious manifeſtations of it ſelf, all the while that his Humanity was in this World diſguiſed under the greateſt obſcurity. So that the Nature truly and properly aſcending was only the Humane, for this only was capable of local motion, or going from place to place, being a finite and circumſcribed being; and had been doing of the work allotted for it here upon the Earth, which being accompliſhed, he went away from hence, to the place of his everlaſting abode. Extraordinary types & fore-runners of this Aſcenſion, were *Enoch*, in the times of the old World, before the flood; and *Elias* afterwards, under the diſpenſation of the Law, or Moſaical Pædagogy; and the more ordinary and Ceremonial, was the High Prieſts going once a year into the *Holy of Holies*, after that he had offered up Sacrifices without at the brazen Altar. Thus was God pleaſed to feed the faith of his People beforehand, in this precious Article.

2. *WE may obſerve the* Time *of his Aſcenſion, which was, after he had done all the Work, that he had to do here below.* Chriſt's Reſurrection was one ſtep to his Glory, and he was to go to enjoy the fulneſs of it by his Aſcenſion: But he was not ſo haſty to go and take his

eternal

eternal Crown, as to leave any thing undone that was neceſſary before he went. He would not riſe from the Grave, till, not only the buſineſs of Satisfaction was finiſhed, but he had left a clear Evidence of his being really dead, that the faith of his People need not be at a loſs in this point. So when he did riſe, he would not immediately go from the Grave to his Kingdom, but his Churches concern, which brought him into the world to redeem them, kept him forty days out of Heaven, after he aroſe; which time he ſpent in confirming his Diſciples faith about himſelf, giving them direction what to do, and how to manage the works of their Miniſtry, for the gathering in of ſinful men to him, and leaving of his promiſe of bleſſing on them. Thus we ſee, that not only Chriſt humbled, but alſo Chriſt exalted, was full of ſelf-denial for his redeemed's ſake. Hence that, Act. 1. 3. *To whom alſo he ſhewed himſelf alive after his paſſion, by many infallible proofs, being ſeen of them forty days, and ſpeaking of the things of the kingdom of God.* He adjourned his Coronation ſo long, becauſe the weakneſs of his Diſciples faith, and the weight of the work, to which he appointed them, called for it, and when this was done, he went to Heaven, to make it appear, that he did not riſe to an earthly felicity or kingdom, which good men were led too much away with the opinion of, but an Heavenly, to which he muſt aſcend.

3. *THE Term of his Aſcenſion from which he went, was in general, the* lower World, *or the* Earth *on which he had lived, and when he had done the whole work which his Father had ſent him about in purchaſing our Redemption.* And having nothing more to do there by his bodily preſence, he now left it; according to *Joh.* 17. 4, 5. But we are alſo acquainted with the particular place, which he was pleaſed to make choice of for the manifeſtation of this his glorious Aſcenſion in; and that was the *Mount Olivet*, Act. 1. 12. It is to be obſerved, that this was the place where he entred upon the laſt act of his Humiliation; here was the Garden in which he began his laſt Sufferings, in his Agony, and where *Judas* with his band of Ruffians arreſted him, *Luk.* 22. 39, *&c.* And if it be asked, why Chriſt choſe this place rather than any other, for this glorious act of his? we muſt acknowledge that where Scripture is ſilent, we can but conjecture: And yet we are to think, that the naming of this place, is not for nothing. Poſſibly then it was,

(1) *BECAUSE he had ſanctifyed this place to himſelf, by frequent* Praying *in it.* This was a place which he had often made uſe of, for his ſecret retirement into, for the offering up of his prayer to his Father, *Joh.* 18. 2. And to be ſure, that pathetical prayer in his agony was here. Hither therefore he comes to receive the benefit and returns of his prayer. And God many times anſwers his Children in the very place, where they have poured out their Souls to him.

(2.) *TO make it appear, that his* Humiliation *was the ground of his* Exaltation. That becauſe he humbled himſelf to the Death, therefore his Father highly exalted him; according to *Phil.* 2. 7, 8, 9. As here he Suffered, ſo here he aſcended into his Glory. How often doth God turn the *valley of Achor*, into a *door of Hope* to his own?

(3.) *TO declare that his* Humiliation *and* Exaltation *aimed at one & the ſame thing.* They had one centre in which they met: They led to one end, and were both parts of the ſame work, *viz.* the bringing about the Salvation of his Choſen, and ſo to encourage us to come with freſh and holy boldneſs, to an exalted and aſcended Saviour.

4. *THE Term to which Chriſt aſcended, was the* higheſt Heaven. Every motion hath two terms, and ſo had this, and by Heaven, *Luk.* 24. 51. is meant this. The Scripture ſometimes calls the air, Heaven, and the fowls are called the fowls of Heaven, by reaſon of their flying in it. The ſtarry Region hath alſo this name. Hence we read of the ſtars of Heaven. But there is a Heaven above theſe, which is uſually called the Empyrean Heaven, and is in Scripture ſtiled, the Throne of God's Holineſs, the Place of his moſt glorious appearance, and manifeſtation of himſelf, the Place appointed for the eternal habitation of the glorifyed; the Kingdom of which God's Choſen are the appointed heirs. And he was now to take poſſeſſion of it in their name. Hence that, Act. 3. 21. *Whom the heaven muſt receive till the reſtitution of all things.* It was not an imaginary or ubiquitary honour that Chriſt aſcended to, as ſome have vainly dreamed; as though his aſcenſion were only a change of ſtate, and not of place. This is to darken, and not to interpret Scripture. He went to a Heaven that is above all the other, *Eph* 4. 10. Believers have a manſion-place which is appointed for them, and Chriſt went before-hand to prepare it for them, *Joh.* 14. 2, 3. It is the houſe of his Father to which he is gone. The firſt *Adam* by his apoſtacy ſhut up the earthly Paradice againſt man; but Chriſt hath by his Redemption opened the heavenly Paradice for himſelf and us. He, being the ſecond *Adam*, and more glorious than the firſt. 1 *Cor.* 15. 57. Having every way anſwered the Law on our account, he muſt receive the higheſt reward of all; not only eternal Life, but the moſt glorious Life with all its advantages. For this reaſon he muſt have his Glory in Heaven and not upon the Earth, the Glories of that Place being tranſcendently more excellent than any thing in the lower world. And therefore both He and we, muſt go to Heaven for perfect happineſs, it being there reſerved to be beſtowed on all that are made owners of it. And for this reaſon he is ſaid to be entred into Heaven itſelf, as being the *Anti-type* of the moſt holy place into which the high Prieſt was to enter, Heb. 9. 24. *For Chriſt is not entred into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the*

the true, but into heaven it ſelf, now to appear in the preſence of God for us.

5. *FOR the* Evidence *of his Aſcenſion, it being a point of Faith, we muſt fetch it from Scripture teſtimony, in which there is a record of that which is ſufficient to confirm it.* His Diſciples were faithful and poſitive eye-witneſſes, who ſaw him go up from them till he was carried out of their ſight. And the holy Angels alſo, certifyed them whither he was gone. Act. 1. 9. *And when he had ſpoken theſe things, while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their ſight.* He did not permit his enemies to be partakers of this glorious ſight: they ſaw him no more after he was laid in his Grave; but his choſen Diſciples, who had been with, and ſeen him in his bitter Sufferings, ſaw as much as they were capable of, of this part of his Glory, and were appointed to bear their teſtimony to the World, as of his being riſen, ſo of his being aſcended to Heaven. The Goſpel therefore is very diſtinct and frequent in mentioning this Article. It was prophetically atteſted to by the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 68. 18. And it is put in as one remarkable piece of the myſtery of Godlineſs. 1 *Tim.* 3. 16.

6. *IN the* Order *of Chriſt's Aſcenſion*, let theſe two things be remarked,

(1.) *THAT in order of Nature he was the* firſt Man, *that ever Aſcended into Heaven:* In as much as he was the original and procuring cauſe of the aſcenſion of all the Elect from the beginning of the World, unto this very day. So that there was none ever that aſcended thither, whether in Soul, or with the Body alſo, but it was by vertue and efficacy of his Aſcenſion. The Sin and Apoſtacy of man had ſhut up the Holieſt of all againſt him, and there was no entring for him thither, it being an undefiled place, and admitting of no polluting thing into it; but he opened this way for them. So that, but for his Aſcenſion, they had never aſcended; for though, he aſcended not, till firſt he died and roſe again, which was in the laſt days, yet it was according to the divine Ordination; and God had a reſpect unto it, in the extending of his favour unto them. He indeed laid the foundation for it in his Satisfaction and Obedience, by which it was purchaſed, but he was himſelf the firſt fruit of it in his Aſcenſion. *Heb.* 9. 11,12. But,

(2.) *IN order of Time, all the faithful People of God, that died before his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion, went* before *him, the Souls of all thoſe that died in the Lord. Eccl.* 12. 7. And we know no reaſon to queſtion, but that the Bodies too, of *Enoch* & *Elias*, did aſcend thither, and dwell there, long before his Incarnation. Of the one, it is ſaid that God tranſlated him; of the other that God would take him into Heaven by a Whirlwind. That paſſage alſo about *Enoch* is obſervable, in that it was by faith, *Heb.* 11. 5. And that was no other but a faith in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and at leaſt vertually, in his Aſcenſion. And we are aſſured, that the vertue of Chriſt's Death did extend to *Old Teſtament* Believers, ſo that they obtained pardon, and acceptance with God, and eternal Life, upon the account of it, in as much as God had accepted of it in the Covenant of Suretiſhip. And Chriſt may with like reaſon, and in the ſame ſenſe be ſaid to be aſcended, as he is ſaid to be ſlain from the foundation of the World: ſo that he aſcended myſtically in every of theſe his Members.

7. *AS to the* efficient *of his Aſcenſion*; we obſerved in the Deſcription, that his *Manhood*, was carried up by the vertue of his *God-head:* which is one great difference between his and our Aſcenſion. The Perſon of Chriſt conſiſts of two Natures: the more glorious infinitely is his divine, whoſe place of manifeſting it ſelf moſt eminently, is in Heaven. The original place of his Manhood is this Earth, which was at firſt made for Adam and his poſterity to live upon. In his Humiliation, his God-head, did, as it were condeſcend to appear in, and ſupport his Humanity, and dwell with it here: His humiliation being ended, it is by his God-head raiſed up, and carried into Heaven. Which divine efficacy is aſcribed to the Father, as well as to the Son. And with reſpect to the Father it is called his aſſumption, or reception, 1 Tim. 3. 16. *Received up into glory.* And in reſpect of the Son it is called his Aſcenſion, Eph. 4. 8. *When he aſcended on high.* His Body could not aſcend by its own vertue, or inclination, natural; but being a glorified Body, it went up by vertue of his God-head, which aided his Man-hood in its going up, and exerted a divine power therein. The Angels might, and doubtleſs did go in company with him, being preſt ever to pay him Service; but he needed none of their aſſiſtance or power, to help him to his Glory. The ſame vertue which raiſed him from the dead, could carry him to his Kingdom, and that was his own, as hath been obſerved.

8. IF it be asked *why*, or for *what ends* did Chriſt Aſcend? We may take notice of many reaſons for it, which doubtleſs he had an eye upon in it, viz.

(1.) *THAT his Humane Nature, by which he had* merited *Glory, and was now prepared for it, might go to the Place where it was to be poſſeſſed.* It is certain, his Work was now done, in which he made ready for it; and the appointed place for perfect Glory is not Earth but Heaven; which muſt be entred into by an Aſcenſion, becauſe the Earth was the place in which he did this Work. This therefore is called his *entring into his Glory*, Luk. 24. 26. i. e. That Glory that he had bought and paid for, and was due to him on the account.

(2.) *THAT he might declare and manifeſt his* Original *to be from Heaven.* I mean, that he was truly a Divine Perſon, who had his habitation in Heaven from the beginning, as in the Palace of his Glory, with reſpect to his Perſon, though not to his humane Nature:

That

That he was not a meer Man, and ſo could not tarry here, but muſt go to his home; according to that, in Joh. 3. 13. *And no man hath aſcended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.*

(3.) *THAT he might prepare* Manſions *of Glory for us in his Fathers houſe.* He went to make ready a Place for our welcome and happy Entertainment, when we ſhould go hence. Joh. 14. 1,2,3. *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe alſo in me. In my Fathers houſe are many manſions, if it were not ſo, I would have told you: I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto my ſelf, that where I am, there ye may be alſo.* What further preparation was needful, or what further adorning was wanted in that glorious Place, beſides what was put upon it in Creation, is hard for us to conjecture; but the Scripture aſſures us that there was ſomething to be done there, to fit the Place for us, as well as to fit us for the Place: and it is enough for us to conſider, that it is wonderfully enhanced by his being there to entertain and make us welcome. And it is certain, that Heaven wanted its moſt ſuitable Ornament for his People's happineſs, till the Man-Chriſt came thither.

(4.) *TO take* Poſſeſſion *for us in our room, and as our Repreſentative.* We know that among Men, when a Purchaſe is made, Deeds are given, and Payment is ſecured; there is alſo a delivery, and entring upon Poſſeſſion follows, either by the perſon himſelf, or by his Attorney for him. This Chriſt did by Aſcending. And therefore in this reſpect, we are looked upon, to be in him there already, Eph. 2. 6. *And hath raiſed us up together, and made us ſit together in heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus.*

(5.) *TO ſend his* Spirit, *and beſtow* Gifts *on his People, for the calling in of his* Choſen, *and for the making of his Called meet to be admitted into the Inheritance.* Hence that, Joh. 16. 7. *Nevertheleſs, I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will ſend him unto you.* And, *Eph.* 4. 8. There is a great deal ſtill to be done for the bringing his Redeemed to Glory, and he is gone thither to take care of it; where he diſpenſeth from a Throne with all power. *Matth.* 28. 18.

(6.) *TO give ſecurity to the* Faith *of his People, that they ſhall* Aſcend *thither in due time.* Hence, he is called the *firſt fruits*,— 1 Cor. 15. 20. He therefore left it as his Legacy, that they ſhould follow him, and be brought in the end to be with him, *Joh.* 17. 24. This is his promiſe, Joh. 12. 26. *If any man ſerve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there ſhall alſo my ſervant be.*

(7.) *TO raiſe up our hearts & affections above the* Earth, *and ſet them on longing after* Heaven, *and Heavenly things.* That, becauſe Chriſt our Beloved is there, we may not comprimize our affections and endeavours any where ſhort of the Heavenly Kingdom. *Col.* 3. *begin. Phil.* 3. 20.

USE. I. IS Chriſt Aſcended? *Expect not then Corporeal Communion with him here.* Would you meet with him in his Houſe, ſee his Face, hear his Voice, ſit down with him at his Table, feed on his Body, and drink his Blood; it muſt be in ſuch a way, as may bring him, who is in Heaven, and we who are on Earth, together; and this muſt be ſpiritual, and not carnal. The Heavens have received his Humanity, there to abide, till the *Reſtitution of all things*: But he comes by his Spirit, to his Houſe, to his Table, and ſo applies the ſaving vertue of his Redemption to our Souls; and we, by right exerciſing our faith, go out to meet him, yea, go to Heaven, and fetch thence the ſtrengthning and comforting vertue, which derives from a Crucifyed Saviour, and live upon it. We muſt then be much in the exerciſe of this faith, if we would enjoy much of Chriſt in his Ordinances.

USE. II. *LEARN hence, not to expect the Recompence of Glory here, but to wait patiently for it, till we come to* Heaven. Chriſt indeed came to purchaſe a Kingdom for us, but if it had been earthly, he would have tarried here, and ſettled it. It is no earthly Paradice that Chriſt ſettleth on his People, but an Heavenly one. God did not lay the foundation of our happineſs in the firſt, but in the ſecond Adam. In him we might have enjoyed conſtant felicity upon Earth, in communion with God here, but Chriſt tranſlates his to ſee and enjoy God in Heaven. Let us then ſay with the Apoſtle, Heb. 13. 14. *For here we have no continuing city, but we ſeek one to come.* Let us not then expect our Crown here, but wait for it, till we come, where he is: mean while, be willing to ſuffer with him here, that we may reign with him there.

USE. III. *LET Chriſt's Aſcenſion comfort every true Believer in the Aſſurance that he ſhall one day go to Heaven too.* Yea, let this Conſideration make you reckon your ſelves to be there already. Remember, Chriſt, who is there, is your Head, and you are his Members; and if the Head be there, the Body ſhall certainly follow after. He will never be at reſt till he hath gotten every one of his Members to be there where he is. Yea conſider, that Chriſt is gone to take poſſeſſion for you, and in your name: He is gone as Mediator to receive the Kingdom, whereof you are the Heirs together with him. His Aſcenſion is your ſecurity; the Kingdom is delivered to him for you. Look therefore upon Heaven as your own; and let this animate you, to bear all afflictions patiently, to encounter all the conflicts of the way couragiouſly; to go through the World, and finiſh your courſe with undaunted reſolution. That man is out of the reach of harm in this, who is ſure of poſſeſſing Heaven in the next life. This is the Portion of every Believer.

[JULY 6. 1697.] SER-

SERMON CXI.

WE have taken a brief view of the firſt ſtep of Chriſt's taking Poſſeſſion of the Kingdom, by aſcending into Heaven. We now paſs over to the ſecond, which is his *Seſſion at the Right Hand of God*; which is the third ſtep of his Exaltation, and that whereby he is advanced to, and ſettled in the higheſt Glory. This great and precious Article is fully aſſerted in the Goſpel. *Mar.* 16. 19. *Heb.* 10. 12. and elſewhere.

IN the clearing of this Truth, we may firſt conſider the *manner* and *meaning* of the Expreſſion, and then the *nature* of the Thing.

I. TOUCHING the *manner* and *meaning* of the Expreſſion, let it be obſerved, *That ſitting at the Right Hand of God is an improper and figurative ſpeech, and not to be underſtood after a carnal manner.* For, as to God, he cannot properly be ſaid to have Hands, in as much as he is repreſented to us as a Spirit, Joh. 4. 24. *God is a Spirit.* And a Spirit hath neither fleſh nor bones, nor limbs; and *hence* he can have no right Hand. And as for the Man Chriſt, it is not for us to think that he ſpends his Eternity in the poſture of a bodily ſitting; as though that were the only Site that he is in, in the Heavenly Kingdom. We muſt therefore look for a metaphorical & ſpiritual meaning of this. Now a *right Hand* is in Scripture attributed to God in divers reſpects. We may more eſpecially take notice of two or three Scriptures in which it is uſed. Pſal. 118. 16. *The right hand of the Lord is exalted; the right hand of the Lord doth valiantly.* Where it evidently intends the high & lofty expreſſions of himſelf, or the diſcoveries of his moſt glorious power & majeſty. In Pſal. 16. ult. *At thy right hand there are pleaſures for evermore:* It ſignifies the conferring of the greateſt favour and good will. In Deut. 15. 8. *Thou ſhalt open thine hand wide unto him:* The moſt enlarged liberality. And accordingly when the phraſe is uſed concerning men, it ſometimes points to the greateſt ſtate and majeſty. Eſth. 1. 7. *According to the ſtate (or* Hand *) of the king.* Sometimes the moſt intimate friendſhip and communion. As, Gal. 2. 9. *They gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowſhip.* Sitting alſo, when in Scripture it is uſed figuratively, mainly intends two things, *viz.* 1. Confirmation, ſecurity, immobility: ſitting being the moſt fixed poſture that a perſon can put himſelf in. And ſo it is uſed of God, Pſal. 29 10. *The Lord ſitteth upon the floud; yea, the Lord ſitteth king for ever.* 2. Satisfaction or contentment in one's condition. A perſon is in motion, till he finds that which he ſeeks, and his deſire is anſwered, and then he ſits down ſatisfyed, having his end. And ſo did the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *Heb.* 4. 10.

II. AS to the *nature* of the thing; we may take it up in the following Deſcription, *Chriſt's Seſſion at the Fathers Right Hand, is the perfection of his Exaltation, wherein his Father entertains him with and eſtabliſheth him in the higheſt Glory he is capable of, to his perfect ſatisfaction.* Or, *It is Chriſt's Settlement by his Father, on his Mediatorial Throne.* The opening of this Deſcription in the parts of it, may help to give us a ſhort glimpſe of this part of Chriſt's Glorification. Obſerve then,

1. *THE* general *nature of it.* It is the perfection of his Exaltation, as it is one ſtep or degree of it, ſo it is in order the laſt and higheſt. His Reſurrection and Aſcenſion were but motions in order to this, and leading of him hither. But here he arrived at the perfection of happineſs. Compleat happineſs conſiſts in the full fruition of God, and reſting in that fruition. Chriſt was but in the way to it, in his riſing and aſcending; but when once he came to ſit down on the Right Hand of his Father, he was then fully poſſeſt of all his Glory. And this is his own peculiar and perſonal or mediatorial Glory. Believers are ſaid to be joynt-heirs with him of the Kingdom. And there is the ſame glory for kind which they participate with him in. We are not only ſharers with him in his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion, but we are made to ſit together with him in heavenly Places. But he hath attained to a more excellent degree, than all either Angels or Saints. So, *Phil.* 2. 9. *Eph.* 1. 20, 21. *Pſal.* 45. 7. There are others that ſit at Chriſt's Right Hand, but it is his alone prerogative to ſit at his Father's Right Hand.

2. *IN the Conſideration of the* ſpecial *nature of it, there are three things obſervable in it,* viz. The *Welcome* he gave him into Heaven, and the *Coronation* which he there beſtowed upon him, and the *Content* he takes in it.

1. *THE* Welcome *which his Father gave him, when he entred into the Heavenly Palace.* We may ſafely conclude, that the *Man Chriſt*, did no ſooner ſet his feet within the door of that City, but his Father gave him all the tokens and teſtimonies of his gracious acceptance. He who ſo often teſtifyed of him, when he was here engag'd in the great work which he ſent him about; that he was his beloved Son, and that he was well pleaſed in him; now let him know how unconceivably great that Love was, which he entertained in his heart for him, by the moſt eminent and glorious expreſſions of it: It being to be an everlaſting Witneſs that he had compleated his Work, and that it had not failed in his hands. Heaven never had a more joyful Day than this. God the Father meets him at the threſhold of that Houſe, and beſtows on him the moſt endearing embraces, in the arms of his moſt glorious Attributes: His Love encircleth him, and breaths itſelf out in the moſt glorious diſcoveries: He takes him into his boſom, and graſps him with infinite endearedneſs: His Wiſdom bequeaths itſelf, and imparts its precious treaſures to him: His Righteouſneſs acknowledgeth him; and His

Power devolves itſelf upon him: HisMajeſty and Greatneſs communicate their dignity and glory to him. All theſe glorious Attributes met him on his firſt entrance into the Kingdom, and having been ſatisfyed in, and glorified by him, they preſented themſelves to him as his portion. And on this account it is that we find ſuch expreſſions as theſe in the Scripture, Rev. 5. 12. *Worthy is theLamb that was ſlain, to receive power & riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength & honour, and glory and bleſſing.* Prov. 8. 14. *Counſel is mine, and ſound wiſdom: I am underſtanding, I have ſtrength.* *Col.* 1. 19. And 2. 9. *For in him dwelleth all the fulneſs of the God-head bodily.* The holy Angels alſo now paid him their homage,and renewed their allegiance to him; fell down and worſhipped him. If they did ſo at his Incarnation, when he was born in a very low condition, (*Heb.* 1. 6.) How much more then now?

AND what Joy do we think it was to the redeemed Souls in Paradiſe; and with what Acclamations may we conceive that they received their King and Saviour, when having perfected the whole work of their Redemption, he came to take up his everlaſting abode among them? I am ſure it is in the ſight and enjoyment of Him, that *Paul* placed all his felicity, and for a participation wherein he was willing & deſirous to be gone, *Phil.* 1. 23.

2. *NOR did God only royally Entertain him, but he alſo* Crowned *him.* This was Chriſt's Coronation Day. God the Father now ſet an immortal Diadem of Glory upon his Head, *Heb* 2. 7,8,9. This Crowning of Chriſt is alſo a metaphorical expreſſion; and among men there are two things ſymbolized, by the Crowning of a Perſon, *viz.* Honour & Power. And this was as it were, the double Crown that was ſet upon the Head of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

(1.) *HE had a Crown of* Honour, *and that Royal or Kingly.* His Father exalted him to the higheſt dignity, Act. 2. 36. *Therefore let all the houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly, that God hath made that ſame Jeſus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord & Chriſt.* He filled him with all Glory. He glorifyed his Body with the moſt eminent beauty and perfection. Hence the glory of our bodies, is in a ſimilitude to his, Phil. 3. 21. *Who ſhall change our vile body, that it may be faſhioned like unto his glorious body.* The Body of Chriſt is the moſt beautiful and aſtoniſhing viſible thing in all Heaven. He alſo glorifyed his Soul with all ſpiritual Ornaments, all the Graces of the Spirit, in a ſuper-tranſcendent perfection: All his intellectual and moral perfections, were beyond meaſure, having all fulneſs, Col. 1. 19. *For it pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell.* He glorifyed his whole humane Nature with a royal influence upon all his Mediatorial Offices. His Prieſtly; ſo that he now no more comes into his Father's preſence,on his bended knees, with his humble Supplications, Prayers, and Tears, but he moſt boldly pleads the Cauſe of his Redeemed with him. *Heb.* 9. 24. We have a ſpecimen of it in that interceſſory Prayer of his, Joh. 17. 24. *Father, I will that they alſo whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou haſt given me: for thou loveſt me before the foundation of the world.* His Prophetical; by opening to him all the treaſures of his Counſels, and affording him his Spirit in all fulneſs to pour out upon his People, and cooperate with his Meſſengers, in gathering up his Choſen out of the World, and preſerving them to the end of it. *Mat.* 28. 19,20. And now this great Prophet knows the day and hour of the Great Judgment, which the Man-Chriſt tells us he did not know when he was here. And his Kingly; in putting the royal Adminiſtration of all the affairs of his whole Kingdom into his Hands, and fully impowering him to govern all Creatures, for the good of his people, *Joh.* 5. 22,23. 1 *Cor.* 15. 25. And in his whole Perſon; God hath honoured the Perſon of Chriſt, ſo as that God in our nature is made the Object of our Adoration. Saints and Angels are injoyned to fall down and adore him, *Heb.* 1. 6. *Rev.* 5. 11,12. In a word, as there are degrees of Glory in Heaven, ſo Chriſt obtains the higheſt of them, and ſuch as do exceed all others beyond any compariſon. Angels have a great deal, and glorifyed Saints have a great deal; and indeed, ſo great it is, that we for the preſent are not able throughly to underſtand or fathom it; but Chriſt, as the head of Angels, and of his Church, hath a tranſcendent Glory conferred upon him, and a more weighty crown of honour than they, he being the firſt born, and the ſurpaſſing dignity belonging to him. Pſal. 45. 7. *Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oyl of gladneſs above thy fellows.*

(2.) *HE had a Crown of* Power, *and that Supream and Sovereign, beſtowed on Him.* All Power in Heaven and Earth was given to him. *Mat.* 28. 18. And this is double, he had a Power of Authority, and he had a Power of Vertue or Might to execute that Authority irreſiſtibly.

[1.] *HE was* crowned *with* great Authority, *large and univerſal.* He is advanced to the higheſt Seat and Dignity. Principalities and Powers are ſubjected to him, yea, all things in the whole Creation are put under his feet, *Eph.* 1. 22. *Col.* 2. 10. There is no ſecond Being, though exalted to never ſo high a Pinacle, that can challenge an equality to him, or an exemption from being under his Juriſdiction. He is the only Potentate: there is written on his veſture and on his thigh, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. The Man-Chriſt, or Chriſt in his humane Nature, is next in Dignity and Authority to the moſt glorious firſt Being, *Col.* 1. 18. 1 *Cor.* 3. 22, 23.—15. 27. Yea, God hath given him abſolute and ſovereign Dominion over all things, to exerciſe

ſupream

ſupream Government over them, and that they ſhould be accountable to him, receive commands from him, and be liable to his Judgment: he hath full liberty to do his pleaſure with them, and is under no Obligation to give them an account of what he ſo doth. Hence that, Rev. 1. 5. *And from Jeſus Chriſt, who is the faithful witneſs, and the firſt begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth: unto him that loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood.* He is like to *Joſeph* in *Pharoah*'s houſe, of whom we have account, *Gen.* 41. 40,44. *Pſal.* 105. 21,22. His Authority is from the Father, and unqueſtionable.

[2.] *HE was inveſted with* great Might *and* Strength. God gave him vertue anſwerable to his Authority. Authority without Force, will ſoon grow into Contempt, and be trodden down by the foot of Pride and Inſolency. But Jeſus Chriſt, at his Father's right hand, hath a potent and efficacious Power, and it extends itſelf to the adminiſtration of the whole Affair of his Kingdom, in all the reſpects of it. He can ſend the Holy Ghoſt, and pour him forth upon whomſoever he pleaſeth. Joh. 14. 26. *But the Comforter, which is the holy Ghoſt, whom the Father will ſend in my Name.* He can make uſe of the Divine Attributes, and employ them as he ſees occaſion, *Rev.* 5. 12. He hath a plenary power over Angels; co-ercive over evil Angels, and can reſtrain their moſt impetuous rage, and ſo tie them up that they can do nothing. He led them captive at his Aſcenſion, and now holds them in Chains, ſo that they cannot ſtir one hairs breadth beyond his permiſſion. He can commiſſion and ſend forth the good Angels, and they neither can, nor will diſobey him, but are ever preſt for his Service, to come and go according to his bidding. He hath omnipotent efficacy over all the World: He can quell and keep them all under, and when he pleaſeth, he can, with his iron Rod, brake the ſtouteſt of them, like ſo many potſherds, *Pſal.* 2. 9. His hook in their noſtrils can hold faſt the greateſt Leviathans, and his arm can when he will, give Dragons to be meat for his People. Yea, he can powerfully ſway the rebellious hearts of his own People, hold them in ſubjection to him, and lead them powerfully home to Glory. Pſal. 110. 3. *Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power.* Yea, he can conquer to himſelf a People out of the World, deſtroy their enmity, and make them to fall down before him, and lay their Crowns and Scepters at his feet, and confeſs him to be both *Lord, and Chriſt.* This is his Entertainment with his Father; and God eſtabliſhed him for ever in his Throne: He fixed him there, he ratifyed & confirmed this honour and dignity to him. See, *Pſal.* 110. 4. 45. 6. He is ſettled unmoveably; all the powers of earth and hell, though combined againſt him, cannot diſturb or interrupt it; ſo that his Glory which he is now poſſeſt of, is an unchangeable Glory, as to the eſſence of it.

3. *AS for the* Contentment *that Chriſt takes in his Entertainment, or the* Satisfaction *that he finds in it, this is ſignified to us, in his* ſitting, *his* reſting, *and his* rejoycing *in it.* This was the perſonal reward which his Father had indented with him, to confer upon him, upon his accompliſhment of the great work which he had undertaken. It was that Joy which was ſet before him, the contemplation, and fore-expectation whereof, bore him up under, and made him to deſpiſe all the contradiction and reproach that he met with-al in the World, *Heb.* 12. 2,3. And therefore the fulfilment and fruition of it, could not give him leſs than full content, for it was in the event, nothing leſs than was promiſed, and equalled the expectation he had about it. Nay, it was the greateſt glory that he was capable of as Man; it was every way ſatisfying, he could not have a greater, the Father had not one bigger to beſtow on him: and therefore needs muſt it fulfil his deſires. His Father bid him ask what he would, and he ſhould not be denied. See how it is ſhadowed, *Pſal.* 21. 2, &c. And there can be no greater ſatisfaction, than to have all the cravings of the Soul filled to the full. What ſhall we ſay? Chriſt at the Fathers Right Hand hath all the dignity, power, delight given him that is poſſible, and ſettled upon him for perpetual duration; needs therefore muſt his Joy in it be proportionable, and incomparably tranſcending all the joys of all the glorified. On this account we have him triumphing in the thoughts of it, then when he was going to his Sufferings, Pſal. 16. 10,11. *For thou wilt not leave my ſoul in hell; neither wilt thou ſuffer thine holy One to ſee corruption. Thou wilt ſhew me the path of life: in thy preſence is fulneſs of joy, at thy right hand there are pleaſures for evermore.* And to reſt in it, as God did in the works of Creation, *Heb.* 4. 10. He hath as much Glory as he asked for. *Jer.* 17. 5. And that was the Glory which he had before the World was. By which we are to underſtand, that which was agreed on, and ſealed up to him in the Covenant of Redemption. And now he hath it in full meaſure, as the everlaſting fruit and reward of his Mediatorial Obedience, in and by which he fulfilled all that Work which he had undertaken.

USE I. *HERE we have a ſufficient Reaſon why the* Church *ſtands through all Ages, and is preſerved againſt all the Rage and Fury of its moſt potent Adverſaries.* It is one of the great Wonders that are to be obſerved, and carries aſtoniſhing admiration in it, to ſee that this buſh hath been ſo long on a light fire, and is not to this day conſumed. That this little Flock of ſheep hath been kept feeding in a Wilderneſs of roring Lyons, and ravenous Wolves, and yet is preſerved from them by an unſeen hand; that all the gates of Hell have combined againſt the Church, and have not prevailed: but here is that which may ſatisfy us about, this great Sight: Jeſus

Chriſt, the Head and King of his Church, is exalted on the right hand of Power, and ſways the Scepter with an Almighty Arm, by which he curbs in the power of the Mighty, and countermines the plots of the Wiſe, ſtops the career of the Furious, and makes all their Enterprizes to miſcarry. Chriſt in Heaven forgets not his labouring Church on Earth; but is ever employing his intereſt and authority for the good of his People. Let us then in the midſt of all the tumultuous hurries of the World, when Nations are moved, and Kingdoms enter into Combinations againſt the Church of God, when they ſay, *Come and let us cut them off from being a People*, &c. not be amazingly affrighted or dejected; Their Redeemer is mighty, Jeſus Chriſt is upon the Throne, and hath all power in his Hand, and it is for his elect, and he cannot ſit ſtill: He is the hope of Iſrael, and will ariſe for their help, and not ſuffer them to be ſwallowed up.

USE II. *IS Chriſt ſet down at his Father's right hand? Then all the Affairs of the World are ordered with infinite wiſdom, and almighty power: and that in the beſt way, for the advancing of the glory of God, and the welfare of his People.* And this is to be inferred, both as to publick and perſonal concerns. Things may look dark and confuſed to us, and we are ready to think the great Pilot is aſleep, and conclude all is gone as to his intereſt in this world; and in reſpect of ourſelves, that this and that is againſt us. But in the mean while, we forget where Chriſt is, and what he is doing. Let us then recollect ourſelves, and believe that he rules over all, and every thing that falls out, paſſes under either his approbation or permiſſion, and he is bringing about his own glorious deſigns thereby. Let us get the faith of this into lively exerciſe, and conclude firmly upon it, that neither Devil or Evil of any ſort, ſhall hinder his work or ſpoil it. The Church ſhall be no further oppreſſed, than to make way to render their deliverance the more glorious and joyful. And for ourſelves in particular, there ſhall no affliction befall us, but what he will ſit by, and give it its operation, and though it trouble us, it ſhall not hurt us, but work for our good, and the latter end ſhall be peace.

[AUGUST 3. 1697.]

SERMON *CXII.*

WE are on the Contemplation of Chriſt's *Exaltation*. We have viewed him in his Reſurrection, Aſcenſion, and left him Sitting at his Fathers Right Hand, in Poſſeſſion of the greateſt fulneſs of incomprehenſible Glory. The peculiar *Employment* that he there purſues, is his precious *Interceſſion* for us: Of which many Divines treat here. But we have already taken a brief account of it; under his Prieſtly Office. But there is one piece of his Glorious Exaltation yet behind, and in which he ſhall appear at the laſt Day. The Man-Chriſt is already made perfectly happy. The deſpiſed Jeſus, is crowned with immenſe Glory: But it is a Glory hidden from the eyes of the World; it is not ſeen by earthly men, and there are but a few here that believe it. Yet there is a Day coming when it ſhall be rendred conſpicuous, and repreſented in the open view of Angels and Men. Yea, thoſe that hated him, and ſaid, *This man ſhall not reign over us*, ſhall ſee him in his Majeſty to their eternal confuſion. Rev. 1. 7. *Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye ſhall ſee him, and they alſo which pierced him.* Now the Glory which he ſhall then appear in, is his Execution of Judgment, upon all the World of reaſonable Beings, with the greateſt royalty. This we have plentifully aſſerted in the holy Scriptures; and may take a brief account of in this place. I ſhall not here treat of the whole affair of the laſt and general Judgment, but reſerve it for its place afterwards: But only conſider of it, as it refers to the Perſon of the Judge, and ſo is one eminent piece of Chriſt's Exaltation. Jeſus Chriſt, after he had accompliſhed his great buſineſs upon Earth, left this lower World for a ſeaſon, as to his humane preſence, when he aſcended up to Heaven, and took poſſeſſion of the Kingdom. But he ſhall leave Heaven as to his bodily preſence, for a while, at the laſt Day, and return back into this lower World, till he hath accompliſhed the great Judgment. For the clearing of this Article, let the following Concluſions ſuffice.

1. *THAT there ſhall be a Day of* Judgment: *A ſeaſon wherein all mankind that have been, or ſhall ever be in the World, ſhall be called to an Account, and made to appear upon Trial, and receive their Recompence.* I ſhall not inſiſt here at preſent. It is one of the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith, fully aſſerted in holy Writ, upon which this Faith is bottomed. Eccl. 12. 14. *For God ſhall bring every work into judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* Pſal. 96. ult. *Before the Lord; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteouſneſs ſhall he judge the world, and the people with equity.* Rom. 14. 10. *For we ſhall all appear before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt.* And elſewhere abundantly. And the manifeſtation of the glorious Attribute of Divine Juſtice calls for it, that it may be made to appear to all, that there is a righteous Judge, who will do righteouſneſs. It is now a day of Patience, Long-ſuffering, and Goodneſs; and ſo there is a promiſcuous diſpenſation of viſible Providences. All things fall out alike to all, *Eccl. 9. begin.* The wicked go unpuniſhed, according to humane Judgment, and the godly ſuffer many things injuriouſly from them, and are not apparently righted. The World is quite out of order, as to the reaſonable Creatures in it: And God for the preſent

preſent ſuffers it ſo to be. But therefore there muſt be a Day wherein God will ſet all things to rights, and give to every one according to their deſervings. He who reads ſuch remarks, Eccl. 7. 15. *There is a juſt man that periſheth in his righteouſneſs, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedneſs.* And Ch. 8. 14. *There is a vanity which is done upon the earth, that there be juſt men unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked: I ſaid this alſo is vanity.* And then remembers, that God is not only Creator, but Governour too of the World, muſt needs from ſuch premiſes infer this Concluſion, that there muſt be a Day of Account.

2. *THE main thing to be obſerved, is that* Jeſus Chriſt *ſhall be* Judge *in that Great Day.* The Scepter ſhall be put into his hand, and he ſhall ſway it; and there ſhall be an univerſal confluence and appearance of all before his Judgment Seat, 2 Cor. 5. 10. *For we muſt all appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* And he ſhall ſit Judge, not only as he is God, but as he is God-Man, Mediator. It belongs to his Mediatorial Kingdom, and hereupon the Scripture puts an emphaſis upon his Judging as Man, Act. 17. 31. *Becauſe he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteouſneſs, by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given aſſurance unto all men, in that he hath raiſed him from the dead.* Joh. 5. 27. *And hath given him authority to execute judgment alſo, becauſe he is the Son of man.* And if it be inquired, how Chriſt cometh to be Judge then? I anſwer, it is by a delegate power, made over to him by his Father, and this as part of the reward that was promiſed to him in the Covenant of Redemption. This was one part of the joy that was ſet before him, *Heb.* 12. 2. It was an Article in the Agreement which paſt between him and his Father in the days of Eternity; one of the great rewards which he promiſed to him, on condition of his undertaking and accompliſhing that great work of Satisfaction to Divine Juſtice. God did not only promiſe him a relative reward, *viz.* that he ſhould bring back a great number of deſtroyed mankind to Glory; but a perſonal reward too, which he himſelf ſhould rejoyce in, and this was one part of it. *Pſal.* 2. 8, 9. That God hath a divine right and prerogative in judging the World none dare to make a doubt of, but ſuch as will not ſcruple to call his Being in queſtion. And therefore Chriſt as God hath an original and primitive right to be Judge; and as Man, and in a ſubordinate ſtation, ſo his Father hath conſtituted him in his Office, and by Commiſſion made over this affair to his management, Joh. 5. 22. *For the Father judgeth no man: but hath committed all judgment to the Son.* And he hath done it, ſo to put upon him the honour of a Redeemer, ver. 23. *That all men ſhould honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which ſent him.* And what higher declarative Glory could the Man-Chriſt be exalted to, than to have an elevated Throne pitch'd for him, and all the Heavenly Hoſt his Attendants, whiles he calls forth, and makes all men and devils appear at his Tribunal, and receive their final doom from his mouth?

3. THE ſtately Majeſty, and exalted Glory of Chriſt in this Affair, will appear in the management of the affair itſelf by him, which may here be briefly glanced at, ſo far as it may ſet forth the ſplendid exaltation of his in it, in a few things.

1. *THE* Time *when it ſhall be.* There is an appointed time, a day fixt and conſtituted for it, *Act.* 17. 31. Now, things done by appointment, are intended to be done with the greateſt ſolemnity, eſpecially if decreed upon long before hand; ſuch is this Judgment. It is one of God's ancient decrees; *Enoch* the ſeventh from *Adam*, propheſied of it, *Jude* 14, 15. When the time ſhall be, or how many months and years ſhall paſs, before the Judge of the World, ſhall come to render rewards to men, is not given to us mortals to underſtand, but kept as a ſecret in God's own breaſt, *Mark* 13. 32. Only thus much in general we may know of it, *viz.* that it will not be long before that day ſhall come; they are the laſt days, and the winding up of time that we live in. There are yet ſome propheſies to be fulfilled, ſome predictions to be accompliſhed, ſome of God's Elect unborn, that are yet to be called, and the World ſtands in its old poſture for the preſent, on theſe accounts. When therefore theſe things ſhall be done (and God will wind up things a-pace towards the cloſe of time) then will the Lord Jeſus Chriſt come to Judgment: and mean while, it is not for us anxiouſly to inquire into times and ſeaſons, but to uſe utmoſt and ſpeedy endeavours, to get ready for the terrible day, that it may not ſteal upon us unlooked for, or find us unprepared. This is Chriſt's own advice, *Mat.* 24. 44.

2. *THE* Place *in which it ſhall be acted.* This alſo is a Circumſtance of Chriſt's Glory at that day. And, though it would be too bold preſumption for us, to ſtate any individual place for it, as ſome have attempted, yet, in general, it ſhall be in this lower World. Hence the Lord is ſaid to *come* to judge, *Pſal.* 96. *ult.* And the Apoſtle tells us that he ſhall be revealed *from Heaven*, 2 Theſ. 1. 7. And no doubt but that it will be a moſt glorious and majeſtical appearance, when Chriſt ſhall come in the ſtate and equipage of a Judge. It was a ſtately Aſcenſion that he had, it dazled the eyes of the beholders: And the Angel tells us, that he ſhall come again in *like manner*, Act. 1. 11. The priſon in which the wicked are ſhut up, for the Judgment, is here below; and the Priſon is wont not to be far from the

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Judgment Seat. Their Bodies are kept in the Grave, and their Souls are in the hands of Satan, whose Kingdom is here below: And it is a certain truth, that neither Devils nor wicked Men shall come into Heaven to be judged there: That holy place shall never be polluted with their entertainment for one moment of time, Rev. 21. 27. *And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lambs book of life.* Hence it must be somewhere here below. Some have thought it will be in the Air, from 1 Thes. 4. 17. *Then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.* But it seems more probable, that that Scripture speaks of the Saints meeting of Christ there, and returning with him to the Judgment; who shall be thus signally distinguished from the wicked. Others therefore reckon that it will be on the Earth; and so that, Job 19. 25. *For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth*: may favour it; though it firstly intends his Incarnation, and engagement in the work of Redemption. And thus will the place of Sinning be the place of Judgment; and where Christ himself was once judged, he shall himself judge his Judges. For the particular Place, as it is uncertain, so it is needless to be sought after. That in *Joel* 3. 12. doth not prove that it must be in the Valley of Jehosaphat; and those that gather it from thence mistake the prophecy of a particular Judgment, for the general one.

3. *THE stately* Preparation *that shall be made for it, or the glorious* manner *in which Christ shall come, and appear.* For it is the day of his appearing, 2 Tim. 4. 1. *And the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.* And the word signifies a bright, clear, and glorious appearing. He shall come in his Glory. His first coming was in all humility & meanness, in the form of a Servant, without all beauty or comeliness; but it shall not be so when he comes again: All the splendour which he hath at his Fathers Right Hand, shall be shewn at that day. Matth. 16. 27. *For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels: and then he shall reward every man according to his works.* And there are these things in special that shall make it amazingly stately,

1. *THE* Forerunners *of his coming to Judgment*: which are principally two,

(1.) *THE* Sign *of the Son of Man which shall appear in Heaven.* *Matth.* 25. 30. What in particular this sign shall be, since the Scripture hath no where declared, men do but conjecture: but this is out of question, it shall be *an amazing thing*, which shall be conspicuous to all men, and shall astonish and terrify the ungodly. *ib.* And to those that wait for his appearance, it shall be comfortable.

(2.) *THE Voice of the* Arch-angel, *& Sound of the last* Trumpet. Which shall be accompanied with almighty power, that shall awaken the dead Bodies out of their Sepulchres, change the Living in a moment, and collect all the number of those that are to be Judged into a readiness for his coming. 1 *Cor.* 15. 52. 1 *Thes.* 4. 16. And a stately thing it shall be. The Spirit of God alludes to it, when he represents the ungodly men in such an horror, *Rev.* 6. 14, 15.

2. *THE Royal* Retinue *that shall accompany and wait upon him in his coming.* He shall have a vast and innumerable train of those Heavenly Inhabitants, that shall come down with him, and attend his holy pleasure. Dan. 7. 10. *A fiery stream issued, and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministred unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousands stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.* 2 Thes. 1. 7. *When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty Angels.* That company of Angels is said to be *innumerable*, Heb. 12. 22. Heaven shall, for a while, be left empty of its Inhabitants, who shall give their attendance upon, & pay their respects to this great Judge and King. His Saints also, and his redeemed Spouse, dresst up for the stately Solemnity, shall go up to meet him in his way, and joyfully acknowledge him, in his coming to compleat their Redemption, 1 *Thes.* 4. 17.

3. *HE shall sit down upon a* Throne, *erected for him, in the greatest state and majesty.* Dan. 7. 9. *I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool, his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.* *Rev.* 20. 11, 12. These indeed are allusive expressions, and not to be strained; and therefore how this shall be in particular, or in what manner the Man-Christ shall place himself at that Day, is not for our curious determining: but the Spirit of God doth in the Scripture, shadow this forth to us, by things which among men, are the most pompous, and carry the greatest state and terror with them; and at least say so much, that the Glory of it is ineffable, and that it can be represented to us but in dark shadows, and exceeding faint resemblances.

4. *THE* Subject *that is to be Judged by him.* This also is a wonderful Circumstance of his Exaltation, and will render his Glory incomparable. And this appears in the consideration both of the quantity & quality of them. For, they shall not be a few, but an *innumerable Company.* Not only the poor and contemptible ones in the World, but such as were exalted to the highest dignity among men, and were in this World above controul, who scorned to acknowledge any Superiour, or any whom they should be accountable unto. This is alluded to, *Rev.* 6. 15. The Devils also shall then be cited to appear; for they are now prisoners in chains reserved to

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that Day, 2 *Pet.* 2. 4. Abortives, that died in the Womb, Infants that departed as ſoon as they ſaw the light, all of all Ages, States and Degrees, *Rev.* 20. 12. Theſe ſhall not only be cited audibly, when the Voice ſhall be heard from one end of Heaven to the other, *Ariſe ye dead, and come to Judgment*, Joh. 5. 28. but they all be made to appear perſonally. Then ſhall all the places wherein they had been before reſerved, freely reſign them up at the Judges ſummons, *Rev.* 20 13, &c. Yea, Chriſt himſelf will then employ his mighty Angels in bringing of them together, and they ſhall ranſack the whole Earth, and fetch them all in, *Math.* 24. 31. Chap. 13. 40, 41. They ſhall all come and be made to acknowledge the ſupremacy of the Judge, bow before him, and hold up their *hand at his bar:* Then ſhall he appear to be exalted far above Principalities and Powers.

5. *THE* manner *of the Proceſs ſhall alſo be with greateſt ſtate, and wonderfully illuſtrate the Glory of Chriſt.* He then comes to wind up the great work of ſpecial Government, which had been managed from the Creation, and to ſettle the determinations of it for Eternity. Hereupon the Subjects of it are now to receive their due & juſt recompences, according to the eſtabliſhed Tenour of that Government. And the great Glory of Chriſt will appear,

(1.) *IN the* Trial *itſelf.* As all Men & Devils ſhall be placed before his Tribunal; ſo ſhall his glorious Supremacy over them be evidenced, in that he will call them forth with authority, make them ſtand forth, and ſubmit to his Juriſdiction, anſwer to their Names, hold up their Hands, and be Tried before him, according to the ſtated rule of Government. Then will their Indictment be read, then all that is to be laid to their Charge ſhall be pleaded againſt them, and all that is to be ſaid for them; all that they have done in the fleſh, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. Every ſecret thing, *Eccl.* 12. 14. Every word and every thought: Theſe things ſhall be examined & evidenced. The Books ſhall then be opened, *Rev.* 20. 12. The book of Providence, and the book of Conſcience, and theſe ſhall be compared with the book of the Law; and by theſe ſhall all things be fairly ſtated & laid open to the conviction of the World, and the ſilencing of all cavils againſt it.

(2.) *IN the* Sentence. Then will he proceed with the greateſt Authority, to paſs the Sentence upon all, according to the evidence of their Caſe. And our Saviour himſelf hath given us an account of a twofold Sentence, that ſhall then paſs from him, Mat. 25. 34, 41. *Then ſhall the King ſay unto them on his right hand, Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Then ſhall he ſay alſo unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting Fire, prepared for the devil & his angels.* And when the Judge hath thus declared it, he will never depart from it, nor ſhall there be any liberty of an Appeal. This is the Supream Court, and he is the Sovereign Judge; nor can there be either a Review or Writ of Error entred, all things being now determined for ETERNITY. And how exalted an One will Chriſt then appear to be?

6. *THE* iſſues *alſo and* conſequents *of this Judgment are glorious.* The Lord Jeſus Chriſt, having with greateſt Authority put an end to the Affair, ſhall now again return to his former Seat of Eternal Glory, accompanied with the ſame Retinue of Angels, and all thoſe his Redeemed ones, whom he had, in that great Aſſembly, openly acquitted, & adjudged to everlaſting Glory, whom he ſhall carry home with him to his Eternal Palace, and make them to ſit down with him upon incorruptible Thrones, and dwell together with him forever in his Kingdom, there to enjoy thoſe inconceivable Delights, which were fore prepared for them, 1 Theſ. 4. 17. *And ſo ſhall we ever be with the Lord.* Then ſhall the wicked, whom he had doomed to endleſs Torments, be left behind in the place of fire, to receive the execution of the fearful Sentence before paſt upon them, and ſuffer in that place which was of old ordained for them, where thoſe flames of everlaſting burnings ſhall be kindled upon them, which ſhall deſtroy them for ever; whereby the power & majeſty of the Judge ſhall be made to ſhine out with the moſt reſplendent luſtre. Thus ſhall that great & ſuperiour Court be broke up, and all the Acts of it be made to be of force, & abide in their efficacy through all Eternity, to the everlaſting renown of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. This is that which is in Scripture called the Great Day, becauſe of thoſe great things that are to be done upon it, by our exalted Redeemer, and which ſhall never be revoked. And this is the *Exaltation* of Chriſt.

USE. I. *WHAT a loud* Call *is here to us all, above all things to ſeek and ſecure an Intereſt in Chriſt, and his Redemption?* Is Jeſus Chriſt to manage that Great Day's Work? Oh! ſeek to make him your Friend againſt that time. Make haſte, break off your ſins by repentance, fly into the arms of a Saviour, that it may go well with you in that dreadful Day. Know of a certainty, that there is ſuch a Day coming; God hath ſaid, and recorded it in the Scriptures of truth. Be aſſured, that you muſt every one of you then in perſon appear, and receive your final doom at that Bar. Remember, Jeſus Chriſt will then be the Judge, and if you now deſpiſe the Son of God, and reject the Lord of Glory, how will you be able to appear before, and look him in the face at that Day? Think what a precious advantage is now in your hands, to ſeek and to obtain to be delivered from your Judge, to fly to his Righteouſneſs, and obtain your Pardon at his hands. Be then perſwaded ſeriouſly to inquire, What you ſhall do that you may ſtand in that day; how you may obtain then to be placed at the Judge's right Hand; and being acquainted with it, fly to

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the Lord Jesus Christ, take up your shelter under the shadow of his Wings : Lo! He stands at the door and knocks ; open to him, let him in, and he will be your protection in that terrible Day.

USE. II. *WHAT admirable* Refreshment *doth this afford to all true Believers ?* Here is a Voice of Peace & Comfort to the Children of God. The great and dreadful Day needs not amaze you ; it is your Spouse, and your Saviour to whom God the Father hath committed this Judgment, with a full power to dispose of the everlasting rewards & punishments of the reasonable Creatures. And if he be Judge, and his Righteousnes shall answer for you, how happy will you be, to see your only Beloved sitting on the Throne, when your eyes shall see your Redeemer in his Father's Glory, and he shall take you near to himself, and make you his Co-assessors in Judging the World ; when he shall put an everlasting Crown upon your Heads. Think of this then, and say, this is the Day that I love, that I wait for : and let the fore-tho'ts of it keep up in you a comfortable expectation of his coming again from the third Heaven ; and put you upon making it your constant care & endeavour to be in a readiness for it, that when you hear him say, *Behold, I come quickly*, you may chearfully echo, *Amen, Even so come* LORD JESUS.

[AUGUST 31. 1697.]

SERMON *CXIII.*

QUESTION XXIX.

HOW are we made partakers of the Redemption purchased by Christ ?

ANSWER.

WE are made partakers of the Redemption purchased by Christ, by the effectual Application of it to us by His Holy Spirit.

WE formerly observed, that in the Anastasy or Restitution of fallen man, there are two parts, viz. *Redemption* and *Application.* The former of these hath been considered of, as being undertaken and compleatly accomplished by the Son of God in our Nature. We are now to take an Account of the latter, which is ascribed to the Holy Spirit; an Introduction to which is made by the *Question* & *Answer* before us. And there are three things plainly expresst, which may at present be a little laid open, *viz.* 1. That we must be made Partakers of this Redemption, in order to our Salvation. 2. That this must be by a particular Application of it to us. 3. That the Holy Spirit of God is the Author of this Application.

I. *THAT we must be made* Partakers *of this Redemption, in order to our Salvation.* Here observe,

1. *THAT the great* design *of Christ's Redemption, is the Salvation of his Redeemed.* He must have some end in this great Work. No wise Agent doth any thing, but with an aim at something which he would bring about by it. Now they are in a great mistake, who think that this was only to render mankind *salvable*, as if it ended there, and were left to the liberty of men, whether they will be saved by it or no. Were it so, there would not be one saved, and so it would lose its Glory. For no man will of his own accord, left to himself, accept of Salvation by it. Christ wrought out this Redemption for those that were given him of his Father to redeem, and there must not any of them be lost. Joh. 6. 39. *And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.*

2. *THE Redemption itself, as it refers to his* Priestly Office, *doth not actually put any into a state of Salvation.* There is indeed a Redemption by Power, which doth give them a title, and so brings them into this state ; but that which is by Price doth not : but only makes way for it. This Price is laid down for, and accepted by God on the account of all the Elect, and they shall in due time have the full benefit of it. But this notwithstanding, They are born *Children of wrath as others*, Eph. 2. 3. There is a time wherein they are *without God and hope*, &c. ver. 12. And thus it is with every natural man, whiles he continues to be in a state of unregeneracy. Tit. 3. 3. *For we our selves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.*

3. HENCE, *That we may be saved by it, this Redemption must be* made ours, *we must have a share in it, and title to it.* It is certain that all men do not obtain Salvation by it ; notwithstanding Christ hath paid an infinite Price sufficient to answer for all the World, yet there are those whom Christ doth not profit ; but after all that he hath done, they perish for ever : and the reason of it must needs be, because they have no part or portion in his Redemption ; they can lay no claim to it. It is not therefore enough to satisfy any Soul, that Christ hath done this work, except he can appropriate it to himself, and say of it as *Paul* doth, Gal. 2. 20. *I am crucified with Christ: Nevertheless I live ; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me : and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

II. *THAT*

II. *THAT this muſt be by a particular* Application *of it to us.* And here we are to conſider, the Neceſſity of Application. In order to which it is requiſite that we obſerve the Nature of it, from which the Neceſſity is to be argued. The particulars of this will be afterwards conſidered. Here only in general: *This Application is the Conveyance of all the fruits and benefits of Chriſt's Redemption to us, according to the tenor of the New-Covenant.* Theſe benefits were purchaſed and laid in by Redemption, but they became ours by a Conveyance that is made of them; and there is a way in and by which this Conveyance is made; and when theſe two are laid open, the Neceſſity will undeniably appear.

1. *THERE is a* Conveyance *of theſe fruits and benefits to us, by which they become ours, and this is the very eſſence of Application.* Now that there muſt be ſuch a Conveyance, will be evident if we conſider,

(1.) *THAT it is from the* Vertue *of theſe fruits & benefits that our Salvation muſt flow.* It is certain that the ground and ſtrength of our Salvation is laid in Chriſt's Redemption. If he had not gone through that Work, no fleſh could have been ſaved. There was all that was requiſite to make us everlaſtingly happy procured. What thoſe fruits and benefits are will be afterwards conſidered. But it is certain, that our felicity cannot exceed the vertue of them, becauſe it entirely depends upon them. And the reaſon why we hope for a compleat Salvation, is becauſe Chriſt is able to ſave us to the uttermoſt, Heb. 7. 25. *Wherefore he is able alſo to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.* If Chriſt had not died, we could not have lived. If he had not ſatisfyed, we could not have been juſtifyed: if he had not purchaſed, we could never have poſſeſſed. It is therefore the efficacy of theſe, that we have alone to reſt upon.

(2.) *THAT it is not enough that they have this Vertue in them, except it be* derived *unto us.* There muſt be a communication of them to us, or elſe we ſhall not be advantaged by them. There is a glorious proviſion made in the Redemption of Chriſt for poor Sinners; but they muſt receive it, and live upon it, if ever they be any thing the better for it. An excellent Salve, though it have never ſo much vertue in it, will not heal a wound, unleſs laid to it. The wholſomeſt Food will not nouriſh the body, except it be eaten; nor will Chriſt the Soul unleſs applied. Hence we have him ſo expreſſing himſelf, Joh. 6. 53. *Then Jeſus ſaid unto them, Verily, Verily I ſay unto you, Except ye eat the fleſh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.* Chriſt's ſufficiency will not do for us, without the efficacy of it working upon us. His Righteouſneſs can anſwer the Law in all its demands for us, but it will not juſtify us except it be imputed to us. He hath Grace enough in him to ſanctify us, but it will not make us holy till it be infuſed into us. He hath paid for the eternal Kingdom, but in order to our enjoying it we muſt be put in poſſeſſion.

(3.) HENCE, *it is by this* Conveyance *that we are put into a ſtate of Salvation.* There was indeed an appointment to Salvation antecedent to it, but that made no change in our ſtate; nor yet did the purchaſe of it which was made by Chriſt in fulneſs of time. There is after all this an actual paſſing from death to life; and that is done by applying of Chriſt to us as a Redeemer. When his active and paſſive Obedience are made over to us, by the juſtifying act of Grace, then is the death of the curſe removed, and we are adjudged to life: and when the ſanctifying Grace of Chriſt is derived to us by the renewing act, then we have a ſpiritual life put into us. Hence that, Eph. 2. 1. *And you hath he quickned who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.* And till this be done, the curſe lies on us, we lie open to the wrath of God, and are under the dominion of ſpiritual Death.

(4.) HENCE alſo, *All our* Claim *&* Title *to theſe fruits and benefits, derives from this Conveyance.* It is true, all our comfort and hope, flows originally from the Redemption itſelf, and we muſt refer it ultimately to that: According to Rom. 8. 34. *Who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died, yea rather that is riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh interceſſion for us.* But ſtill, that we may or can ſafely derive this comfort and hope to our Souls, and have an undeceiving aſſurance that it is our own, we muſt be able, not only to ſay that Chriſt hath done and died, and riſen, and is in poſſeſſion of all for his People; for ſo may every one that hath heard the report of the Goſpel, and given a literal credit to it ſay, and yet be never the better for it; but alſo, that all this be made ours, that we have received it. It hath been offered to many, but theſe only have the good of it. Hence that, Joh. 1. 12,13. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to them that believe on his Name; Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* Accordingly we have ſuch an expreſſion, in Col. 1. 27. *To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this myſtery among the Gentiles, which is Chriſt in you, the hope of glory.*

2. *THAT this Conveyance is according to the tenor of the* New Covenant. And the conſideration of this will further evince the Neceſſity of this Application. And here obſerve,

(1.) *THAT the reſtoring of fallen man from miſery to felicity, is brought about in the way of a* Covenant. On this account it is that we ſo often read of God's making a *New Covenant.* When he ſpeaks of beſtowing ſaving good upon his Choſen, this is the way in which infinite Wiſdom hath ſeen meet to tranſact with man. And as there was a Covenant, by the violation of which man was loſt, ſo God

hath appointed another, according to which he ſhall again be recovered. And ſo neceſſary is this Covenant, in order to man's well-being, that to be without Covenant, and without Hope, are made parallel, *Eph.* 2. 12.

(2.) *THAT in this Covenant there are* Terms *according to which the benefits thereof are offered.* God in treating with man in it, propoſeth great benefits to them to be enjoyed by them, even all thoſe benefits which Jeſus Chriſt hath purchaſed by his Redemption, in which are Grace and Glory, and every good thing contained. Pſal. 84. 11. *For the Lord God is a ſun and ſhield: the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will be withheld from them that walk uprightly.* They are called great and precious promiſes, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. But theſe are not abſolutely given, but hypothetically offered in this Treaty. So that the Covenant not only exhibits the things, but alſo ſhews us the way in which we may be partakers in them. We therefore read of a *way of Peace*, and a *way of Salvation:* In which is ſhown to us, what muſt be done in and by us, if ever we inherit the Promiſes.

(3.) *THAT theſe Terms are by the Covenant made* neceſſary. They are not only propoſed as things convenient, but they are things that do; and muſt accompany Salvation. As, *Heb.* 6. 9. And though God hath put it into the promiſe of the Covenant of Redemption, that he will work theſe things in all thoſe whom he hath given to Chriſt, yet in the offers of the Covenant of Grace he requires them of us, Mich. 6. 8. *He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.* And the demand is ſo politively made in the Goſpel, that the coming ſhort of thoſe terms, is threatned with a loſs of the good promiſed. Not only is the promiſe upon a ſuppoſition, if you repent and believe; but the loſs of all this good is denounced on failure of this, *Mar.* 16. 16. *Joh.* 3 36. *Rom.* 8. 13. *Heb.* 12. 14. And frequently elſewhere.

(4.) *THAT in the* plighting *of this Covenant, theſe terms are wrought in the man.* God never ratifies the Covenant to any but in this way, and therefore until this be done in man, it is a ſure evidence that they are ſtrangers to the Covenant. When therefore God ſpeaks of making a new Covenant with his People, he tells them what he will do in them upon this account, Jer. 31. 33. *But this ſhall be the covenant that I will make with the houſe of Iſrael, After thoſe days, ſaith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they ſhall be my people.* And elſewhere he tells them that he will bring them under the *bond of the Covenant*, Ezek. 20. 33. i. e. they ſhall be made to comply with all that is therein required of them.

(5.) *THAT* in, *and* upon *the working of theſe terms in us, Chriſt, with all his benefits becomes ours; who was not ſo before.* We muſt be entituled to Chriſt himſelf, if we would be able to challenge his benefits. It is certain that we are ſtrangers to him, and have no intereſt in him, in our natural eſtate. But it is in and by the new Covenant, that he becomes ours, it being a Covenant of Eſpouſals. And hence it is ſo expreſſed, Hoſ. 2. 18, 19, 20. *And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beaſts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow & the ſword, and the battel out of the earth, and will make them to lie down ſafely. And I will betroth thee unto me for ever, yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteouſneſs, and in judgment, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulneſs, and thou ſhalt know the Lord.* And here he tells us what he expects, if we be his, and he ours; and upon our actual conformity thereto the Covenant is ratifyed. Now theſe things amount to the Application we are conſidering of, and ſo ſtand to ratify the Neceſſity of it.

III. *THAT the Holy Spirit of God is the* Author *of this Application.* It is he, and he only that doth produce it, as the efficient of it. The Word indeed is uſed by him as an Inſtrument, which he makes improvement of, as he ſees meet, in the production of it, but that can do nothing without him, whereas he can do without that; and all the efficacy that is wrought by it derives from him. Now when this is attributed to the Holy Spirit, it is not to be underſtood excluſive of the other two Glorious Perſons of the Trinity; for, all the divine Works that are done by God out of himſelf, are common to the Trinity. And hence this is aſcribed both to the Father, Joh. 6. 44. *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath ſent me, draw him.* And to the Son, Joh. 12. 32. *And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.* But yet it hath a more peculiar aſſignation in Scripture, to the Holy Ghoſt, and for that reaſon, Chriſt uſeth that as an argument to convince his Diſciples of the need of his going from them, as to his bodily preſence, that ſo he might make way for the Spirit's coming to do his work, Joh. 16. 7. *Nevertheleſs, I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will ſend him unto you.* And he tells them what the work was that he ſhould do when he came, ver. 13. *Howbeit, when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he ſhall not ſpeak of himſelf; but whatſoever he ſhall hear, that ſhall he ſpeak, & he will ſhow you things to come.* The regenerate are therefore ſaid to be *born of the Spirit*, Joh. 3. 6. Here then we may firſt ſee that it is a divine Work, and then the reaſon why it is aſcribed to the Holy Spirit.

1. *THAT the work of Application is a divine Work*, will be evident if we conſider theſe things,

(1.) *THAT the things that are done* in us *by this Application, are works of Omnipotency.*

There

There is nothing less than Almighty Power exerted in every part of Application. The Work of Conversion, which comprehends under it the Change itself that is wrought in us, whereby Christ and we are brought together, of Unbelievers we are made Believers, of Sinners, Saints, is compared to those things which are above all the vertue of any created power, *viz.* a Creation, 2 Cor. 5. 17. *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are past away, behold, all things are become new.* A Resurrection or Quickning, Eph. 2. 1. *And you hath he quickned who were dead in trespasses and sins.* And in this respect it is ascribed to the same power which was at work in raising Christ from the dead, Eph. 1. 19,20. *And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power: Which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, & set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.*

(2.) *IT must needs therefore exceed the power of* men *or of* means *to do it.* That God makes use of men and means in the doing of it, is not because they have the vertue in them. They must all say here, as they did in another case. Act. 3. 12. *And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness, we had made this man to walk?* But it is that his power may be seen and acknowledged, by the weakness of the Instruments. Hence that observable Speech of *Paul*, 2 Cor. 4. 7. *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.* He therefore refers the whole efficacy of all endeavours of Man to God, 1 *Cor.* 3. 6. And we are given to understand that the new birth, which is the product of Conversion, is to be attributed to no second cause, but only to the first, *Joh.* 1. 13.

(3.) HENCE, *The* Instrumental *efficacy of the means is meerly moral.* It is true, the truth contained in the Word of God is the matter that is applied; but in point of efficiency, Man can only apply it to us by way of Persuasion, according to which it is suited to treat Man by, as a reasonable Creature, and moral agent. But the power to discern the excellency of the Truth, and so to approve and embrace it, and to chuse and close with Christ, who is offered in it, must come from a superior agent; because in the doing it, the blind mind must be illuminated, and the rebellious heart subdued, *Acts* 26. 18. and this they cannot do of themselves.

(4.) HENCE, *till God applies* His *Vertue with them, there is no saving efficacy at all by them upon Men.* Men may sit all their lives under the most clear and lively dispensation of the Gospel, and yet remain in their unbelief and impenitence. Yea, woful experience tells us, that there are a great many that do so; and so they will, till the *Arm of God is revealed to them*, Isai. 53. 1. What made *Lydia* to hearken to *Paul*? *Acts* 16. 14. What makes any of God's Servants successful in the Conversion of sinners, but the influence of that promise? Mat. 28. 20. *And lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the World. Amen.*

2. IF the Reason be asked, *Why this is more peculiarly ascribed to the Holy Spirit?* Let these things be observed,

(1.) *THAT the* Spirit *being equal in Glory to the other two Persons, must have some great Work ascribed to him, that the glorious manner of his subsisting & working may appear, and that he may have the declarative glory of it ascribed to him from us, and that all men may honour him, as they honour the Father, and the Son.* Now Creation is peculiarly ascribed to the Father, and Redemption to the Son, and what other great Work remains to be attributed to the Spirit but this? Hence we read, 1 Cor. 12. 13. *For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free: and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.* Joh. 16.8,9. *And when he,* i.e the Spirit, *is come, he will reprove the world of sin, & of righteousness, & of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not in me. Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more.* 1 Cor. 2. 10. *But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.*

(2.) *THAT all the* Divine Persons *are to shew their wondrous Love in the recovery of fallen man.* And this each doth according to his manner of working. There must be that then wherein the Holy Ghost displays his Love in his manner of working. Believers are said to be the house of God, and all must shew their good will to this house. God the Father manifests his in chusing of it, *Eph.* 1.4. God the Son hath abundantly declared his in purchasing of, and the price which he laid down for it, *Act.* 20. 28. And now the Holy Ghost displays his, in taking possession of it, 1 *Cor.* 3. 16.

(3.) *THE* Spirit *is the last in order of subsisting, and hence the consummation or finishing of things is ascribed unto him.* In the great Work of man's recovery this Application is the last thing that is done for him. The Father had done his part in chusing & ordaining them to life, and Covenanting with his Son for the bringing it about. The Son had done his by making Satisfaction to Justice, and laying down the whole Redemption-price. And now there is nothing else remains to recover man from misery to happiness, but the Applying the vertue of this unto him, which he pursues till it be accomplished, and thereby witnesseth the Love of the Father, and of the Son, as well as his own to us.

(4.) *THE Work of* Application *is a work of Infinite and Almighty Power:* As hath been observed. And hence we have such an expression, Eph. 3. 20. *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.* It is therefore properly ascribed to him, who is called the power of the most high, *Luk.*

1.35. There being a confluence of all the micles that ever were done in the work of Application. Yea, the work of Creation itſelf, was but a ſhadow of it, 2 *Cor* 4.6. *Iſai.* 51.16.

Use. I. *LEARN hence, how vain a thing it is for any to bleſs themſelves in the conſideration of Chriſt's Redemption, who are not able to evidence this work of* Application *in them.* Vain man is rather willing to take any thing on truſt, than to deal throughly with himſelf, though it be in a matter of greateſt moment. How many therefore can give no other account of their hope for eternal Life, but that they believe that Chriſt died to purchaſe it for fallen man. But let all ſuch know, that if this were never made yours by Application, it will never be your ſecurity againſt the wrath of God. What will it avail you, that Chriſt died, if his Death be not made yours? And if ever it were, there have been thoſe impreſſions of the divine Power on your Souls, which have brought you into the New Covenant, and wrought the terms of it in you. You have been made to comply with the offers of Grace, and receive the Lord Jeſus Chriſt as he hath been tender'd to you in the Goſpel. And if you are ſtrangers to any ſuch thing as this is, your pleas are but bold preſumptions, and if you lean your weight upon them, you will find them to deceive you.

Use. II. *SEE here how dangerous a thing it is to* reſiſt, *to* tempt, *or* provoke *the Spirit of God.* If ever the Purchaſe of Chriſt, and benefits of Redemption be made ours, they muſt be conveyed to us by the Holy Ghoſt. If he do not apply them to us, all the Power in the World can never effect it. There is ſo much of Omnipotency required in this Work, that no other can be the Author of it but he. What then do you mean, that you withſtand him, when he comes and proffers to do this work for you. Sadly ſit ſtill, and think with your ſelves, if by thus doing you provoke him to depart and forſake you, you are then put beyond all hopes of recovery, though you ſhould enjoy the beſt of means. And let Young Ones beware of this: If now he ſtrives, and you reſiſt, he urgeth, and you put him off with delays, he may take his farewell of you. And if he do, you will miſs of Salvation by Chriſt, and live but to fill up a more fearful meaſure of Wrath to be executed upon you.

[September 28. 1697.]

SERMON *CXIV.*

Question XXX.

HOW doth the Holy Spirit apply to us the Redemption purchaſed by Chriſt?

Answer.

THE Spirit applyeth to us the Redemption purchaſed by Chriſt, by working Faith in us, and thereby uniting us to Chriſt, in our Effectual Calling.

UNDER the former Queſtion, we took an Account of the general Nature, Neceſſity, and Author of Application. We are here pointed to the Conſideration of the Way or Manner of the Spirit's working it in us. There are Three things intimated to us in this Anſwer, 1. The Way in which the Spirit ſo applies Chriſt's Redemption to us, as it becomes ours, i.e. by Uniting us to Chriſt. 2. The Courſe that he takes to produce this Union, *viz.* by working Faith in us. 3. The Work in which this Faith, and the conſequent Union is produced, *viz.* Effectual Calling. The two latter of theſe will come under after Conſideration. I ſhall therefore at preſent take no further notice of them, than is neceſſary for the opening and clearing of the former. Let us then obſerve, that Faith is the proper uniting Grace, by which we are made one with Chriſt, and that this Faith is a work of the Holy Spirit, and produced in us in Converſion. But that that lies before us, is our Union with Chriſt. And here in general, let us obſerve, That there are two parts of Application, *viz.* Union to, and Communion with Chriſt. The former of theſe is the ground of the latter, or the foundation on which it is laid, or the medium by which it is introduced. We muſt firſt be in Chriſt, before we can partake in his benefits. All the promiſes are treaſured up in him, 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. And ſo, it is with Him, that God gives every thing elſe to us, *Rom.* 8.32. The Doctrine of this Union, is very myſterious, and moſt abſtruſe, next to that of the hypoſtatical Union of the two Natures, Divine and Humane, in the Perſon of Chriſt. It is therefore profitable for us to take a brief view of it at preſent, for the avoiding of the dangerous miſtakes on either hand. And here I ſhall purpoſely wave divers niceties uſed by ſome, and endeavour to accommodate my ſelf to vulgar Capacities. And here we may firſt conſider of the *Nature* of this Union, and then of the *Way* in which it is wrought.

I. TOUCHING the *Nature* of this Union, we may conceive of it in this Deſcription, *It is a myſtical and ſpiritual Conjunction made between Chriſt and the Believer, whereby they are brought into the neareſt relation, one to the other.* In which Deſcription there are ſeveral things to be taken notice of,

1. *THE* Parties *between whom this Union is made,* viz. *Chriſt, and the Believer.* The notion of

of Union intimates things that are *diverſe*, and yet in ſome reſpect *one*; and oftentimes they become one by vertue of this Union, which before it, were not only *divers*, but *diſtinct*. And ſo it is here. There are therefore two Parties, which are ſuppoſed to be ſubjects of it.

(1.) *THE one Party is* Chriſt. On which account he and his Church are called by one name, Chriſt, 1 Cor. 12. 12. *For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many are one body: ſo alſo is Chriſt.* And here we are to conſider him, neither meerly as God, or a divine Perſon, nor meerly in regard of his humane Nature, but as God-Man Mediator. It is true, by Chriſt, we are united to God. Hence that wonderful expreſſion, Joh. 17. 21. *That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they alſo may be one in us.* But it is the Perſon of Chriſt whom they nextly adhere to. And indeed, it was by the Son's becoming Man, and Mediator, that the way was made for this Union, but for which, there had been no coming at God by ſinful man, but he would have been as dry ſtubble to a conſuming fire. It is by him that we have acceſs to God, *Eph.* 2. 18.

(2.) *THE other Party is the* Believer. Not that there is any article of time in which he is a Believer before this Union is made; for our Anſwer tells us, that by working Faith in us, he unites us. We therefore read, Eph. 3. 17. *That Chriſt may dwell in your hearts by faith.* Before believing we are ſinners, and ſeparate from him, but by faith we receive him. But yet there is an antecedency in order of nature, in as much as faith hath the nature of an inſtrument, or medium of this Union. It may alſo well be expreſt by the Believer, becauſe all Believers, and none but Believers, are thus united to him.

2. *THE general nature of it; it is a* Conjunction *made between theſe two.* Believers are, on this account, ſaid *to be joined to the Lord*, 1 Cor. 6. 17. The word ſignifies to adhere cloſe, as things that are glued one to another, noting the intimacy of it. There are ſeveral Conjunctions of things, all of which are not of the ſame kind or nature, though all imply an uniting of them; we muſt therefore purſue this a little further.

Hence,

3. *THE* ſpecial *nature of it, may be gathered from the reſt of the Deſcription.* Where three things are aſſerted,

(1.) *THAT it is a* myſtical *Union.* The Apoſtle tells us that *it is a great Myſtery*, Eph. 5. 32. Now a Myſtery is a thing that is abſtruſe and ſecret, we have a notion of the thing itſelf, but are at a loſs about the way and manner of it, we cannot underſtand or expreſs how it was brought about. The Myſtery of a Trinity of Perſons in the Unity of the God-head, of the two Natures infinitely diſproportionable in themſelves, united in the Perſon of Chriſt; and of the Union of a Believer to Chriſt in Regeneration, are depths, which the line of our underſtanding is not able to fathom; but after our utmoſt ſearch, we muſt ſit down to gaze upon them with admiration. How many overdaring Spirits, not content to acknowledge their own ignorance, have run themſelves into blaſphemy, whiles they have confounded this with the two former, and ſaid, we are Godded with God, and Chriſted with Chriſt? It is certain, that our whole Man, Soul and Body are united to the whole Chriſt, God-Man; but neither are we made to loſe our humane nature, and become divine; nor is our humanity ſo united to Chriſt, as is that individual which he hath aſſumed into union with his Perſon; which Hypoſtatical union is proper to that individual: It is another manner of thing, and we may make ſome gueſſes at it by that which follows.

(2.) *IT is a* ſpiritual *Union.* It is not therefore to be looked on with a carnal Eye, or entertained with carnal Conceptions. It is real and not imaginary, but yet it is not that which our ſenſes are to be admitted Judges of, but being ſpiritual, we muſt have ſpiritual thoughts about it. The Apoſtle tells us, 1 Cor. 6. 17. *But he that is joined to the Lord, is one Spirit.* The diſtance of place between the humane nature of Chriſt in Heaven, and ours here upon Earth, doth no way impede it; the ſeparation between our Souls and Bodies at Death, doth not diſſolve it, but when the Soul is in Heaven, and the Body is turned to Duſt in the Grave, the union of both to him abides indiſſoluble. We are therefore ſaid to *die in the Lord*, Rev. 14. 13. *To be dead in Chriſt*, 1 Theſ. 4. 16. And to *ſleep in Jeſus*, ver. 14. But though this union be truly ſpiritual, yet the Word of God gives us diverſe carnal ſimilitudes of it, for the help of our underſtandings, which we muſt warily apply to it; not groſsly, but ſpiritually, remembring that every ſimilitude hath ſomething defective in it, and the Spirit of God uſeth many, becauſe no one can fully adumbrate it. It is compared to that of a *Vine* and its *Branches*, *Joh.* 15. 1,2,4,5. to note the cloſeneſs and connaturalneſs of it, and to let us underſtand, that by vertue of it, we derive all our life, and fruit from Chriſt, and receive the ſame ſap of Grace from him, which is radicated in him. But yet, there is this difference, the branches do grow naturally out of the Vine, and are of the ſame individual ſubſtance with it, whereas Chriſt and we are perſonally diſtinct, and we are put into him by an implanting, Rom. 6. 5. *For if we have been planted together in the likeneſs of his death: we ſhall be alſo in the likneſs of his reſurrection.* Hence it is reſembled to a Cion, that is grafted into a ſtock, *Rom.* 11. 17. Thereby intimating, that though by it we participate in his ſap and vigour, yet this union is not by nature, but it is an effect of free Grace. We were before united to the firſt Adam, but we are taken out of him, and put into Chriſt.

And

And there is here alſo this remarkable difference, that the Cion turns the ſap into fruits of its own kind, whereas the Believer upon Union with Chriſt, and drawing nouriſhment from him, bears fruit accordingly; *ſpiritual fruit.* It is expreſt by a Body conſiſting of head and members, 1 *Cor.* 12. 12. noting the ſymetry & proportion there is between Chriſt and Believers in his myſtical Body: and that they are managed & aſſiſted by his influence, and that there is a ſympathy between them; but yet this is after a more tranſcendent manner than that. It is compared to that of a Building, conſiſting of a foundation & ſuperſtructure, in which every Believer is one ſtone, 1 *Pet.* 2. 4, 5, 6. to ſhew us, that the whole ſtrength of this Union is in Chriſt. It is he who bears it up, and holds it together; that our whole weight lies upon him. Only in this it differs, that in this Building every one is a living ſtone. And to name no more, it is reſembled by the union that is made in Marriage, between Husband and Wife, *Eph.* 5. 31. 32. They remain two individual perſons ſtill, but yet there is an oneneſs between them. And this adds to all the former compariſons, that it is a rational union, and is founded, in mutual conſent, from whence proceeds that bond by which, they are tyed one to the other inſeparably. This therefore of all the ſimilitudes uſed in Scripture to expreſs this union, is moſt frequently made uſe of, as moſt wonderfully expreſſing the excellency of it, and moſt clearly diſtinguiſhing it from the hypoſtatical union of the two Natures in Chriſt. Hence,

3. *IT is an Union that brings them into the neareſt* Relation *each to other.* Indeed, it is not meerly and purely relative; it is a real thing as was before obſerved. And ſo there is ſomething real, which is the foundation of many relations in this World; as between the Vine and its Branches, the Stock and the Graff, the Foundation, and the Stones that are built upon it, the Husband and the Wife. This Union is ſuch, as by vertue of it we dwell in him, and he dwelleth in us, 1 *Joh.* 4. 13. And ſo we become *the Temple of the living God.* It is an Union by which the ſame Spirit that dwells in the Man Chriſt, dwells in us, ſo that we are one Spirit, 1 *Cor.* 6. 17. Hence we have ſuch a wonderful expreſſion, Rom 8. 11. *But if the Spirit of him that raiſed up Jeſus from the dead dwell in you: he that raiſed up Chriſt from the dead, ſhall alſo quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* It is an Union by which Chriſt derives every Grace of his to us, and cauſeth us to partake in it, according to our meaſure, Joh. 1. 16. *And of his fulneſs have all we received, and grace for grace.* It being like that *precious Ointment*, Pſal. 133. 2. It is an Union by which our whole ſpiritual life is fountained in him, and derives continually from him to us, *Gal.* 2. 20. Without which derivation, or continued influence, we can do no ſpiritual action, *Joh.* 15. 5. But yet the reſultancy of the Union is the making of that relation between him and us, whereby we are placed moſt near to him. Hence that wonderful expreſſion, Eph. 5. 30. *For we are members of his body, of his fleſh, and of his bones.* Which is not carnally but ſpiritually to be underſtood. Not that we do by it derive our body, and fleſh and blood from him, as the efficient, for in this we differ not from all other Creatures; but he is looked upon as the ſecond Adam, and ſo ſpiritually deriving a new Nature to us, by which we are made like him, and ſpiritually are as near him, as a man's *fleſh* and *bones* are to him naturally. Hence all thoſe relative Titles derive, as Head and Members, Beloved and Spouſe, &c. And this may ſuffice to be ſpoken concerning the *Nature* of this Union.

II. TOUCHING the *Way* in which it is wrought: This alſo is as myſterious as the former. We are told that it is done by *Effectual Calling.* So that when we come to a particular inquiry into the nature of that Work, we may from thence receive further light into it. We are alſo told, that it is done by the working of Faith in us, which is the product of effectual Calling. When therefore we come to conſider how we come to be made Believers, we may then perceive, how this Union is brought about & compleated. This might be illuſtrated in each of the forecited compariſons, but that which looks upon us as reaſonable Creatures, and points us to that mutual conſent which goes into it, is the moſt full and comprehenſive. Here then let theſe few Remarks be made for our help in it.

1. *THAT there is not only a* natural, *but a* moral *diſtance between Chriſt, and the Sinner, in his natural ſtate.* Not only are they two diſtinct Perſons, but ſin had made a great ſeparation between them. *Pſal.* 53. 2. They were far off from him, before he came to do this in them, Eph. 2. 13. *But now in Chriſt Jeſus, ye who ſometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Chriſt.* They were as contrary one to another as light is to darkneſs. They were gone far from God, and had no mind to return to him again. And hence, there was little appearance of any likelihood of there ever coming together; there being ſuch a contrariety between his ſpotleſs holineſs, and their univerſal impurity.

2. *THAT the firſt* leading cauſe *of this Union, is the Everlaſting Love of God to the Creature.* God is the Author of it. If he had not fought it the ſinner never would. Hence that, Iſai. 65. 1. *I am ſought of them that asked not for me: I am found of them that ſought me not: I ſaid, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my Name.* And that, 1 Joh. 4. 19. *We love him: becauſe he firſt loved us.* God did purpoſe concerning ſome, from Eternity, that when their ſin had broken the union between them and their Maker, he would bring about another between them and their Redeemer. This therefore is aſſigned as the prime reaſon of their being

drawn

drawn to him. Jer. 31. 3. *The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, ſaying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlaſting love: therefore with loving kindneſs have I drawn thee.* Yea, this is the Love that ſent Chriſt to make way for ſuch an Union as this, which could not be till our ſin was ſatisfied for, which he employed him about. 1 Joh. 4. 10. *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and ſent his Son to be the propitiation for our ſins.*

3. *THAT from this Love, God holds a* treaty *with the Sinner about this affair.* God treats with Man as a reaſonable Creature, and hereupon, in order to the bringing about of this Union, he comes and communes with him about it, and makes offers of it to him. This is done outwardly by the Goſpel, and the Ordinances of it, for the diſpenſing whereof, he ſends forth his Miniſters as Ambaſſadors, and their great buſineſs is to make the offers of, and invite ſinful Men to embrace Reconciliation with God, through Chriſt, which is to be brought about in this Union. Hence we have that in, 2 Cor. 5. 20. *Now then we are ambaſſadours for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us; we pray you in Chriſts ſtead, be ye reconciled to God.*

4. *THAT in this treaty, he lays before the Sinner all* Arguments *perſuaſive, to move him to comply with the offer made.* He lays before him, how highly rational it is that he ſhould ſo do, and how every way advantageous and happifying it will be for him. He therefore declares to him the miſerable and undone eſtate that he is at preſent in, and that the reaſon of it is becauſe by ſin he hath ſeparated himſelf from the fountain of Life and Happineſs, and brought himſelf under all the Curſes of the Law. He declared to him that it can never be better with him, ſo long as he remains as he is, and the diſtance between God and him is not removed; that there is no other Object of truſt with which he can unite, that is able to do him the leaſt kindneſs on this account, but will prove a refuge of lies, and an hiding place of deceit. He propounds the Lord Jeſus Chriſt to him as one that is able and willing to remedy all this miſery, by delivering him from it, and to make him compleatly happy in caſe he will reject his affiance elſewhere, and place it upon him; that he hath Salvation to the utmoſt to beſtow upon him; he opens to him therefore the terms of the New Covenant, and ſhows to him how he may come by a title to all the precious promiſes that are laid up in it, *viz.* by believing on him, and cloſing in with him, as Prophet, Prieſt, and King of Salvation: Aſſures him, that in caſe he thus doth, he ſhall receive all his benefits which derive from him, and muſt go with his Perſon, *Rom.* 4. 32. That he ſhall receive from him, Pardon of Sin, Peace with God, the Adoption of a Son, all Grace to ſerve him, freedom from Condemnation, and an Inheritance among thoſe that are Sanctify'd. And withal aſſures him that if he neglect or reject this Offer and Invitation, he will not only loſe all this Felicity, but add to his Guilt, and incur the ſorer Condemnation for ſlighting ſo great Salvation.

5. *THE* Spirit *comes into the Soul, together with the propoſals, and brings the Union about.* While the treaty is outwardly managing, He applies himſelf inwardly, and makes it to become effectual. And here,

(1.) *HE leaves a clear* Illumination *on the Underſtanding, wholly to diſcern the Emptineſs of every other Object, and the glorious Excellency of* Chriſt. This ſaving Union begins with Light. The Eyes of the Underſtanding are opened, and the Diſcoveries that are now made are ſurprizing, *Eph.* 1. 18, 19. He ſees now the Vanity of every thing elſe, which he ſometimes thought of worth; and the Beauty of Chriſt, wherewithal he is ſurprized; and by vertue of this, he gives in a true Verdict, his judgment being rectifyed; and this is the Renovation in the image of his mind, *Eph* 4. 23.

(2.) *HEREWITHAL He* plants *all his ſaving Graces in the Soul.* That indeed is the New Creature, for it is *renewed in righteouſneſs, and true holineſs, Eph.* 4. 24. This is that which prepares the Soul to give Chriſt entertainment in it; for ſo long as that is unſanctifyed, or unregenerate, it can be no Habitation for the holy One of Iſrael to take up his abode in, it being nothing elſe but a hovel of impurity; yea, this is that that is called the *forming of Chriſt in us*, Gal. 4. 19. For we muſt not think that the Perſon of Chriſt individually dwells in us, as it doth in his own humanity, but he forms his likeneſs in us, by infuſing of all renewing Grace into us. And this is that which impowers us for the ſubſequents acts in which this Union is compleated. For till the body of ſaving Grace be formed in us, we cannot put forth any act of Grace.

(3.) *TOGETHER with this, he draws forth the* Act *of the Soul, in which renouncing his league with other objects, he conſents to, believes in, and ſo imbraceth Chriſt as his own.* And this is the uniting act on our part, though wrought by the efficacy of the Spirit of God. He had put in a principle of faith before, and now he draws it out and aſſiſts it. Now the man caſts off his former truſt on his Idols. He was glued to them, Hoſ. 4. 17. *Ephraim is joined to Idols:* But now he will have nothing more to do with them, Chap. 14. 5. *Ephraim ſhall ſay, What have I to do any more with idols.* Now he takes Chriſt as offered, receives him, according to the terms of the Treaty held with him. And it is with, and in his whole Soul that he thus entertains him. He takes Chriſt for his own, and reſigns himſelf up freely to Chriſt to be his. And this is that Covenant of Eſpouſal mentioned, *Hoſ.* 2. 18, 19.

(4.) *HEREWITH the Spirit takes up his* abode *in the Man; and having ratifyed the Union, eſtabliſheth it unalterably.* It is therefore called an Everlaſting Covenant, *Iſa.* 55. 3. And

not

not to be broken; their whole Life is now hid in him, yea, he is their life, *Col.* 3. 3, 4. His Spirit manageth them, his Grace invigorates them, his Image ſhines forth by them, they derive all their ſtrength from him, and they return it all to him; they that touch them to hurt them, touch him, and he feels and reſents it; and they that diſhonour him, wound them, and they cannot bear it; ſuch is the Union between them. Thus are we brought into a participation in the Redemption of Chriſt, and all the precious benefits flowing from it.

USE. I. *LEARN hence the Dignity and Safety of all true* Believers. Both of theſe neceſſarily flow from this Union. Needs muſt it be a ſuperlative Honour for any Creature, much more ſinful duſt and aſhes, to be advanced to ſo near a Conjunction with the Ever-bleſſed and Eternal Son. It was an Honour that he put upon our Nature, to aſſume it into his Perſon; but it an high perſonal Honour to us, that he will advance us to be Members of his Body, to be of his Fleſh and Bones, that he will put his Name upon us, and dwell in us. And how ſecure muſt the eſtate of every ſuch Soul be? *If Chriſt live, he muſt live alſo*; if Chriſt be in Glory, ſo ſhall he too; nor can all the Powers of Earth and Hell ever be able to undermine that Man's happineſs, who is thus built upon this Rock of Ages.

USE. II. HENCE, *Let this be a powerful Perſuaſive to Young and Old, to come and believe on Chriſt.* Behold he invites you in the Goſpel, and by his Ambaſſadors; and he is ſtriving with you by his Spirit. He ſtands at the Door and knocks, open to, and let him in, yield to the framing hand of the Bleſſed Spirit. Reſiſt him not, quench him not, receive him, and he is yours; turn all your other Lovers out of doors, that you may be for him and no other; ſo ſhall the King of Glory come into you, and take up his Everlaſting abode in you; ſo ſhall that knot be tied, that Union be made between him and you, which ſhall abide to, and through Eternity; through which ſhall derive to you all thoſe Bleſſings which ſhall make you happy through Time and Forever. Take him now in his moſt earneſt Offer, leaſt if you refuſe him, you rue it when it is too late.

[OCTOBER 26. 1697.]

SERMON *CXV.*

QUESTION XXXI.

WHAT is Effectual Calling?

ANSWER.

EFFECTUAL Calling is a Work of GOD's Holy Spirit, whereby Convincing us of our Sin and Miſery, and Enlightning our Minds in the knowledge of CHRIST, and Renewing our Wills; He doth perſwade and enable us to Embrace JESUS CHRIST, freely offered to us in the Goſpel.

THE firſt great thing that is done for and in us in the Work of Application, is the Uniting of us to Chriſt; of which we took a brief Account under the former Queſtion. And being then told that it is done in *Effectual Calling*; it follows that we now conſider of this, in which ſo glorious an effect is produced. A Deſcription whereof lies before us, and may now be a little explained.

THAT we may not be miſtaken in the matter under Conſideration, let us firſt take an Account of the Name here given it, and what is intended in it. It is named, *Effectual Calling*. *Calling*, becauſe it is a Voice of God ſpeaking to the Soul of a Sinner, inviting and alluring of him to come over to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and accept of him, by believing in him. Giving us to underſtand, that the Spirit of God in the work of Application, treats with men as reaſonable Creatures, and Cauſes by counſel; not carrying them by violent compulſion, but winning them by Arguments, by which they are *made willing in the day of his power*, Pſal. 110. 3. So it is expreſt, Pſal. 27. 8. *When thou ſadſt, Seek ye my face, my heart ſaid unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I ſeek.* *Effectual*, becauſe it always gains the Sinner to accept of, and cloſe in with it; and ſo to diſtinguiſh it from other Callings, which are not Effectual. There is an outward and general Call which is given to all that come within the ſound of the Goſpel. For the Commiſſion which Chriſt hath given to his Ambaſſadors, who come in his Name, obligeth them to make offers of him, and Salvation by him to all without exception, and earneſtly to invite them to come over to him, and believe in him, Mar. 16. 15. *And he ſaid unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the goſpel to every creature.* Hence, Iſai. 55. 1. *Ho every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price.* Rev. 22. 17. *And the Spirit and the Bride ſay, Come. And let him that heareth, ſay, Come. And let him that is athirſt, Come. And whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely.* But how many are there who regard not this Call in the leaſt? Who ſtop their ears, and turn their backs upon it. It is Chriſt's complaint, Joh. 5. 40. *And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.* Mat. 23. 37. *O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, thou that killeſt the Prophets, & ſtoneſt them which are ſent unto thee, how often would*

I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. There is alſo an outward Call, by which men are in a common work, ſo far enlightned, and wrought upon, as to give external entertainment to the Goſpel, and make a profeſſion of Faith and Repentance, and ſo become members of a viſible Church, and enjoy the external priviledges of it; but yet their hearts were never throughly changed, nor they broken off from their ſins. And of this Vocation Chriſt ſpeaketh, Mat. 22.14. *For many are called, but few are choſen.* Theſe Callings therefore are ineffectual. This Calling is the ſame which is ſometimes called Converſion, ſometimes Regeneration, or the New-birth. Some alſo make it the ſame with Sanctification, though others diſtinguiſh between them; and ſo doth our Catechiſm, which I ſhall follow. Only let us remember, that the habits of Sanctification, are wrought in Effectual Vocation, which are afterwards carried on in progreſſive Holineſs. So that we find it rooted here, though it may admit of a diſtinct Diſcourſe by its ſelf. Effectual Calling comprizeth in it, the whole work of Converſion, in which a Sinner is changed and turned; and made to comply with the Goſpel call, which invites him to Faith and Repentance. But Divines do generally reſtrain it to *the working of ſaving Faith in us, whereby we accept of Chriſt as propoſed to us, and adventure our ſelves upon him for Salvation*; upon which the forementioned Union is made. And thus doth our Catechiſm. And ſo our following Diſcourſe muſt be reſtrained to this ultimately; though it is neceſſary to conſider the things which belong to it in common with Repentance, from which Faith is inſeperable.

HERE then, let us obſerve, That as in Converſion; ſo in Effectual Vocation, there are two things that muſt be diſtinctly conſidered.

1. *THERE is ſomething* habitualy *wrought in the man whereby he is capacitated, and diſpoſed to believe in Chriſt.* And this is wrought in him together with all the other habits of ſaving Graces, and is that which is in the Scriptures called, the New Creature, 2 *Cor.* 5.17. And this is uſually called *paſſive Converſion*; the reaſon whereof will be anon conſidered.

2. *THERE is ſomething done* actually *by the man in the exerting of this power ſo created in him, in which he applies theſe graces or powers in him, to their Objects, and exerciſeth them; and particularly his Faith, in cloſing with, and imbracing of Jeſus Chriſt exhibited in the promiſe; and is in the Goſpel called* believing. It is the former of theſe that our Catechiſm in the Paragraph before us peculiarly ſpeaks to, though as introductory to the latter; in which Effectual Vocation is compleated: And may therefore be particularly ſpoken unto. For although it will be too nice, to diſpute whether Elect Infants, dying in their Infancy, do, before they dye, actually believe in Chriſt: tho', as to their capacity of having the habits of ſaving Grace wrought in them, there is no queſtion to thoſe that allow them to have in them naturally the habit of original ſin: yet, as to thoſe who have the uſe of reaſon, and are called under the Goſpel diſpenſation, it is not to be denied, but their Vocation determines in their actual exerting of Faith in Chriſt. Hence, theſe are expreſſed togerher, *Mar.* 16.15,16. I ſhall then, firſt ſpeak ſomething to the former in purſuit of the Anſwer before us: And then add a few words to the latter as conſequent on it.

AS to the former, viz. *The producing of the habit of Faith in us*, we may obſerve,

I. *THE* Author *or* Efficient *of it*; *the* Spirit *of God.* It is he alone that doth this Work on the Soul. We obſerved under the former in what reſpect the Work of Application is aſcribed to him. Now this Effectual Vocation properly belongs to the Application; and ſo it cannot be aſcribed to any other Author but him, neither in whole nor part. Regeneration therefore in which this is wrought, is hither reſtrained, Joh. 1. 13. *Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* And for that reaſon ſuch are ſaid to be *born of the Spirit*, Chap. 3. 6. That he doth make uſe of the Word in this is certain. Hence that, Jam. 1. 18. *Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth.* And 1 Pet. 1. 23. *Being born again, not of corruptible ſeed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever.* Nor yet are Goſpel-Miniſters excluded from being ſerviceable in their place towards the Converſion and Salvation of Sinners. As, 1 Cor. 4. 15. *For though ye have ten thouſand inſtructers in Chriſt, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Chriſt Jeſus I have begot ten you through the goſpel.* Nor are men themſelves to neglect, but be found in the uſe of means; elſe Ordinances were appointed in vain. We therefore read, Rom. 10. 14. *How ſhall they call on him in whom they have not believed, and how ſhall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how ſhall they hear without a preacher.* But yet, the efficiency by which this habit is wrought in the Soul, belongs alone to the Spirit of God. For,

1. *THE* act *of Faith doth neceſſarily ſuppoſe the* habit *of it, or the power of believing.* All Acts require a power ſuitable and ſufficient for them; nor can any Agent go beyond its ability: no effect can exceed the vertue of its cauſe: ſo that a Man muſt have Faith in order to his exerting it. It belongs therefore to the Character of *wicked Men*, not to have Faith, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 2.

2. *THIS habit of Faith, or power of Believing, is one of the Graces which are wrought in* Converſion. And hence *muſt have the ſame Author with the reſt.* It is therefore enumerated among the Works of the Spirit, *Gal.* 5. 22. And on this account it is particularly aſcribed to God as his *Gift*, *Eph.* 2. 8. Who is elſewhere called, *The God of all Grace*, 1 Pet. 5. 10.

3. *NO Man in his natural ſtate hath any* Seeds *of this Faith in him.* He is indeed a Subject capable of receiving the Graces of the Spirit, and that is all the diſpoſition in him towards Faith. God is able to convert him, and make a Believer of him, but then he muſt create and infuſe it into him. There is an activePrinciple in him,which may be wrought upon and excited, ſo as to receive the habits of humane Sciences, and common Morality; but there is nothing more than a paſſivePower to receive theſe ſupernatural habits of ſaving Grace. When the Spirit comes to quicken them, he finds them dead, *Eph.* 2. 1. Believing is called *coming to Chriſt*; and ſo, a Power of coming is the habit of Faith, but no natural Man hath it, till God works it in him,*John* 6.44. This Faith is *not of ourſelves*, Eph. 2. 8.

4. HENCE,*There is no*Co-operation *of the man with the Spirit in the producing of the habit of Faith in him.* He is a Subject,but not an Agent. He contributes nothing at all to it, but it is wholly put into him by another hand. It is a *creating Work*,and that belongs to God alone, *Eph.*2.10. It is a*Reſurrection*,and that belongs intirely to the Divine Omnipotency,*Eph.*1.19. It is a *Regeneration*, and none ever helped to beget himſelf, yea, being a *ſpiritual Regeneration*, none but the Spirit can effect it. 1 *Pet.* 1. 3.

5. *THE* Means *themſelves have no Efficiency in the Production of this habit by moral ſuaſion.* Not but that the Spirit uſeth the Means in order to his bringing about this Work in us. *Ezekiel* was to propheſy in order to the dry Bones living, *Ezek.* 37. 9, 10. The means are properly accommodated to work on Man as a moral Agent, rationally, by evidence or demonſtration, by convictions, awakenings, encouragements, and the Spirit comes with them as he ſees meet, and gives them ſuch an operation: But either their operation is common, and that can at moſt be but preparatory; or it is ſaving, and then it ſuppoſeth this habit in them. Moral ſuaſion can do only on a Subject capable. Come to the grave of a dead Man, and make never ſo grave an Oration to him, tell him what a miſerable condition a ſtate of Death is, and what benefits accompany the living, and ſo beg of him to riſe and live; and what will this do? There muſt be Faith, to receive Chriſt, e're the endeavours to perſuade Men produce the act of believing on him,and this is an operation more then meerly ethical or moral.

II. *THE general* Nature *of it*; *it is a* Work *of the* Spirit. It is to be obſerved, that when Divines ſpeak of the things done for us by the Spirit of God in Application, they generally diſtinguiſh between Acts and Works; hence they call Juſtification and Adoption, *Acts* of the Spirit, whereas they call Effectual Vocation, Sanctification, and Glorification, *Works*: And the reaſon of this diſtinction is, to point at the difference there is, between the one and the other: For though each equally proceed from Him as the Author,and are equally applied by him to the Elect as the Subjects, yea, and one as well as the other makes a change on the Subject to which they are applied,yet there is a double difference between them, which is aimed at in this.

1. *THE former is done at* once, *whereas the latter is carried on by* degrees. A Work in our common acceptation, doth not conſiſt of one ſingleAct, but many repeated ones,which go together to put that denomination on it. And this may be conſidered either with reſpect to the Agent, or to the Thing it ſelf which is done. NowJuſtification &Adoption are done at once. When God declares the perſon righteous, his Juſtification is intire; and when God once puts any into the number of his Children,their Adoption abides, and is never renewed again. Whereas in the other, there are either many diſtinct things contained, as in Effectual Calling: for, though the new nature, or the whole body of ſaving Graces are produced in an Infant, yet, if we conſider the thing intirely, or all that goes into this affair, it hath many parts in it; and there is uſually a gradual proceeding of the Spirit of God in order to it: or elſe, they are not begun and perfected at once, but carried on to more and more perfection, in ſucceſſion of time, as in Sanctification and Glorification. 2 Pet. 3. 18. *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.* 1 Cor. 13. 12. *For now we ſee through a glaſs darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part, but then ſhall I know even as I am known.*

2. *THE former make only a* relative *change on the perſon, but the latter make a* real *change in his very nature.* So that in the one there is only a change of the eſtate, in the other of the nature. And ſo that is better expreſt by an act; in which the relation is made,and the ſtate altered; and the other by a work, whichleavesſomethingbehind it,which makes a man another manner of perſon than he was before. Such is this work of EffectualCalling, becauſe it leaves the man wholly changed from what it found him, when it was to be wro't in him. Which will evidently appear in the diſtinct view of it. Hence,

III. *THE* ſpecial Nature *of this Work, deſcribed by the things that are particularly done, in the bringing of it about.* In the whole whereof we may make this general remark, viz. *That the Spirit of God, in the Calling of a Sinner home to Chriſt, doth not deal with him, as with a ſtock or ſtone, but as a reaſonableCreature; and accordingly applies himſelf to him, and leaves ſuch impreſſions upon him, as are ſuited to ſuch an Agent; and uſeth ſuch means as are agreeable to the nature of it.* Accordingly we are here told,

1. *WHAT is the* aim *or* deſign *of Effectual Calling*, viz. *to bring the man to embrace Jeſus Chriſt, with a true Faith in him.* That he cloſe

cloſe in with him for Life and Salvation, according to the tenor of the Goſpel Covenant, which is by cordially believing on him.

2. *WHAT is done by the* Spirit *of God in the bringing of this about.*

1. *EXTERNALLY:* viz. *He offers* Chriſt *in the Goſpel.* Under which is comprehended all the Treaty that is uſed with men, in and by the means of Grace. In which he ſhews men their need of Chriſt, his ſufficiency, the way in which they may come by an intereſt in him, and all the Arguments uſed with Sinners to perſwade them to accept of him.

2. *INTERNALLY:* In which he more peculiarly applies himſelf to, and deals with the two ſuperiour faculties of the Soul, the *Underſtanding* and *Will*, to gain the aſſent of the one, and conſent of the other; to win the one to approve of, the other to elect Jeſus Chriſt, for the Object of his truſt and confidence.

(1.) *HE applies himſelf to the* Underſtanding, *and accordingly ſuits himſelf to it.* And that,

[1.] *BY way of* Conviction. And there are two things which this is directed to, viz. *Sin* and *Miſery*; which points to the ſtate which the apoſtaſy brought men into; of which we have formerly conſidered; and through all the ſtages whereof, the Spirit leads the man, and affects him therewithal. And this is that which by many is called *Preparatory Work*, becauſe by it the man is brought to ſee his need of Chriſt, to be a Saviour to him. And under it are comprized all things which Divines aſſign to the Souls preparation for Chriſt.

[2.] *BY way of ſaving* Illumination. He enlightens it, &c. in which Chriſt is diſcovered to him as a ſuitable & all-ſufficient Saviour. So that in it he is led into a ſweet diſcovery of the whole Work of Redemption. Of which alſo we have had an account. And this is called the *renewing* of the *Underſtanding.*

(2.) *HE applies himſelf to the* Will, *by a ſaving Change made on it; in which it is alſo renewed, by ſubduing the old habits & diſpoſitions that were in it; and putting of gracious ones in the room of them.* Which yet at firſt is done but in part.

3. *WHAT is the* effect *wrought in the man by thoſe Operations.* We are perſwaded and enabled to embrace Jeſus Chriſt: i. e. *the whole Soul is put into a poſture and readineſs for the exerting of the act of Faith, which follows thereupon.* For there is now a power and inclination in him thus to do. Theſe are the principal heads of this Work, which call for a more particular inſpection; only in order thereto, to prevent miſtakes, and doing wrong to gracious Souls, let two things be premiſed,

1. *THAT although, the thing that is wrought by the Spirit in this Work, is* one *& the* ſame *in all, yet he uſeth an arbitrary liberty in the Circumſtances of the Work.* He doth by one and the ſame act introduce into the Soul that Principle which is called the New-Creature; one principal member whereof is Faith. But yet in his dealings with the Souls of men about it, he acts not alike in all. And as to the Experiences of gracious Souls, they are various on this account. Nor is the method to be limited to any one's particular obſervation in himſelf. We read, Joh. 3. 8. *The wind bloweth where it liſteth, and thou hearеſt the ſound thereof, but canſt not tell whence it cometh, and whether it goeth; ſo is every one that is born of the Spirit.* In ſome he makes ſhorter work by the Means, others he holds longer under Awakenings, Terrors, &c. Some are drawn to Chriſt more gently, others more terribly; and all this according as he pleaſeth. And it will be a great injury to the Souls we are concerned with, if we be rigid here.

2. *THAT there are many debates among the Orthodox, about* Preparatory Work. Whether there be any ſuch Work; and if there be, whether it be a common or ſaving Work; or whether there be any ſaving diſpoſitions put into the Soul before Faith. But I hope theſe Controverſies are for the moſt part, rather about the terms, than the thing. Give me leave then here to offer a few things to Conſideration, which may poſſibly be helpful to reconcile thoſe differences, and give a right ſtate of the Affair.

(1.) *ALL the Orthodox conſent, that there muſt be a* new power *put into the man, in order to his believing in Chriſt.* That a man can no more of himſelf come up to the terms of the New-Covenant, then keep the law of the firſt Covenant. They that deny this, are unacquainted with the efficacy of the Apoſtaſy, or energy of *Original Sin* in man. Philoſophy tells us, that life-Actions requires life in the Agent. And ſpiritual Actions muſt derive from a ſpiritual Life; gracious Actions muſt flow from Grace. Call this an habit, or a vertue, or a principle; it muſt be an ability to do theſe things, which it had not naturally, but muſt be given it. Hence that, Gal. 5. 25. *If we live in the Spirit, let us alſo walk in the Spirit.* And, Mat. 7. 18. *A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit: neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.*

(2.) *THAT this power or ability, can be produced by no other, but the* Spirit *of God.* And that becauſe it requires Omnipotency, to the producing it; and there is none Almighty but he. None but he that could make a World, bring light out of darkneſs, raiſe the dead, can do this. All of which are in Scripture made the ſhadows and reſemblances of it. And indeed the Spirit of God in thoſe Works, finds only impotency in the ſubject, but no reſiſtance; whereas here he meets with, not only a total debility in the creature to join with him in it, but alſo a malignant oppoſition to it; there being nothing which the heart of man is more averſe to, then coming to Chriſt, and believing in him: that being every man's diſpoſition in himſelf, Joh. 5. 40. *And ye will not come to me that ye might have life.*

(3.) *THAT the Spirit of God in order to the producing of this, uſeth* means *with Sinners.* This hath already been intimated, and may be afterwards more particularly inquired into. And it is certain, that theſe means are not only uſed with the Called, to exciteFaith in them to its operation, but alſo for the begetting of Faith in the Elect; as in the Scripture before inſtanced. And what doth this ſay, but that together with the preaching of the Goſpel, and the Goſpel preached, the Spirit comes, and applies efficaciouſly to the Soul, whereby the means become effectual to Regeneration.

(4.) *THAT in and with theſe means, he applies himſelf to men as* reaſonableCreatures. When we ſay men are paſſive in Regeneration, we do not intend, that they are treated as brutes, that have no underſtanding: but as men that can rationally entertain the literal notions of things preſented to them, and receive conviction of the truth & reaſon of theſe things, and acting as reaſonable creatures hereupon. Though yet, the depravation of their natures hath diſabled them from uſing theſe powers graciouſly. And were it not ſo, to what end is the Goſpel written, ſo as to be accommodated for this purpoſe? or why are God's Miniſters ſent, to treat with unregenerate ſinners about it, 2 Cor. 5.20. *Now then we are ambaſſadours for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us; we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled to God.*

(5.) *THE Spirit of God addreſſeth himſelf in thoſe means, to* others, *beſides thoſe whom he effectually calleth.* He knows who are his, but Miniſters know not, and ſo are to plead hard with all; and the Spirit with them, makes many offers to ſuch Souls; and ſo they are ſaid to reſiſt and quench the Spirit: Though often ſuch have contritions, compunctions, convictions, &c. which yet never iſſue in the new-birth. Mat. 13. 20. *But he that received ſeed into ſtony places, the ſame is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it.* Heb. 6. 4, 5. *Who were once enlightened, and have taſted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the holy Ghoſt. And have taſted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come.*

(6.) *BECAUSE the Spirit doth the* ſame things *in the Elect, which in themſelves & alone, are common, and to be found in others: Hence* in this reſpect Preparatory Work is by ſome counted common, even in the Elect. And who knows, but that he may begin with ſuch things as theſe, and they may ſuppreſs and get over them many a time, before he comes indeed to Convert them, or before he infuſeth Grace into them.

(7.) *IF by* Preparatory Work *we underſtand, the preparing and diſpoſing the Perſon for actual Believing, it is doubtleſs a ſaving Work.* As it is wrought in none but the Elect, ſo it is itſelf a paſſive Converſion, or the new-Creation in the Soul. It is the very *paſſing from death to life,* 1 Joh. 3. 14. which is always in the Adult, followed with actual believing: it being done for this very end and purpoſe; and queſtionleſs, it puts forth ſome act as ſoon as produced, not always ſo diſcernable by the Believer.

(8.) HENCE, *Though there may be ſaving Qualifications in the Soul, before the* act *of Faith be diſcerned, yet there are none before the* habit *of Faith is wrought.* This is in *order of Nature* before the other, that being an effect of this. And it is very certain, that all ſaving Qualifications are at once infuſed into the man, upon the great Work wrought by the Spirit in him, when he forms Chriſt in him, and endows him with the new Nature.

[NOVEMBER 23. 1697.]

SERMON *CXVI.*

WE have taken a ſummary Account of the Work of *Effectual Calling*, or *Paſſive Converſion*, in which the Soul is put into a poſture, for the Embracing of Chriſt with a ſaving Faith. We have alſo taken Notice of the ſeveral things that are done by the Spirit in the bringing of this about, whether it be in a common and preparatory, or in a ſaving Work. It now follows that we make a more particular enquiry into theſe things; and conſider what is done in each of them, and how this bleſſed effect is produced by them. And here,

I. *THERE is ſomething that is done* Externally, *and in common to them that are effectually called, and them that are never ſo, who yet are under the treaty of Peace*; and that is, *He offers Chriſt to them in the Goſpel.* He opens to them the way of Life, and makes overtures with them about it. Here two or three things may be obſerved,

1. *THAT the* Goſpel *is a medium made uſe of by God, for the bringing of Sinners to Faith in Chriſt, and ſo to Salvation.* For this reaſon we have that encomium put upon it, Rom. 1. 16. *For I am not aſhamed of the goſpel of Chriſt: for it is the power of God unto ſalvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew firſt, and alſo to the Greek.* Becauſe the power of God inſinuates itſelf in and with it, into the Souls of all thoſe that are made Believers by it. By the Goſpel we are to underſtand, the *whole diſcovery of the way in which fallen man may come to obtain Salvation by Chriſt; and all the means that are uſed by it to bring this about.* Which, what they are, will follow to be taken notice of. And here let us conſider,

(1.) *THAT God in treating with Sinners, deals with them as* reaſonable Creatures: *i. e. He applies himſelf to thoſe* Faculties *which he hath put into them, whereby they may be led as Cauſes by Counſel in their accepting of Chriſt.* It is true, he doth that in them by an immediate and creating efficacy, which reſtores to them a gracious power of ſo doing; but this is done while he is outwardly treating them with

with the means, and inwardly moving upon their minds and Consciences. He therefore offers that to them, which may convince their reason, and move upon their affections; which is the way in which man is rationally drawn to the exerting of humane actions. And on this account he is said to *perswade men.* Gen. 9. 26. *God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem.* See, 2 Cor 5. 11. *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we perswade men.*

(2.) *THAT* hence, *Faith in Christ must be built upon the* Knowledge *of him.* If ever a Sinner be perswaded to venture himself upon Christ for Life, it must be upon a discovery that is made to and in him, and that Christ is such an object as is every way fit for him so to do. The Act of the Will cannot be called an humane Act, any further then as it follows the dictates and directions of the Understanding. Faith indeed is a Confidence, but it is ever built upon Knowledge; so that till there be a discovery made of Christ to the Man, by which he apprehends him to be able to save him to the uttermost, he will not cast himself upon him for Eternity. *Paul* therefore hath such an expression, 2 Tim. 1. 12. *For I know whom I have believed, and I am perswaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.*

(3.) *THAT this Knowledge must be by* Revelation. There are but two ways in which Men can come by the Knowlege of any thing; viz. by the Improvement of natural Reason, or by Revelation from God; the former can extend no further then to such Rules or Principles as are rooted in the nature of things, and there to be discerned by the light of nature; such therefore as have no rooting there, but depend upon the Divine Pleasure, can be no otherwise known, than as God sees meet to declare them; and such is the Knowledge of Christ, both as to his Person, Natures, and Offices. *Paul* therefore ascribes this Knowledge of his to this fountain, *Gal* 1. 15. Hence that, 1 Cor. 2. 13. *Which things also we speak, not in the words which mans wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*

(4.) *THAT God hath chosen the Gospel to be the* Instrument *in and by which this Revelation is made.* If we speak of the matter of the Gospel, that is the Revelation itself, it being nothing else but those Truths wherein fallen Man's Religion is contained. But if we consider the Gospel as it is written and published in the Scripture, so it is an Instrument of this Revelation, and this is of God's appointment. Hence that, 2 Tim. 1. 10. *But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light, through the Gospel.* So that in and by it, God proclaims to Men the glad tidings of Peace. There were those that were immediately inspired to record these things, and Christ hath appointed an order of Men to preach them to Men, but it is the Gospel or Word of God that is to be preached, 2 *Tim.* 4. 2, 3, 16, 17.

(5.) HENCE ordinarily, *There are none called, but those to whom the Gospel is brought, in the external Dispensation of it, i. e.* either the *written Word of God*, or the *publick Preaching of it.* For although God's Power is not to be called into Question, yet if he hath seen meet to restrain the exerting of it to such a way, his declared Will ought to set us down; nor can we have any other Rule to judge by. The Apostle therefore speaking of this matter, declares himself plumply, *Rom.* 10 14, 15. Nor can we name that People in the World, that ever received the Knowledge of Christ in any other Way.

(6.) *THAT God brings not the* Gospel *ordinarily, to any People, but where there are some to be Effectually Called by it.* It cannot be instanced, where the Gospel offer was ever made to Men, meerly for Condemnation. God knows who are his, according to the Purpose of his Grace, before they are so called; where they live, and accordingly orders, either the Gospel to come to them, or them to come to it: And his Providence hath been very remarkable on this account. We are told, what is the direct end of it, *Act.* 26. 18. It is therefore for the sake of such whom he intends it to have this efficacy upon, that he over-rules the dispensations of it.

2. *THAT in the Gospel, God makes Offers of* Christ, *and* Salvation *by him, to all that it comes unto.* Here let us observe,

(1.) *THAT God sends the Gospel to men, by* Men, *whom he employs for that end.* The Gospel is presented to men in the way of an Embassy, and God hath made choice of men like our selves to be the Embassadors of it. This title *Paul* assumes to himself and the other Gospel Ministers, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. And herein he both puts a great honour upon those whom he so employs; *Paul* mentions it as so; *Eph.* 3. 8. and also greatly favours men, in that he sends to them by such, who may say to them as *Elihu* to *Job*, Job 33. 6, 7. *Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am formed out of the clay. Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee.* God might have employed *Angels*, and they would have gloried in it, as an high honour put upon them. But he hath chosen this way, and it is for his own Glory too. 2 Cor. 4. 7. *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*

(2.) *THAT this Errand is to* publish the glad tidings of Peace, *and invite men to accept of it.* That therefore is used as a periphrasis of the Gospel Ministry, Isai. 52. 7. *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that published peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!* The Gospel is called, the *Gospel of Peace*, because it is an Instrument of making Reconciliation & Peace between God and man. Sin hath

had made them enemies, but Chriſt came to make up the breach, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. And having removed that out of the way which obſtructed this Peace, now he ſends this Meſſage to men, and the Errand is, not only to declare that there is a way opened to it, but to uſe all utmoſt entreaties with Sinners to accept of and imbrace it, *ver.* 20.

(3.) *THAT their Commiſſion is to* all, *that come within the hearing of them, without reſtriction.* Remember that their Errand is to declare that there is Salvation to be had by Chriſt for Sinners, who are under Condemnation; to make offers of it to men, to invite them ſeriouſly to accept of it, and to warn them on their peril, that they do not reject it. Now in all this they are to act according to their Commiſſion and Charge, and neither to go beyond, nor come ſhort of it. As to the ſecret purpoſes of God, they are not acquainted with, nor can, nor may they meddle with them. But as to God's revealed will, they muſt declare that. Now the Charge which Chriſt gave his Diſciples, which alſo extends to all the Goſpel Miniſters, in their ſtation, it comprehends all that they preach to, without exception. See, *Mat.* 28. 19. *Mar.* 16. 15. They are to tell every one, that there is Chriſt a Saviour who came into the World to ſave Sinners; that there are no Sinners but may be ſaved by him, if they accept of and come in to him for it. That they come in his Name, and have Orders to beſpeak them, and tell every one of them, that Chriſt by them, asks their Conſent, and offers all his Grace and Salvation to them: That nothing can hinder their being ſaved by him, but only their wilful putting him away from them. Hence the general terms that are uſed in this invitation, *Iſai.* 55. 1. *Rev.* 22. 17.

3. *THAT in the Goſpel theſe Offers are made upon* Terms, *which are therein opened.* There is not only an offer made, but alſo a treaty propoſed in the Goſpel unto Sinners. And here,

(1.) *THERE is not only* Salvation *to be had by Chriſt, but there is alſo a* way *appointed by God, in which it is to be had.* God hath not only ordained Men to be ſaved, but hath likewiſe determined how they ſhall ſo be, and this is as firmly fixed as the other. And notwithſtanding the abſolute certainly that ſome ſhall be ſaved, it is true, that none ſhall be ſaved in any other way but this. We are therefore told of *the way of Peace*, Rom. 3. 17. And Chriſt gave order to his Diſciples to preach the Goſpel on theſe terms, Mar. 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not ſhall be damned.* If ever God brings any to eternal Life, it ſhall be through the way in which he hath deſigned it. Hence that, Tit. 3. 5. *Not by works of righteouſneſs which we have done, but according to his mercy he ſaved us, by the waſhing of regeneration, and renewing of the holy Ghoſt.*

(2.) *IN this way there is ſomething to be* complied with *by them that will be ſaved.* Man is not carried in this way as a ſenſeleſs, or a meerly ſenſitive Creature, but as a rational Agent: And as he is endued with an humane will, capable of making its own election, ſo God applies himſelf to it accordingly. Tho' it is *he that draws us*, yet *we muſt run after him*, Cant. 1. 4. As God will ſave no man againſt his will, ſo he will lead no man in the way of it, by a forcible compulſion, but by a ſpontaneous, or voluntary conſent. Hence that, Pſal. 110. 3. *Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holineſs from the womb of the morning: thou haſt the dew of thy youth.* They ſhall chuſe the good, and refuſe the evil.

(3.) *THAT men may comply with this way as reaſonable Creatures, the terms of it muſt be* opened *to them.* An humane choice, though it be an act of the will, yet to render it humane, it muſt be guided by the practical underſtanding: nor can it otherwiſe be denominated an election. That therefore men may be capable of making ſuch a choice, they muſt be acquainted with, that ſo they may have the knowlege of that about which it is to be made. Hence we have that expreſſion, Pſal. 9. 10. *And they that know thy name, will put their truſt in thee.* The man muſt apprehend the thing to be good, in order to his cloſing with it; whereas, that which he knows nothing of, he can neither determine to be good nor evil, and ſo cannot exert an act of his will about it. That therefore is reckoned as no ſmall part of the natural man's miſery, Rom. 3. 17. *And the way of peace have they not known.*

(4.) *FOR this end, God in the Goſpel, propoſeth theſe terms in the way of a* Covenant. The Goſpel treaty is frequently in the Scriptures, called a Covenant; and the reaſon is, becauſe in it God deals with men in a way analogous to a Covenant among men. God therefore, together with making offers of eternal Life by Chriſt, declares to men the way in which it is to be had. And in the Goſpel he ſhews to them what is required of them if ever they hope to be ſaved, and would not be aſhamed of, or have thoſe hopes to periſh. Hence that, Joh. 3. 36. *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlaſting life: and he that believeth not on the Son, ſhall not ſee life: but the wrath of God abideth on him.* And in this regard it is, that the Promiſes of the New Covenant are connected with thoſe Precepts which require a conformity to them, in order to our partaking of the good promiſed; as is every where to be obſerved.

4. *THAT in the* Goſpel, *God uſeth all means ſuitable to perſwade men to accept of this Offer on theſe terms.* He not only propoſeth the terms, but he urgeth them with earneſtneſs, and accommodates the pleas uſed to move upon them. And here,

(1.) *THE* natural man *knows not the need he hath of Chriſt or Salvation by him.* Man under the power of Unregeneracy, is ignorant of his own miſery. He is *poor, and wretched, & blind,* &c. and knows it not. He thinks, &c, Rev. 3. 17.

Becauſe

Becauſe thou ſayeſt, I am rich, and increaſed with goods, and have need of nothing: and knoweſt not that thou art wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked. He labours under that grievous error, which makes him miſ-call good, evil, and evil, good; and being in a deep ſleep of ſecurity, he can hear of Chriſt, and his glorious Excellency, and the Salvation that he is Author of, and not at all concern himſelf about it. Let thoſe that need it, ſeek it, as for him, he hopes to do well without it. Our Saviour Chriſt tells us, Mat. 9. 12. *They that be whole need not a phyſician, but they that be ſick.* And ſuch an one is he: and for that reaſon he concerns not himſelf to ſeek an intereſt in this precious Saviour, but he may carry his Salvation to whom he pleaſeth for him.

(2.) NAY, *There is in him a* natural averſeneſs *to compliance with the way of Salvation by Chriſt.* Not only doth he not know his need of it, but the terms or propoſals of it are grievous to him. The way of life opened in the Goſpel, being ſuited on purpoſe for the exaltation of the free Grace of God, is directly croſs to the inclinations of the proud nature in fallen man: ſo that the very offers of it do ſtir up this malignity to give oppoſition hereto. We are told, Rom. 8. 7. *Becauſe the carnal mind is enmity againſt God: for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* And by that law we may underſtand, the *Rule of Life which is revealed to fallen man.* And indeed, none but an humbled Soul can ever comport with it. Man would have a righteouſneſs of his own, and cannot tell how to ſtoop to go to Chriſt to be covered under his. He muſt find and know himſelf miſerable indeed, before he will give his conſent to this. How was it with the Jews, Rom. 9. 31, 32. *But Iſrael, which followed after the law of righteouſneſs, hath not attained to the law of righteouſneſs. Wherefore? Becauſe they ſought it, not by faith, but as it were by the Works of the law: for they ſtumbled at that ſtumbling ſtone.*

(3.) HENCE *he muſt be* perſuaded *to this in order to his compliance.* And there muſt be ſtrong perſuaſions uſed, to prevail with one who hath no inclination to, but hath a deeply rooted averſion and prejudice againſt a thing; for if he do make choice of it, his conſent muſt be gained; and for that he muſt change his mind, which cannot be an effect of force, but muſt be done by perſwaſion. Unto which it is abſolutely neceſſary that he be made to take up other ſentiments about theſe things, than he before had of them. For, while he not only deſpiſeth, but hates them, he will never cordially imbrace them. For the heart of the natural man is exceeding tenacious of the way that it is in. According to, *Jer.* 8. 5.

(4.) GOD *to this end in the Goſpel, uſeth all* Arguments *ſuitable for this perſwaſion.* A ſuitable perſwaſion is built upon ſuch rational conſiderations offered to the perſon, as may convince his Judgment or Conſcience, that the thing propoſed to him is good, or neceſſary, or ſome way profitable for him; and the neglect of it will be hurtful to him: ſo as thereby to work upon his affections, by which the whole man is ſet on going. And ſuch a courſe as this the Spirit of God uſeth in his treating of Sinners by the Goſpel, in which he urgeth his Invitations upon them.

[1.] *BY ſhewing them their abſolute* neceſſity *of Chriſt to be a Saviour to them:* That they are undone, & muſt needs periſh everlaſtingly without him. He, by clear evidence, & irrefragible demonſtration lays before them the truth of that, Act. 4. 12. *Neither is there ſalvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we muſt be ſaved.* That if God had not ſent his Son into the World to work out Redemption for us, we had been loſt for ever; and that if we now do not cloſe with him upon the terms propoſed, we remain hopeleſs. And there can be no Argument more forcible, than what is urged from *neceſſity.* When the man's condition is reduced to one way of help, and if that fail, there is none other left, all objections are hereby anſwered, all doubts ſilenced. What courſe he uſeth to evidence this, will afterwards be conſidered when we come to conſider the Internal work of the Spirit. But the truth of this is aſſerted and proved in the Goſpel.

[2.] *BY diſcovering the fulneſs of* ſufficiency, *and* ſuitableneſs *there is in Chriſt, to be a compleat Saviour.* He makes it to appear that he is every way furniſhed for this work, and that there is nothing wanting in him, for the delivering of us from all miſery, and crowning us with perfect bleſſedneſs; and ſo demonſtrates the truth of that, Heb. 7. 25. *Wherefore he is able alſo to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.* He lays open the fulneſs of Chriſt, and the inexhauſtable treaſures that are ſtored in him, fit to anſwer all the ends of fallen man. So that *all they muſt needs be bleſſed, that put their truſt in him,* Pſal. 2. 12. Which how he doth will alſo in its place come to a diſtinct Conſideration.

[3.] *BY ſetting before them the* readineſs *there is in Chriſt to ſave them on theſe terms, not only that he is* able *to ſave, but that he is* willing *to receive all that thus accept of him.* Hence in the Goſpel, he ſets before them, all the precious Covenant-promiſes, that are made to all that ſo do; all the earneſt Invitations that are given to Sinners to come to him; all the Complaints that he makes of their obſtinacy in refuſing to come; and how infinitely he is pleaſed with thoſe that hearken to his Call, and come in upon it; together with the Welcome that all ſuch do find with him. And what can be more urgent or perſwaſive?

5. *THAT* all *to whom the Goſpel is ſent, do not come up to, and accept of theſe Terms.* That this is ſo practically is undeniable. And would we know whence it is, obſerve,

(1.) *THERE*

(1.) *THERE are none that will comply, so long as they hope to do well enough* without *Christ.* That is the language of secure Sinners, Job 21. 14,15. *Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us: for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit shall we have if we pray unto him?* No one ever came to him till necessity drove them. Nor is it to be wondred at, if we consider the security, pride, and enmity, that is in the natural man.

(2.) *THE Gospel* Ambassadors *can but Offer and Entreat.* This they must do, else they will incur guilt, and be called to answer for blood, *Ezek.* 3. 17,18. But though they are faithful and skilful, and spare for no pains, yet sinners may die in their sins. Only they save their own Souls. God will never charge them with the death of such. We see how it is in this respect, Isai. 49. 3, 4. *And said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified. Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain, yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.*

(3.) YEA, *the Gospel it self proves to some eventually a* savour of Death. It is not effectual on all unto Life. And hence the preaching of it, is an occasion of the hardning of some, as well as the softning of others. What saith the Apostle? 2 Cor. 2. 15,16. *For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are the savour of death unto death, and to the other, the savour of life unto life.* Yea, such was the errand of the Prophet, Isai. 6. 9, 10. *And he said, Go and tell this people, Hear, ye indeed, but understand not, and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes: lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed.* Many despise these offers, and many presume, and abuse the Grace of it to their own utter undoing.

(4.) *THE* Elect *of God are mixed with others, for whose sake the Gospel comes among them.* God will call his own whom he knows. They dwell in the midst of wicked men. It is by the Gospel that he will bring them home to himself. He sends this Gospel by such as know not who they are, but are to invite all. And Christ hath said of his own, Joh. 6. 37. *All that the Father hath given me shall come to me.* Though of others he makes that complaint, Joh. 5. 40. *And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.*

(5.) *THAT God will be as well* glorified *in them that resist Christ, as in them that imbrace him.* Though the primary design of the Gospel was not men's damnation, yet, if men that enjoy it, do not hearken to the Call given, but refuse to entertain the Salvation set before them, God will recover honour upon them in this respect. And for that reason we have Christ himself so menacing, Mat. 11. 21, 22. *Wo unto thee Chorazin, wo unto thee Bethsaida: for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre & Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth & ashes. But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, then for you.*

6. *THAT hence, there is a further* efficacy *requisite, to make the Gospel powerful to* Effectual Calling. For,

(1.) *THE* reason *why men are not perswaded by the Gospel, is not for want of* sufficiency *in the Arguments used in it.* They are the same by which some are perswaded, which move not others, but harden them to their own destruction. The same Text of Scripture, the same Sermon, hath this contrary event, &c.

(2.) *THE* reason *of this difference is not in the different* natures *of the subjects to whom the Gospel is offered.* They are all of one kind, have the same sort of faculties, and powers in them: the same dispositions & inclinations to sin; the same aversation from good; there is not one better than another, *Rom.* 3. 9.

(3.) HENCE, *the making the Gospel effectual to Conversion, depends on an* Omnipotent Agent. The Gospel is an Instrument of this, but none can use it to effect but the Spirit. Man indeed hath rational powers in him, and must therefore be so treated; but all gracious qualities are lost: and these must be restored, before he can use these powers graciously; which none but God is able to do in and for them. *Phil.* 2. 13. *Eph.* 2. 8. And there is no contradiction between God's treating men as rational agents, and yet supplying their defects and impotency of acting graciously, by renewing his Grace in those powers. And this brings us to the Consideration, of the *Internal* Operations of the Spirit.

USE. *LET this then advise us, as to be very* thankful *for the Gospel, so to be exceeding careful what* Entertainment *we afford it.* God is to be praised for this favour. All have it not. And they that are without it perish. But by it, we have advantage to be instructed in the way of life, and treated with about the things of our peace. Nor have we better deserved it than those who enjoy it not. But let us rejoyce with trembling; considering, that if we despise the Offer made, and refuse to comply with the Terms of the Treaty, that are propos'd to us, we shall not only miss of Eternal Salvation, as all those that never heard the Gospel shall do, but it will be a most astonishing Article, in the Indictment that shall be brought in against us, that God sent his Ambassadors of Peace to us, and by them proclaimed the Gospel of Peace to us, and with much Entreaty, and long Patience waited upon us; but we would not answer his Call, but wilfully withstood him. Tremble at the thoughts of having this to be accused for, before his great and terrible Tribunal.

[DECEMBER 21. 1697.]

SERMON

SERMON *CXVII.*

WE have taken an Account of what is done *Externally* by the Spirit of God in order to *Effectual Calling*, viz He makes Offers of Chriſt, to the man, in the Goſpel. But we are not to think this to be all that he doth in this great Work; though ſome have, very miſtakingly called it, Grace ſufficient. The Goſpel Offer, though it is a great favour, is yet common; and there are more that neglect then imbrace it. This is intimated in, *Mat.* 20. 16. It is not ſufficient to make a blind man to ſee, for one to hold a Candle before him; but his eye-ſight muſt alſo be reſtored to him. The ſtate of ſpiritual Death, under which the Word of God aſſures us all natural men to be, tells us, that outward moral ſuaſion is not enough to draw them to Chriſt, but there muſt be ſomething done, which may reſtore them to life again. Hence, although the Spirit of God hath choſen externally to apply himſelf to men by the Goſpel, yet when and where he will render this Call effectual, he doth ſomething more in and for them. Here therefore,

II. *THERE is ſomething that is done* Internally *in theſe.* Whiles by the miniſtry of men, in the adminiſtration of the Goſpel-Ordinances, the Spirit applies himſelf to mens ears, and treats with them as rational creatures, inſinuating himſelf into their minds, and giving ſuch efficacy as he ſees meet; but for which, all the other endeavours, would be loſt upon men, as to any ſaving Work.

NOW in this *Internal* Work the Spirit applies himſelf to the Soul, principally to the ſuperiour Faculties of it: To the Underſtanding, and there peculiarly to the Conſcience: And to the Will, and by that alſo to the Affections, which are the immediate inſtruments of it. We may take a brief account of each of theſe.

1. *HE inwardly applies himſelf to the* Underſtanding. And this is the firſt in order of Nature, and for the moſt part, of Time too. For although the Spirit of God can, if he ſees meet, do the work together and at once, yet he doth not ordinarily ſo do. But as he applies himſelf in the means to men, as *Cauſes by Counſel*, ſo he propoſeth things to them, and works them up to make a deliberate choice, which is not wont to be inſtantaneous: Though ſtill, the new Creature, which is the product of this application is formed at once in the man, it being a work of Creation, immediately wrought by God himſelf in the man. But in his treating with men, he applies himſelf ſuitably to them; and that muſt be by informing their Underſtandings. How elſe ſhould the act of Faith, which is an exerting of this new nature, be the act of a rational Agent? Now there are two Things in which the Spirit applies himſelf to the Underſtanding, in order to the bringing the man to believe in Jeſus Chriſt.

1. *BY way of* Conviction. He convinceth the man of his *Sin* and *Miſery*. And here let it in general be obſerved, that under this head of Conviction, our Catechiſm compriz-eth all that which is by Divines wont to be called *Preparatory Work*; which therefore muſt be looked at in the laying of it open. Only, before I proceed to particulars here, it may not be amiſs to ſpeak ſomething of the *Nature*, and *Neceſſity* of this Conviction, or Preparation.

I. TOUCHING the Nature *of it:* The great Inquiry here is, *Whether it be a Common, or Special & Saving Work?* And though there was a Touch given at this before, yet I find it needful to remove ſome miſtakes, to add a few words more to it. Now we call that a Common work, which may be found in the Reprobate, as well as in the Elect; & conſequently hath nothing in it of evidence to diſtinguiſh one from the other: And that Special and Saving Work, which is wrought only in the Elect, and is either eſſential to Salvation, or at leaſt an infallible antecedent of it; or which *accompanies Salvation*, as the Apoſtle expreſſeth it, *Heb.* 6. 9. In ſum, that which brings the man under the aſſurance of the promiſe of Eternal Life. Give me leave to eſſay at the Reſolution of this ſo much diſputed Caſe in the following Propoſitions,

1. *THAT there is doubtleſs an internal Operation as well as an external Application of the Spirit, which is* Common. We are not to limit the Addreſſes of the Spirit to the Non-Elect, to the outward propoſal of the Goſpel by the Word and Miniſtry, and ſuppoſe that all the impreſſions made thereby on the minds and Conſciences of ſuch, to be nothing elſe but the exerciſe or improvement of their own rational powers. He indeed applies himſelf to thoſe powers, and makes uſe of them; but yet he comes in and with the means, and excites ſuch operation in them. Whence elſe is it, that the ſame Word at one time moves on them, which at another time ſtirs them not? Certainly, it was not then Chriſt's meerly ſpeaking that word to the adulterous Jews, that left ſuch a ſting in their Conſciences, as made them ſo act, *Joh.* 8. 7, 8, 9. Or why have men that caution given them, 1 Theſ. 5. 19. *Quench not the Spirit:* were there no inward ſuggeſtions of his kindled in them?

2. *THAT the firſt ſpecial work wrought by the Spirit in any, is the* ingenerating *of the New-Creature in Regeneration.* Whatſoever are the ſecret purpoſes of God concerning men, it is certain that there is no ſaving gift beſtowed on them, before he works the ſaving Change in them, in which all the Graces of the Spirit are produced. *Effectual Vocation* it ſelf, is the firſt ſaving gift applied to men: in which men are put into Chriſt. And we are told, 2 Cor. 5. 17. *Therefore if any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature; old things are paſt away, behold, all things are become new.* So that we muſt either ſuppoſe the man to be Converted antecedently to this Conviction,

or that the Conviction it ſelf is Converſion, or elſe allow it to be a Common work. There is no promiſe of ſpecial Grace, but requires Faith in us to imbrace it, in order to the conveying of a title to the good in it to us; and there can be no Faith exerted, where there is not a principle of ſaving Grace implanted.

3. *THAT there is nothing done in an Elect perſon* before *this, but what may be done in a Reprobate.* Not only is the Spirit of God, who is a Spirit, as able to come home to the Conſciences of men, by touching of them, as to their ſenſes by the means; but unregenerate men, in their natural ſtate are capable of receiving all theſe impreſſions on them, without any ſaving Change wrought in them. Their Underſtandings and Conſciences, need no new habits to be put into them for this work; but it may be done by the awakning and exciting of thoſe that are in them. A *Pharoah* may be convinced of ſin, and made to confeſs God to be righteous in his puniſhing him, *Exod.* 9. 27. A Hypocrite may be ſo apprehenſive of God's terrible Wrath, as to be afraid of it, *Iſai.* 33. 14. Nor is there any difference in that which is excited in the one before Converſion, either as to the manner of it, or as to the degree; to diſtinguiſh it from what may be in the other.

4. *THAT all thoſe works comprized in this Conviction, may be found in thoſe that afterwards totally and finally* Apoſtatize. It is a received Truth among the Orthodox, and plentifully confirmed by the Word of God, that none in whom there is a ſaving Work wrought, tho' never ſo ſmall, ſhall ever totally or finally fall away from it: Grievous backſlidings indeed, they may be drawn into, as *Peter* was, but not deadly. I ſhall not here particularly inquire, what is comprized in thoſe ſeveral expreſſions, in *Heb.* 6. 4,5. but it is beyond diſpute, that all theſe Convictions are included in it; and yet the Apoſtle ſuppoſeth ſuch in hazard of an irrecoverable fall. Nor doth he mention it as a meer problem or ſuppoſition, which may never be; but as that which he gives them notice of, and expreſſeth better Charity for them, as ſuppoſing them built on a ſtronger foundation, *ver.* 9.

5. *THAT many* Elect Perſons *have had the beginnings of theſe Works in them, which they have outgrown.* There is many a true Convert, that can make report of this upon his own Experience, that before the Spirit came to do the Work effectually in him, he had many an Awakening, many a ſtrong Conviction, many a deep prick in his Heart, which put him upon thinking, purpoſing, and practiſing too, which yet he out-grew, and wholly wore off, and grew to the old paſs again. And though it be often otherwiſe, yet it is frequently thus, with ſuch as have lived all their time under the Ordinances. And God will hereby let Men know, whom they are beholden to for their Converſion.

6. *THAT yet theſe* Convictions *begun, and carried on in the Soul, afford no ſmall hope, to and of thoſe that have them.* As long as perſons remain ſecure, ſenſeleſs, unconcerned under all the cries and calls of the Goſpel, it ſeems to be loſt on them, or to have a contrary operation, and to be a *ſavour of death* to them; though God often ſuffers it to be ſo, the more to magnify his mercy on them afterwards. But when once the man is awakened, the terrors of the Lord put him in fear, and he is made to apprehend himſelf a vile & undone Sinner. and to cry out, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* Now there is hope in *Iſrael* of ſuch an one, that *he is not far from the Kingdom of Heaven.* And that, becauſe this is the Spirit's way, in which he brings Sinners home to Chriſt. For ſuch therefore are thoſe gracious encouragements laid in, *Iſai.* 41. 17. *Jer.* 31. 18, &c. And the Invitation, *Mat.* 11. 28.

II. *AS to the* Neceſſity *of this Conviction or Preparation,* Let us obſerve theſe following Concluſions,

1. *THAT this Conviction hath no* cauſal influence *into Paſſive Converſion.* All the Neceſſity that can be urged on that account, is only that of concomitancy. The Spirit of God hath done this in ſuch as were not capable of Conviction under and by the means. Judicious Divines judge that *Jeremiah*, and *John* the *Baptiſt* were Converted before they were born. And it is to be believed that Elect Infants dying in their Infancy, have the new-Creature formed in them, without which they could not be ſaved. Joh. 3. 3. *Verily, verily I ſay unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot ſee the kingdom of God.* And poſſibly this Work is done for others that live, before we are aware of it, who have given evidence of their ſeriouſneſs from their Infancy. However, the man can no more Convert himſelf upon theſe Convictions, then he could before, nor is it eaſier for the Spirit to do it now. Whenever it is done, it muſt be by a creating Power, in which God uſeth no Inſtrument, but acts immediately.

2. *THAT yet, the* ordinary ſeaſon *in which the Spirit is wont to do this Work, is whiles he is applying of himſelf to them, in and with the Word.* At what article of this Conviction the Spirit pleaſeth to work this glorious Change, is not for us critically to determine. But in his Converting of men under the Ordinances, while he is morally applying to them, both outwardly and inwardly, he ſteals in his Grace unawares to us, and draws forth our Souls unto gracious actings. Thus while *Paul* was preaching, *Lydia* is moved, &c. Act. 16. 14. *And a certain woman named Lydia, a ſeller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worſhipped God, heard us: whoſe heart the Lord opened, that ſhe attended unto the things which were ſpoken of Paul.* Thus *Ephraim*, while he is looking on, and bemoaning his unworthy carriages, is made able to take hold on God by Faith, and call him his own God, Jer. 31. 18. *I have ſurely heard Ephraim bemoaning himſelf thus, Thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was chaſtiſed, as a bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke:*

turn

turn thou me, and I ſhall be turned ; for thou art the Lord my God. And how often do burdened, ſinking deſpairing Souls under Conviction, in one inſtant find their hearts encouraged to hope and truſt in God?

3. *THAT the end or deſign of the Spirit's working the grace of Faith, in paſſive Converſion, is that we may* actually *believe in Chriſt.* All habits are properly deſigned for acts ſuitable to the nature of them ; and then they attain their end, when they are exerted in ſuch acts. The Goſpel invites men to believe in Chriſt, and for incouragement promiſeth Salvation to them that ſo believe : And becauſe no man can believe of himſelf, or till he be renewed in the image of his mind, the Spirit of God produceth this renovation in him, and that not to be a ſleeping power in him, but a new life, that he may live according to it. The *Apoſtle* therefore urgeth the actings of Grace upon Chriſtians, from the conſideration of their having the habits in them, Gal. 5. 25. *If we live in the Spirit, let us alſo walk in the Spirit.* And God tells us what is the deſign of the new Creation, Iſai. 43. 21. *This people have I formed for my ſelf, they ſhall ſhew forth my praiſe.*

4. *THAT this Faith is drawn forth, and exerted by us, as the act of a* cauſe by Counſel. Though the Spirit puts into us a power of believing, without any, either conſent or diſſent of ours, yet he doth not draw forth this power into action without us, nor contrary, but intirely according to the nature which God had put into us. We are ſo drawn, that we follow voluntarily, and not by force, or unaccountable inſtinct. Cant. 1. 4. *Draw me, we will run after thee.* And that we may do it voluntarily, we muſt do it knowingly : or our Underſtanding muſt be eyes to our Will, and entertain the reaſon for our ſo doing. The Treaty therefore between God and us muſt be carried on in this way ; though there be ſuch a powerful alteration made in us, to render it capable of being ſo.

5. *THAT the Spirit of God in his treating with us, preſents* Chriſt *to us, as the Object for our Faith to rely upon for Salvation.* It is certain that Chriſt is in the Goſpel offered to men as a Saviour, and we are commanded to believe on him as ſo. We are therefore ſaid to believe to Salvation, Rom. 10. 10. *For with the heart man believeth unto righteouſneſs, and with the mouth confeſſion is made unto ſalvation.* Thus therefore the Spirit with the Goſpel, perſwades us to look upon him. And that is the great Argument to move us to imbrace and rely upon him, becauſe he is ſuch an One, and there is none elſe; *Act.* 4. 12. Iſai. 45. 22. *Look unto me, and be ye ſaved all the ends of the earth : for I am God, and there is none elſe.* And further to ſtimulate us, he aſſures us of the compleatneſs of ſufficiency there is in him for this end, Heb. 7 25. *Wherefore he is able to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.* And what is all this for, but to draw us to believe in him ?

6. *THAT we may be drawn to cloſe with him as ſuch, we muſt apprehend our* need *of him.* All motions offered to a rational Agent, that are accommodated to move on him as ſuch an one, muſt not only deſcry an excellency in the Object propoſed; but alſo a ſuitableneſs in it to the ſubject treated withal. What avails it to commend a man for his excellent skill in Phyſick, to one that is ſound, and feels no malady ? Mat. 9. 12. *They that be whole need not a phyſician, but they that are ſick.* It is indeed, excellent good news, that Chriſt is a mighty Saviour, but to whom is it ſo, but thoſe who are miſerable, and need Salvation ; it will not allure any elſe to make uſe of him. Men therefore muſt apprehend themſelves to be in ſuch a condition, before they go out of themſelves to Chriſt, that they may be ſaved.

7. *THIS will not be without ſuch a* Conviction *as this is.* The natural man is ſecure and ſelf-conceited, and not acquainted with his true ſtate : like them, *Rev.* 3. 17. But the Spirit of God in this work, reads them ſuch a Lecture ; and makes ſuch impreſſions on their Conſciences by it as puts them off from that ſecurity, and becomes a potent argument in them to excite their faith, when he reveals Chriſt in them. This helps them to prize Chriſt above all, and put an ineſtimable value on the reports and offers made of him. Thus *Paul* expreſſeth himſelf, 1 Tim. 1. 15. *This is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners, of whom I am chief.*

IT now follows that we proceed to a more particular Inquiry into this Work of Conviction. Under which we are to conſider, not only the bare Convictions or Diſcoveries themſelves, but all the Operations and Effects of ſuch a diſcovery, as are wrought in the natural Conſcience thereby. Only let this Caution be here entred, viz. *That there are ſome Convictions of ſin and miſery, which do neceſſarily ſuppoſe a principle of ſaving Grace in the heart, or a ſaving Illumination on the mind, and the genuine effects whereof, are the diſcoveries of Faith already wrought in the man.* And theſe belong not to our preſent Inquiry, but only ſuch as are wrought by the Spirit on a natural Conſcience. Here then we may conſider, 1. The Convictions themſelves. 2. The Effects which the Spirit works by them on the Conſciences of Sinners.

1. *FOR the Convictions* themſelves : And theſe are two, viz. Of *Sin & Miſery.* Of which in Order.

WE have before been acquainted that the fall brought Mankind into a ſtate of ſin and miſery ; where we took a ſummary Account of both. Now theſe are the things to which this Conviction refers ; and therefore need here to be but briefly glanced at.

1. *HE convinceth them of* Sin. This our Saviour plainly aſſerts, *Joh.* 16. 8. And here let us obſerve,

(1.) *THAT there are thoſe* Principles *in the*

Conſciences of natural men, by the application of which they are able to judge of this or that to be Sin. The *light of nature* is not ſo extinguiſhed, but that it may by ſearching find out many fragments of the Law engraven on the Conſcience, by which comparing himſelf, he muſt needs charge himſelf with Sin. This is manifeſt by that, in Rom. 4. 14, 15. *For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promiſe made of none effect. Becauſe the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no tranſgreſſion.* A man's own reaſon tells him, thus he ought to do, and this to avoid, in a multitude of Caſes. And if men did not impriſon the truth in unrighteouſneſs, but ſet their *moral powers* on work, they ſhould find more. Hence the Morals of the Heathen Philoſophers.

(2.) *THAT there is an* hiſtorical *credit or aſſent to the truth of the Scriptures, as being the Word of God, which the moſt that are educated under the Goſpel do give.* This our Saviour acknowledgeth to thoſe carnal Jews, Joh. 5.39. *Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which teſtify of me.* Though they have no love to the Word of God, yet their Conſciences ſay that it is true, and they expect to find them to be ſo another day. Now the Law given to man for his rule, is one part of this Word; and the Apoſtle hath that aſſertion about it, Rom. 7. 7. *What ſhall we ſay then? Is the law ſin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known ſin? but by the law: for I had not known luſt, except the law had ſaid, Thou ſhalt not covet.* And 3.20. *Therefore by the deeds of the law, there ſhall no fleſh be juſtified in his ſight: for by the law is the knowledge of ſin.* So that if men will but ſet themſelves to ſtudy, and acquaint themſelves with the Scriptures, they muſt needs know a great deal about Sin, and acknowledge it too.

(3.) HENCE, *The Spirit coming in with thoſe* Truths, *and ſetting them home on the Conſcience with power, works this conviction of ſin in the Man.* He awakens theſe principles in the Man, and ſets him to think of them, who was apt to forget them: He confirms his credit of them, by making his Conſcience to ſet a new ſubſcription to them; and he makes him to compare himſelf by them; & to diſcover how he is declared to be a ſinner by them, and ſo cauſeth his Conſcience to condemn him for ſin, or conclude himſelf to be guilty of it. He makes him to acknowledge, that he owes Obedience to God as his Lawgiver and Sovereign; that this is the Law by which he is obliged, that he hath tranſgreſſed it, and is thereby proved to be a ſinner.

(4.) *THIS* Conviction *is extendible, ſo far as either the light of Nature, or the Law of God, declare him to be under Sin.* There are ſome things which the remains of natures Light in fallen Man do not of themſelves bear witneſs to; but yet the Word of God plainly aſſerts: And the ſame aſſent which ſubſcribes to the truth of the Word, muſt yield to theſe on that ground; ſo that though the man may not ſee through the reaſon why it is ſo, yet he cannot but acknowledge that it is ſo, becauſe God, who cannot lye, hath declared it to be ſo. So that though the malignity in men's hearts, riſeth up againſt theſe truths, yet the influence upon their Conſciences, makes them confeſs them to be true for all. And ſuch was the Conviction that was upon them, *Acts* 7. 54. Here then to draw to ſome particulars,

[1.] *HE convinceth them of* Actual *Sin.* And ordinarily Conviction begins here. Sometimes they here this or that Sin laid open to them in an Ordinance, and reproved; and the Spirit of God toucheth Conſcience, and makes it to ſay, *Thou art the Man.* Sometimes God ſuffers them to fall into ſome notorious Sin, and then makes their hearts to ſmite them, and teſtify againſt them. And by this he leads them from one Sin to another, and ſhews them an innumerable company of them, both omiſſions and commiſſions, how they have broken the Law from ſtep to ſtep. *Job.* 36.9. Now Conſcience ſaith, at this time, and that time &c. till it goes beyond count.

[2.] *HE convinceth them of many* Aggravations *of Sin.* Makes them to ſee, not only that they have broken the command, but have done it boldly, impudently, againſt the light of Nature, or the knowledge of the Word of God; againſt the checks of Conſcience, againſt Mercies obliging them, Warnings given them &c. *Solomon* therefore chargeth *Shimei*, 1 *Kings* 2. 44.

[3.] *HE convinceth them of* Original *Sin.* How far the light of Nature may be improved for this, I ſhall not now inquire, though doubtleſs it will ſay a great deal on this account: Notwithſtanding the Heathen Moraliſts, who have ſpoken much of *actual Sin*, have obſerved very little about their *original Sin*; though ſometimes ſomething that looks that way; eſpecially as to Man's impotency. Whence *Plato* complains that the Soul hath broken her wings, and ſuch like. But the Word of God is full for this, *Gen.* 6. 5. & 8. 21. *Rom.* 5.12. and elſewhere. And uſually, the Spirit leads men from actual Sin, up to original Sin, as the fountain from whence the other ſtreams, and makes Men to find and confeſs, that the very bias of their Nature inclines and forceably leads them that way. Thus *David* runs up his Sin, *Pſal.* 51.5. He makes Sinners to feel that their very hearts are prejudiced at, and riſe up with malignity againſt the Law of God, as a thing contrary to them. As a *Medea* could ſay

Video meliora proboq;
Deteriora ſequor

[4.] *HE convinceth them of their Intereſt in* Adam's *Sin by* Imputation. This ſeems to be above the reach of the light of Nature in fallen Man; and therefore this Conviction is made by the application of the Word of God. For though there are many that deny this,

this, and the carnal reaſonings in the depraved minds of Men, have a great deal to ſay againſt it; yet the Word of God, by which, all that acknowledge it to be his Word, are to judge of things, is ſo full and clear for it, that when the Spirit of God comes to ſet it home, on the Conſcience, the Man is made to acknowledge that it is verily ſo, he cannot withſtand the plain truth of the Scripture, *viz.* that *in Adam we all ſinned*, according to, *Rom.* 1. 12. And that thereupon we are chargeable with the Guilt of it, ſo as by it to be expoſed to all the evil conſequents of it, even all the fruits and effects of the wrath of God, which were introduced by it; which puts him upon the expectation of being called to an account for it, and bear the penalty of it: *Thus He convinceth Men of Sin.*

[JANUARY 18. 1697.]

SERMON *CXVIII.*

2. HE *convinceth them of* Miſery. This Conviction is ſubordinated to, and promoted by the former, and hence the Conviction of it is rationally applied to the natural man. For,

(1.) *THE* miſery *of the reaſonable Creature, is properly the fruit or puniſhment of ſin.* How far God may in Sovereignty afflict one that is innocent, meerly to aſſert his Supremacy, I ſhall not diſpute; but it is certain, that the miſery of man is, as inflicted on him by God, an execution of Juſtice, and ſo it muſt refer to ſome law or rule of righteouſneſs. Now, Death, which comprehends all miſeries under it, is ſaid to be the *wages of Sin*, Rom. 6. 23. And to be brought into the world by it, *Chap.* 5. 12. Man by making himſelf ſinful, procured to be made miſerable. All miſery being nothing elſe, but the execution of the threatning that was denounced againſt ſin, *Gen.* 2. 17. And if man had not ſinned, man had been a perpetual ſtranger to all miſery, any further than as it ſtood in the threatning to be his faithful Monitor.

(2.) *THE light of* Nature *points man to read his miſery in his ſin, and his ſin in his miſery.* The natural man is ſaid *to be a law to himſelf*, Rom. 2. 14. And it muſt be ſo: for the ſame light which diſcovers to man that there is a God, who is Governour of the World, and to whom all Creatures owe their ſervice, doth alſo witneſs in him *right* & *wrong*, that ſuch things he ought to do, and ſuch things to avoid; and not only ſo, but that there is a Juſtice of God, which will puniſh men for their tranſgreſſions. This the Apoſtle plainly inſinuates, Rom. 1. *ult.* *Who knowing the judgment of God (that they which commit ſuch things are worthy of death) not only do the ſame, but have pleaſure in them that do them.* And hence have riſen thoſe terrors of Conſcience in meer Heathen, upon the commiſſion of ſome unnatural ſins. The ſame light alſo makes men, when they meet with ſome notable Afflictions in Providence, to have fearful reſentments of ſin, as the moral procuring cauſe of it. Hence the Widow of *Sarepta*, upon the ſudden Death of her Son, could ſo expoſtulate with the Prophet, 1 Kin. 17. 18. *And ſhe ſaid unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my ſin to remembrance, and to ſlay my ſon.*

(3.) *THE* Word of God *hath fully declared the miſery of man by ſin, and the natural man is capable of being convinced by it. There* is a full account given of this miſery. *There* we are acquainted with the holineſs of God, which is peculiarly diſplayed in the diſpleaſure which he conceives againſt ſin. Hab. 1. 13. *Thou art of purer eyes then to behold evil, and canſt not look on iniquity.* There we are told of the Law or Covenant of God, in which he not only forbad man to ſin, but alſo threatned him with Death in caſe he ſhould ſo do, Ezek. 18. 4. *The ſoul that ſinneth it ſhall die.* *There* we are aſſured of the Juſtice of God, by which he hath engaged himſelf to puniſh ſin according to the tenor of the Law which he put man under, Pſal. 7. 11, 12. *God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day. If he turn not, he will whet his ſword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.* *There* we have an account of all the Plagues and Miſeries that are contained in that curſe *of death* which is fallen upon man for ſin, which are to be gathered out of all the ſeveral threatnings recorded in the book of God. *There* we have the reaſon rendred of all the fearful Judgments of God that have come upon the World ever ſince man's fall, which are reduced to Sin as the procuring cauſe of them. Now all theſe diſcoveries are adapted to *humane reaſon.* So that a natural Conſcience is capable of receiving the impreſſion of a Conviction of them; and made, both to acknowledge their ſin, in the miſeries they meet with, as did *Pharoah*, Exod. 9. 27. And to be put into fearful expectation of the miſeries which they read in the threatning, though for the preſent the execution of them is deferred. As they, Iſai. 33. 14. *The ſinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulneſs hath ſurprized the hypocrites: who among us ſhall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us ſhall dwell with the everlaſting burnings?* The Spirit therefore ſets home theſe things on the Conſcience, and powerfully produceth theſe Convictions in it. Of which we may take a brief account; ſtill reſerving a reſpect to the cautions that have been formerly entred.

[1.] *HE convinceth the Sinner of the ſtate of* Condemnation *that he is in, by the ſentence of the Law which he is under.* The ſtate of Condemnation into which apoſtate man is fallen, properly conſiſts in that guilt which he is under, by vertue whereof he is ſentenced

to

to undergo all the direful effects of the wrath of God which are included in the threatning of the Law. For *Guilt is nothing elſe but the binding a perſon over to ſuffer Puniſhment, according to the Law under which he ſtands.* Now there are two ways, by which the word of God diſcovers this ſtate, both of which the Spirit of God ſets home on the Conſcience. One is by the imputation of the firſt and great tranſgreſſion; whereby the guilt of it derives to every one of *Adam's* progeny, God treating with him in the firſt Covenant as the head of Mankind; whereupon all are ſaid *to die in him*, 1 Cor. 15. 22. And ſin and death, not only to be introduced by him, but to paſs from him upon all, Rom. 5. 12. *Wherefore as by one man ſin entred into the world, and death by ſin: and ſo death paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned.* The other is by actual ſin, the wages whereof is declared to be death, *Rom.* 6. 23. And the threatning againſt which is poſitive, *Ezek.* 18. 4. Now the Spirit of God makes this Conviction, by ſetting in with theſe truths, and making the man to acknowledge them, by yielding himſelf to be under the condemnation of the *great Tranſgreſſion*, according to the plain teſtimony of the Word of God; and ſhewing them the law againſt which they have *actually tranſgreſſed*, and the ſentence therein denounced for their ſins ſo committed; whereby they ſtand guilty and condemned in their own Conſciences. Thus he makes them to conclude themſelves to be *men of death* by the law of God.

[2.] *HE ſhews him how fearfully* miſerable *he is, by reading all the Curſes to him, and charging them upon him.* The *Death* which by the ſentence of condemnation, the ſinner is doomed to ſuffer, is a voluminous Word; it is not a ſingle, but a complex miſery, and there are very large Commentaries made upon it in the book of God. There are innumerable evils comprehended in the curſe; for we are told what a fearful thing it is, Zech. 5. 2, 3. *And he ſaid unto me, What ſeeſt thou? and I anſwered, I ſee a flying roll, the length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits. Then ſaid he unto me, This is the curſe that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth.* And all theſe belong to the miſery that ſin hath brought upon man. The Spirit of God ſets this Roll before the man, and makes him to read it; it ſets his Conſcience on work, and cauſeth him to meditate terrors. He expounds that Text to him, Gen. 2. 17. *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou ſhalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die.* And tells him that he is expoſed by it, to a bodily Death, and therein to ſuffer all thoſe ſickneſſes, pains, loſſes, diſgraces, vexations, which ever were felt or heard of in the World, and at length to undergo a ſeparation of Soul and Body, and be made worms meat in a rotting Grave: That he is an open prey to all ſpiritual Plagues; to be a veſſel of Hell, led about captive by *Satan* at his will, to be tormented with the ſtings and laſhes of a terrified Conſcience, eating out all his comfort, and beginning an Hell in him upon Earth; making him a *Magor Miſſabib*, an intolerable burden to himſelf, and an horror to all that ſee him: That he doth but live to fill up his meaſure, and heap up the more aſtoniſhing treaſures of Wrath to himſelf, and to live in a continual expectation of divine vengeance to cut him off and deſtroy him. That he is a ſubject of eternal Death, and is only reprieved for a while during pleaſure, mean while poſting apace to the lake of brimſtone, where he is to undergo an eternal ſeparation from the preſence of God's favour, and ſuffer the fury of God in that place where the *Worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched*; but he muſt ſpend a wretched *Eternity* among the *Devils* and the *Damned*, in torments intolerable, and without the leaſt hope of deliverance, through an endleſs Eternity. Thus he makes him to read, and ſee this to be his portion laid out in the Curſe; and though fain he would, yet he cannot divert his thoughts from it, nor ſtop his Conſcience from paſſing this doom upon him.

[3.] *HE makes him to find and feel the* beginnings *of thoſe miſeries to be already upon him; and that, both thoſe that are temporal, and thoſe that are ſpiritual.* There is a ſenſible Conviction which he affords to men, or at leaſt a leading of them by that which is ſenſible, to an apprehenſion of their ſad ſtate. That there is a begun operation of the Curſe upon ſinners in this life, is certain, and the Spirit of God makes uſe of it to bring men to a deeper ſight of the miſery that is on them. All men readily confeſs that the condition of mankind is troubleſome and ſorrowful; but men generally ſee not the true reaſon of it, but are ready to ſay, with the *Philiſtines*, it is *a Chance.* But God many times, brings ſome ſore trouble upon men, and with it ſhews them the threatning of his Word, and makes them compare themſelves with it, and thereupon to conclude it to be a fruit and effect of it. Thus it was with *Joſeph*'s Brethren in that diſtreſs of theirs, Gen. 42. 21. *And they ſaid one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we ſaw the anguiſh of his ſoul, when he beſought us; and we would not hear: therefore is this diſtreſs come upon us.* Thus mens ſorrows by the Word and Conſcience, are made to ſhew them the wrath of God, and their miſery by it. And thus alſo ſpiritual miſeries are ſenſibly begun in them, whiles he ſets in with them, and makes them to read on, and ſee themſelves equally expoſed to all the reſt, and puts them into a fearful expectation of them. And they are convinced that God hath begun with, and let looſe his hand upon them, and they are terribly afraid that he will proceed to the uttermoſt. And hereby he cauſeth them to ſee that ſin hath made them miſerable. Thus God ſpeaks to them, Jer. 2. 17, 18, 19.

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Haſt thou not procured this unto thy ſelf, in that thou haſt forſaken the Lord thy God, when he led thee by the way? And now what haſt thou to do in the way to Egypt, to drink the waters of Sihor? or what haſt thou to do in the way of Aſſyria, to drink the waters of the river? Thine own wickedneſs ſhall correct thee, and thy backſliding ſhall reprove thee: know therefore and ſee that is an evil thing and bitter that thou haſt forſaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, ſaith the Lord God of hoſts. And this indeed is one great end of the Judgments of God which he brings on men, whether publick or perſonal, that now he may bring them to conſideration, and by the miſerable effects of it to give them a more clear ſight of the miſchief which ſin hath expoſed them unto.

[4.] *HE convinceth him of the powerful* Obligation *he is under to ſuffer all the reſt of the miſeries contained in the threatning.* And he many times makes uſe of the former in order to the production of this. Though the curſe be out againſt every ſinner, and all the plagues in it are the portion that he is doomed to receive from the hand of God; yet it is here a day of patience and forbearance, in which the hand of mercy holds back the full execution of that ſentence. And ſuch is the vanity and folly of Sinners, that they grow ſecure thereupon, yea are ready to think themſelves happy, and put away all fears of after-miſery. But when the Spirit pleaſeth, he makes the Sinner to ſee his danger, and puts him from his ſecurity, and that by leading of him into a Contemplation of the ſtrength of the Curſe that is upon him: He ſhews him the indiſpenſible neceſſity of undergoing the utmoſt extremity of it, if there be no Redemption provided for, and applied to him. He cauſeth him to underſtand that the ſentence of the Law is poſitive, that there are thoſe glorious Attributes of God engaged for the accompliſhment of it, which would loſe of their glory, if he ſhould not purſue it. His *Holineſs*, which is ſet againſt, and cannot endure Sinners: His *Truth*, which bound itſelf to the fulfilling the threatning as well as the promiſe of the Covenant: His *Juſtice*, for the illuſtration of the glory whereof, the Law or Covenant of Works are eſtabliſhed to be a rule of God's proceedure with man. In theſe the Sinner is made to read how certain he is to undergo all the reſt, as well as what he hath felt; that delays are no diſcharges; that God is not ſlack, but will in due time, fulfill all that he hath ſaid.

[5.] *HE convinceth him, that it is utterly beyond his power to* deliver *himſelf from this miſery, yea, beyond the power of the whole Creation.* That his help is not in his own hand, nor any perſon or thing in Heaven or Earth, that can relieve him, if God do not, *Pſal.* 73. 25. And this Conviction may be alſo wrought upon the natural Conſcience. For, tho' there muſt be a principle of Grace in us, to apprehend the ſpiritual miſery flowing from the nature of ſin, yet the man is convincible of his legal miſery by vertue of his relation to the Covenant of Works, by the light of common reaſon, when applied powerfully by the Spirit; and from that of his helpleſs ſtate in regard either of himſelf or the creature. For, when he reads his miſery grounded in the ſentence of the Law condemning him; and the Truth, Juſtice, and Power of God engaged in it, to bring all this miſery upon him, he muſt conclude that there is but one of theſe two ways for his eſcape; either by fortifying againſt, and ſo ſecuring himſelf from the wrath of God; or by compoſition, buying himſelf out of the hands of the Law either by force, or by price: but he is convinced that neither of theſe courſes will avail him. Not the former, becauſe he hath to do with the great God, who is a great King, againſt whom there is no riſing up; whom none ever reſiſted and proſpered; before whom the mountains quake, and the hills tremble. There is no hiding from him, who is Omniſcient, and Omnipreſent, Jer. 23. 24. *Can any hide himſelf in ſecret places that I ſhall not ſee him ſaith the Lord? do not I fill heaven and earth? ſaith the Lord.* There is no entring the liſts againſt him. Hence that, 1 Cor. 10. 22. *Do we provoke the Lord to jealouſie? are we ſtronger than he?* No Garriſon in the World ſtrong enough to keep out his fury from overflowing. Iſai. 24. 17. *Fear, and the pit, and the ſnare are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth.* Not the latter, for that muſt be by a valuable Redemption-price paid, and a ſufficient Righteouſneſs offered; but he can do neither: all the World will not make up ſuch a ſum, Pſal. 49. 7, 8. *None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ranſom for him: (For the redemption of their ſoul is precious, and it ceaſeth for ever.)* God therefore blows on ſuch an offer, Mich. 6. 6, 7. *Wherewith ſhall I come before the Lord, and bow my ſelf before the high God? ſhall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleaſed with thouſands of rams, or with ten thouſands of rivers of oyl? ſhall I give my firſt-born for my tranſgreſſion, the fruit of my body for the ſin of my ſoul?* And as for a Righteouſneſs of his own, it cannot avail, becauſe nothing but Death will anſwer the ſentence of the Law.

[6.] *HE convinceth him that all this is* righteouſly *befallen him.* It is true, the corrupt reaſonings of carnal men do here riſe up, and are ready to find fault with the rigour of the ſentence of the Law, and charge God for being an hard Maſter: But yet the Sinners mouth is here alſo ſtopt. Hence that, Rom. 3. 19. *Now we know that what things ſoever the law ſaith, it ſaith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the world become guilty before God.* And our Saviour Chriſt tells us that the *Spirit ſhall convince the world of Righteouſneſs*, Joh. 16. 8. And to this belongs the Conviction of the Righteouſneſs of the Law; from which

flows

flows a rational Conviction of the juſtice of the ſentence of it, & that not meerly becauſe it is God s Law. And the ſame reaſon that tells us there is a God, ſaith that he cannot be unrighteous. Hence that, Rom. 3. 5, 6. *But if our unrighteouſneſs commend the righteouſneſs of God, what ſhall we ſay? is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I ſpeak as a man) God forbid: for how then ſhall God judge the world.* But there is alſo a reſentment on the Conſciences of men, of the demerit of ſome ſins, Rom. 1. ult. *Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit ſuch things are worthy of death.* So that a *Pharoah*'s Conſcience will declare for God, and pronounce him *righteous*, Exod. 9. 27. And by all theſe Convictions the ſinner is made to find & feel himſelf to be extreamly miſerable. And this may ſuffice for the Convictions themſelves,

2. *WE proceed to conſider the* Effects *which the Spirit works by them on the Conſciences of Sinners.* Which are eſpecially,

1. *THIS Conviction puts them into horrible* Fear. Fear is properly a reluctancy on the heart, on the apprehenſion of the danger of ſome approaching miſchief; and ariſeth from the hatred in us againſt it, and an earneſt deſire to eſcape it. Thus Sinners &c. Iſai. 33. 14. *The ſinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulneſs hath ſurprized the hypocrites.* This affection was put into man at firſt, to make him cautious to himſelf, to keep out of harms way, and not to adventure upon any ſin. But ſince man's fall, and the miſery befallen him by it, there is a double improvement made of it by God in his Providence. Partly, *as a Puniſhment of Sin, and the beginning of hell on Sinners in this Life:* and this is, by making ſuch impreſſions by the forecited Convictions on the Conſciences of ſinners, as, together with their fearful expectation of fiery indignation, they put away all hope from them, & abandon themſelves to deſperation; as did *Cain* and *Judas*. Partly, *as a Preparitory for the gracious diſcovery of the Redemption of Chriſt to the Souls of men, in order to their making it welcome when it comes.* For, fear, of its own nature, puts men upon flight, makes men to ſeek an eſcape, if poſſible, from the thing they are afraid of, as long as there are any glimmering hopes of a poſſibility for their eſcaping, as theſe are diſcovered to ſinners by the Goſpel. We ſhall therefore find ſuch an expreſſion as that, Pſal. 83. 15,16. *So perſecute them with thy tempeſt; and make them afraid with thy ſtorm: Fill their faces with ſhame; that they may ſeek thy name, O Lord.* And we find that *Paul* makes uſe of *the terrors of the Lord to perſwade men withal*, 2 Cor. 5. 11. And if ſuch a Conviction as this be really wrought in the Conſcience, it cannot but leave the impreſſion of this fear upon him.

2. *IT eats out all his* Comfort *in any Creature Enjoyment.* Sinners, in this life, do enjoy a great many outward favours of God: And while Conſcience is aſleep, and the terrors of the Lord do not amaze it, they pleaſe themſelves in the fruition of them, & reckon themſelves happy therein. We have an account of their jollity in their proſperity, *Job* 21. 12,13. But when Conſcience is once awakened with the Thunder, and wounded with the Lightning of theſe Convictions, their whole mirth is marred, and their jollity confounded. Either it is to them as the ſtory of *Abigail* was to *Nabal*, 1 *Sam.* 25. 37, or as the news of *Jonathan* to *Adonijah*, and his gueſts, 1 *King.* 1. 49,50. or as the hand-writing on the wall was to *Belſhazzer* in the midſt of his carouſing, *Dan.* 5. 6. All tends rather to aggravate than moderate the fear and trouble upon them. They can taſte no more reliſh in any thing here, than in the *white of an egg.* Theſe thoughts are like the coloquintida of the Prophets, making them to cry out, *There is death in the Pot.* They ſee the curſe of God upon all, which imbitters every Relation, and every Enjoyment to them.

3. *IT ſtrips him of his carnal* Hopes & Confidences. There is a vain hope, which ſecure ſinners bolſter themſelves up withal, and on which they build a preſumptuous confidence that all is and ſhall be well with them, and by which they put away from them all fears of the evil day. But when this Conviction comes home upon them, it ſhrinks up all theſe hopes to nothing; and their confidences fly away from them. So we have the Hypocrite ſet forth, *Job* 8. 13, 14, 15. For now he is made to find the vanity, emptineſs, and deceitfulneſs of all the props on which he ſupported himſelf, that they are but the ſtaff of a broken reed; that they can neither ſave him from, nor relieve him under the miſery that is upon him, and that is haſtning to devour him. And he is made, though unwillingly, to throw them all away. As, Iſai. 2. 20,21. *In that day a man ſhall caſt his idols of ſilver, and his idols of gold, which they made, each one for himſelf to worſhip, to the moles, and to the bats: To go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth.* He is made to ſee and acknowledge, that if he have no other Object of truſt, he is loſt beyond hope for ever.

4. *IT makes him very inquiſitive, whether there be no poſſibility of his* eſcape. Tho' the corrupt heart in man hath a natural liking to ſin, whereby his luſts are gratifyed, yet nature itſelf reluctſ at miſery. And hence the fear of it puts him upon making that his firſt inquiry, after his danger is realized to him, *But is there no way to be delivered from it? Muſt I needs dye? Is there no hope but I muſt dwell with Everlaſting Burnings? Is there nothing to be done that I may be ſaved from the Wrath to come?* Thus did they, when they were pricked at their hearts, *Act.* 2.37. Thus did the rough Jaylor, when terrifyed, *Act.* 16.29,30. He that before, deſpiſed all counſels,

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and made light of Goſpel Invitations, now begins to ask ſerious Queſtions.

5. *IT ſets him upon legal* Repentance *and* Reformation. This indeed is the fartheſt that Convictions leads the moſt unto; and it is uſually the firſt thing that any ſet themſelves about. And the ground or reaſon of it lies here: This Conviction of ſin & miſery go together; the Spirit not only convinceth men that they are miſerable, but whence their miſery proceeds, *viz.* from their ſin; that that is it which hath involved them in all theſe ſorrows. And tho' they have not a genuine hatred of ſin, for that is a *ſaving Grace*, and flows from the Grace of Regeneration; yet they find it too hot for them. They ſee, that if they go on in their ways of ſin, they run upon the point of the Curſe, and go certainly to deſtruction; this makes them to abſtain, and take up a courſe of Duties inſtead thereof. Thus did *Iſrael* once and again, when God's Judgments on them, wro't Convictions, and Terrors in their Conſciences.

6. *IT puts him upon a more diligent and ſerious* Attendance *on the Reports of the Goſpel.* Before, he little regarded the Ordinances, but either neglected coming at them, or took no heed to the Truths delivered in them, or entertained them with Prejudice and Contempt. But now, the very hearing that the Goſpel is a diſcovery made of a way in which miſerable Sinners may be delivered, and obtain Salvation, makes him to entertain a civil reſpect to and liking of it; and thereupon he hears theſe glad tidings with no little rational content: ſo did *the ſtony ground hearers*, Mat. 13. 20. Such effects as theſe are, the Spirit works, as he ſees meet, by theſe Convictions.

Use. I. *HENCE Learn, what to think of thoſe that are* ſtrangers *to theſe Convictions.* We have already obſerved, that the Spirit works them diverſly, both as to the manner and degree. But that man that pretends to believe in Chriſt for Salvation, that hath not been convinced of his ſin, and miſery by it, cannot give a good reaſon of his hope, or ſatisfy his own Conſcience what he truſts in Chriſt for.

Use. II. *LEARN hence, that theſe* Convictions alone, *are not a ſufficient evidence of a man's good and ſafe ſtate.* They are of the way in which God uſually, under the means brings Sinners home to himſelf; but they may be wrought upon the natural principles that are in fallen man, without any ſaving change in the heart; and therefore cannot give a diſtinguiſhing character of a Child of God. It is therefore preſumption for any to build their confidence upon them. Theſe Convictions may dye away, or they may take up at a legal Repentance, ſhort of ſaving Grace.

Use. III. *HENCE it is our duty to endeavour with men, to bring them to, and nouriſh in them, theſe* Convictions. If we deſire, and would be inſtrumental of the Converſion of our friends, we muſt begin here. To tell them of a Chriſt, before we ſhew them their need of him, is prepoſterous: And that is done by laying open before them, their Sin and Miſery. And when we ſee any labouring under the diſtreſs of theſe Convictions, let us not be ſorry for, but glad of it: and take heed how we ſeek to ſtop them. If they tend to deſpair, it is good to offer encouragement, but not to hinder but help the kindly operation of them, as to encourage our praying for them, and to foment the operation of them, unto a godly ſorrow under them; and thereby, doing what in us lies to help on the Repentance that is not to be repented of, and put them upon ſeeking of Chriſt reſtleſly till they have found him.

[February 15. 1697.]

SERMON *CXIX.*

WE have been conſidering how the Spirit applies himſelf to the *Underſtanding*, by way of Conviction, and that both of *Sin* and *Miſery*, in the Preparitory Work. It follows to obſerve,

2. *THAT he inwardly applies himſelf to the Underſtanding by way of ſaving* Illumination. He enlightens it in the knowledge of Chriſt. The Spirit of God is a free Agent, and comes in to the Soul at his pleaſure: but becauſe he treats with the man, according to his nature, he uſually firſt begins with the former Conviction, in which, having brought him into diſtreſs, and put him upon inquiring, he now comes and reveals Chriſt unto him, as the only Remedy againſt the miſery, which by ſin he is brought into. Not as if by the former work there were any ſaving Change wrought in the Soul, or any Obligation by it laid upon him to proceed to the producing of the ſaving Change. He may leave the man there; and if he doth, he ſtill is a ſtranger to the life of Chriſt. However it may be ſaid of ſuch an one, who is under ſuch Convictions, that *he is not far from the Kingdom of Heaven*; as having been under the Law, which is our Schoolmaſter to Chriſt. This Work of ſaving *Illumination* wrought by the Spirit on the Soul in paſſive Converſion, is a ſecret and myſterious Work, and better known by the Perſon who hath received it, then capable of being deſcribed by words. And many times the moſt that ſuch a perſon can ſay of himſelf is, *That I know, that whereas once I was blind, now I ſee.* Give me leave however to make ſome eſſay, to ſtammer out a little about it. Let us then obſerve theſe Concluſions,

1. *THAT the whole body of ſanctifying and ſaving Graces are* at once *ingenerated in paſſive Converſion.* There is not a ſucceſſion in this Work, but it is at once and inſtantaneous. Theſe Graces are many, and ſome of them belong to the Underſtanding, others to

the Will and Affections, but yet they all of them go in together to conſtitute the new Nature in us; the whole of them therefore is for that reaſon called the new Man, which is put on in our Renovation, *Eph.* 4. 23, 24. And this is called the new Creature or Creation, 2 *Cor* 5. 17. Now Creation is in an inſtant. If God ſay, Let ſuch a thing be, it forthwith ſtands forth in its entire Being. It is called *the Divine Nature*, 2 *Pet.* 1.4. As having its original from God, and being a Conformity to his Image. And there is no Grace but what belongs to it; for the new Man is perfect, and hath no member wanting, *Jam.* 1. 4.

2. *THAT there is a* diſtinction *and* order *of theſe Graces in themſelves, and ought to be ſo in our Conſideration of them.* They are diſtinct in themſelves; for though they all proceed from the ſame principles of infuſed Holineſs, yet they are ſo many diverſe Members going in to make up that one Body in us. As therefore the hand is not the foot, though both are of the Body, ſo neither is one Grace another; Faith is not Love, Patience is not Joy &c. though all belong to the new Nature. They are alſo diſtinguiſhed in the ſubject of them: there are ſome of them ſeated in the Underſtanding which is renewed by them, *Col.* 3. 10. and are uſually called intellectual; others are in the Will and Affections, *Eph.* 4. 24. and are called moral. There is alſo an order between them, one is before another, though not in Being, for ſo they are together, yet with reſpect to Operation, one working by and from another, *Gal.* 5. 6. Of which more anon. And this diſtinction and order is to be obſerved by us, in our conſidering of them; and that not meerly from the neceſſity of our manner of Conception, but alſo from the nature of the things themſelves. In our Contemplation of the Divine Perfections, we are neceſſitated to take them aſunder, though in God they are but that one abſolute & *ſimple Being*, elſe we could know nothing of him; but the Graces in us have the foundation of this diſtinct and orderly conſideration in them, being created Perfections in us, and aſſigned to their ſeveral uſes.

3. HENCE, *For a clear apprehenſion of the Work of Effectual Calling, we muſt conſider the* ſaving Operation *of the Spirit on the Underſtanding, and on the Will apart.* That he doth influence them both with his Power in this Work is certain, and that becauſe he draws them with the cords of a man, and they are brought to believe in Chriſt as *Cauſes by counſel*; they muſt therefore have both Eyes to ſee, and Ears to hear, and an Heart to embrace him. The act of Faith being a truſting on Chriſt as an Object ſuitable, and apprehended to be ſo, the power of Believing wro't in paſſive Converſion muſt needs correſpond hereto. Why we firſt treat of the renewing of the Underſtanding by Illumination, will appear in the Sequel. Concerning which let us obſerve,

1. *THAT there is a* literal *knowledge, neceſſarily either antecedent to, or concomitant of this ſaving Illumination.* By a literal knowledge I underſtand, a rational conception of the Truths of the Goſpel, which are to be believed by us; to which alſo belongs an humane credit or hiſtorical faith of the truth of them. Now the ſaving Illumination always ſuppoſeth ſuch a knowledge as this; either it finds it in the man, or brings it into him. Without this knowledge the mind of man cannot be good. The want of this belongs to that hiding of the Goſpel, of which, 2 Cor. 4. 3. *But if our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt.* This therefore is the next and immediate deſign of the literal and miniſterial teaching appointed by God, tho' the ultimate aim of it is to bring men to a ſaving acquaintance with Chriſt; the Spirit having choſen ordinarily to convey this ſanctifying light in this way. A defect in this knowledge is blamed by the Apoſtle in them, Heb. 5. 12. *For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the firſt principles of the oracles of God, and are become ſuch as have need of milk, and not of ſtrong meat.* And a neglect of inſtructing the People in it, is ſeverely charged on thoſe Prieſts of old, Hoſ. 4. 6. *My people are deſtroyed for lack of knowledge: becauſe thou haſt rejected knowledge, I will alſo reject thee, that thou ſhalt be no prieſt to me: ſeeing thou haſt forgotten the law of thy God, I will alſo forget thy children.*

2. *THAT there may be a literal knowledge, and an hiſtorical Faith, where there is no* ſaving *Illumination.* Altho' the latter is not without the former, yet the former may be, where the latter is not. The one is but a common gift, whereas the other is a ſaving Grace. The Articles of Religion are delivered intelligibly, accommodable to the ſentiments of humane reaſon, and may be ſo underſtood, as the rules of other Arts, by him that applies his mind to read, and hear, and ſtudy upon them. And there are no Truths have more rational confirmations given to gain mens credit, than thoſe of the Word of God. And though it be a great favour of God to make men Orthodox in the points of Divinity, and not leave them to a Spirit of error; yet it is given to ſuch as never come to a ſpiritual diſcerning. Chriſt ſuppoſeth that men may *know their Lord's will, and not do it*, Luk. 12.47. And it is beyond queſtion, that there are ſome who have a very large portion of knowledge in Religion, who are yet utter ſtrangers to the ſaving knowledge of Chriſt; whenas there are others whoſe knowledge of theſe things is more confuſed, who yet do ſo know God and Chriſt, as is Eternal Life.

3. *THAT there is a* ſaving knowledge *of Chriſt, wrought in Effectual Vocation, that belongs, & is eſſential unto Faith.* To limit faith to the Underſtanding, and to deny it any rooting in the Underſtanding, are both extreams

treams to be avoided. Truly we have but little acquaintance with our own Souls, and the faculties thereof; but this we know in general, that the Understanding and Will in us must concur in every act we perform, as Causes by Counsel, or that is properly humane. And hence, both these faculties must be sanctifyed for the producing of gracious actions. But more particularly observe,

(1.) *THAT* Christ *is the Object on which the Soul terminates in Effectual Vocation.* The effect wrought in Effectual Calling is, *We are made to believe in Christ; We come to him on his Call, follow him upon his Invitation, accept of him on his Offer.* He therefore is the Object proposed to us in the Gospel, unto whom we are to look that we may be saved. And this is the design of all the Invitations given us to believe. The Preaching of the Gospel is therefore called the *Preaching of Christ*, Act. 8. 5. And *Paul* terminates his whole Preaching to the *Corinthians*, upon this Subject, 1 *Cor.* 2. 2. When therefore we are truly brought home to Christ, then we are Called.

(2.) *THAT the Soul is drawn to Christ, after the manner of a* reasonable Creature. In the bringing the man actually to believe in Christ, which is the resultancy of this call, we are not carried by instinct, and a blind impulse, which many pretend unto. This would be to treat us, not as men, but as brutes; but it is by Counsel. And indeed, believing in Christ is a most deliberate act. The man considers and sees reason for what he doth. *Paul* could say, 2 Tim 1. 12. *For I know whom I have believed, and I am perswaded he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.* For this reason it is that in the Gospel-Treaty, God not only bids men come to and believe in Christ, but reasons with them about it, and lays all convincing Arguments before them, to shew them the Necessity of it in order to Salvation.

(3.) HENCE, *There must be the* Assent *of the Understanding in order to the consent of the Will.* In Faith there is a trusting in Christ, which is properly a voluntary casting our selves on him for Life, but to a rational doing so, there must be an acknowledging of him to be an Object of Trust; One that is to be confided in, and that with safety, and this is properly an act of the Understanding. And this is, not only in order of Nature, but also of acting before the other, for though the Power of both, be at once infused in Regeneration, yet the order of exerting its Powers by a rational agent, is thus and no otherwise, viz. He sees that in Christ, which sets him forth to be an Object every way suitable to be trusted in, and he firmly believes him to be such as he is represented to him, and therefore he adventureth himself upon him, on his Invitation. It is therefore supposed, that every one that hath truly believed on Christ, is able to give a *reason of his hope*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 15.

(4.) *THAT in order to this Assent, the Mind must be enlightened in the* Knowledge *of Christ.* It must have the Light of it before it can improve it, and act by the direction and influence of it. There must be sight in the Eye, else it cannot see. If therefore the Man be blind, his Eye-sight be lost, it must be restored to him again, before he can see; for there must be a principle, before there can be an Operation. Such is the present case; for it is not a literal Knowledge, but a spiritual Discerning that is required to it. The Eye of Man's natural Understanding is not put out, he may therefore improve it to know Christ according to the flesh. But his spiritual Eye sight is gone, and must be restored; this is properly the Image of God on the Understanding, which is to be renewed, *Col.* 3. 10. *The Assent of Faith, is a firm Belief and Acknowledgement, that Christ is an Object on whom the Soul may securely lean its whole repose for Eternity, and be happy in so doing.* Which that it may be gained, we must have such an effectual Discovery made of him in us, as fully convinceth us how and wherein he is so: And prevails over all doubts and jealousies in us, whether he be so or no. This is the Divine Illumination which we are considering of. Here then there are two things to be taken notice of with respect to it, viz. the Matter and the Manner of it.

1. *AS to the* Matter *of it, it is the great Gospel Truths concerning Christ, as he is made to be an Object suitable for our Faith to build upon.* I will not here dispute what Articles about Christ are necessary to be known, or what is the distinctness of the Knowledge of them, that must be in that Knowledge that accompanies Salvation. A difference of Times, and Means, and Opportunities must here be acknowledged; and the Sovereignty of free Grace in the Communications of it self is to be adored. But I shall offer to touch on these heads, which do principally belong to this Knowledge of Christ, for which we are to wait upon God in the use of all the Means appointed. And they are,

1. *THE Truths which concern the* Person *of Christ.* In Effectual Calling we believe on Christ for Salvation. We must therefore believe that he is able to save to the uttermost, for which end, we must know how he came to be so; which we cannot know, without some acquaintance with his Person, viz. That he is the Eternal Son of God, according to his Divine Nature, and that he is the Son of Man according to his Humane Nature. That he is both God and Man in one Person; Hence we must know and believe that the second Person in the blessed Trinity was Incarnate; that the *Word was made flesh*, that he took our very Nature upon him, without which he could never have wrought out that Salvation for us, which we stood in need of. For except he had been Man, he could not have answered the demands of the Law for us, and stood as our Surety; and unless he had been God, he could not have

compleated that Suretiſhip, by paying the full price of our Redemption.

2. *THE Truths that diſcover the great* Deſign *of his being ſuch a Perſon; or the Reaſon why the Son of God took our Nature upon him, and appeared cloathed with our fleſh.* All of which amount to that in fine, viz. That he might redeem and ſave us. Hence we muſt know that the Son of God, together with his being made a man, was alſo made under the Law, for the accompliſhing of this affair, Gal. 4. 4,5. *But when the fulneſs of the time was come, God ſent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons.* It was that he might anſwer the demands of Juſtice for us; and by doing and dying for us, might lay in a compleat Righteouſneſs that might ſtand for our Juſtification, and make way for the manifeſtation of the free Grace of God in our Salvation. Hence that, 2 Cor. 5. 21. *For he hath made him to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* And that this deſign was contrived & fixed, in a firm agreement that paſt between his Father and him, on which the acceptance of him, in purſuit of it, doth depend. According to, Zech. 6. 13. *Even he ſhall build the Temple of the Lord, and he ſhall bear the glory, and ſhall ſit and rule upon his throne, and he ſhall be a prieſt upon his throne, and the counſel of peace ſhall be between them both.*

3. *THE Truths that refer to the* Offices *he bare for the management of this deſign.* It was requiſite that he ſhould be inveſted with Authority ſufficient for this affair. Hence his Inauguration. He therefore ſaith, Math. 28. 18. *And Jeſus came, and ſpake unto them, ſaying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.* Now for the compleating of our Salvation, there muſt be ſatisfaction made to the Juſtice of God for us; whence is his *Prieſthood.* And we muſt be guided into, and *led in the way of Peace*; to the former of which his *Prophetical*, and to the latter his *Kingly* Office refer. So that we muſt know him in theſe Offices, and therein, how ſuitable an one he is to engage in this great Work, as having to do by them both with God and man; and ſo being fit to be a Mediator between them: as he is for this reaſon called, 1 Tim. 2. 5. *For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Chriſt Jeſus.*

4. *THE Truths which diſcover his full* Sufficiency *to anſwer this deſign.* For it is not enough for us to lean our weight on one that hath undertaken, unleſs he be alſo able to go through with his undertaking. And here we muſt know what he hath already done for this end, or that Redemption which he hath gone through, in his Life & Death; and how therein he anſwered all the demands of the Law, and that both for the ſatisfaction of revenging Juſtice for our offences, and the purchaſing of the Kingdom of Glory, and all the bleſſings referring to it for us. Whereby he hath made that a Truth, Heb. 10. 14. *For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified.* As alſo, that whatſoever remains to be done in bringing us to the full poſſeſſion of the purchaſed Inheritance, by making us meet for it, is ſecured in him. According to, *Heb.* 7. 25. And here we are to be acquainted with the Doctrine of his Humiliation and Exaltation.

5. *THE Truths wherein we are aſſured, that he is* ready & willing *to receive all Comers to him, and ſave them.* His Ability conſidered alone, is not ſufficient to our ſatisfactory reliance on them, tho' it have encouragement in it to ſeek him for Salvation. Many therefore ſtick here. They are afraid whether he will accept of them, if they come, and are too apt to put themſelves out of hope, by aggravating their miſery to bring them to deſpair. This therefore muſt be believed, That *Chriſt ſtands at the door, and knocks:* That he will caſt out none who are perſwaded to come unto him: That he delighteth in ſhewing mercy. *That if weary & heavy laden Sinners come to him, he will give them reſt.* That ſcarlet and crimſon ſins cannot prevent his ſhewing them mercy, if they confeſs and forſake them, and caſt themſelves upon him by Faith: That the glory of his Grace is hereby exalted, and the very end of his Redemption is obtained hereby.

2. *AS for the* manner *of it; Or* how *he thus Illuminates them.* And here,

1. *HE lets in a divine light into the* Underſtanding, *by which it is renewed.* He doth not put a new faculty into the man, but he reſtores the Image of God to it. Hence it is compared to the cauſing of the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, in the firſt Creation, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. This is called the giving us an Underſtanding, 1 *Joh.* 5. 20. It is called an opening of the eyes, &c. Act. 26. 18. Intimating that they were before ſhut, and under the power of darkneſs. We are therefore told how it is with the natural man in this regard, 1 Cor. 2. 14. *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs unto him: neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.* Not only is there a revelation of theſe truths in the Word, (but for which Natures light could have never groped them out,) but there is a power put into the man to ſee ſpiritual things with a ſpiritual eye. *Moſes* complains of them, Deut. 29. 4. *Yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to ſee, and ears to hear, unto this day.* And yet he tells them they had ſeen them, ver. 2. *And Moſes called unto all Iſrael, and ſaid unto them, Ye have ſeen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, unto Pharoah, and unto all his ſervants, and unto all his land.* So that it is a new light that is given them, and properly belongs to the new Creature.

2. *HE brings this* Object *into the Underſtanding in its glorious luſtre.* The man

before

before had a notion of the Truths concerning Chriſt, and could talk of them, and argue about them; but he ſaw no beauty nor glory in them, nor in him whom they concerned. It might be ſaid of it as, *Iſai.* 53. 2. He is now made to ſee the *King in his Glory.* He acts the truths upon the Underſtanding, ſo as that Chriſt is made to appear the *Chief of ten thouſands, and altogether lovely.* The moſt beautiful & amiable Object even to aſtoniſhment and admiration; which tranſports the Soul into an extaſy. And all things elſe, which ſometimes ſeemed to dazzle him, are made to appear vile compared with the excellency of Chriſt, *Phil.* 3. 8. He cauſeth Chriſt to poſſeſs the Underſtanding, as the adequate Object of it, *Col.* 1. 17, 18, 19.

3. *HE brings in this light with a* convincing *Evidence of the divine Teſtimony.* He bears theſe Truths upon the Underſtanding, with that efficacy that is irreſiſtable; he writes the law of them on the mind, and ſtamps the witneſs of God himſelf upon it, with evidencing certainty; called a receiving of it, Joh. 3. 33. *He that hath received his teſtimony, hath ſet to his ſeal, that God is true.* We are told that the *work of Faith is wrought with power, Eph.* 1. 19. 1 *Theſ.* 1. 11. He can no longer withſtand the efficacy of the Truth. He is now aſſured that Chriſt is ſuch an Object, as he is repreſented to be, Joh. 6. 69. *And we believe, and are ſure that thou art that Chriſt the Son of the living God.* And he now is throughly perſuaded that Chriſt invites him to come to him, and adventure upon him. He is made to hear the voice of the Son of God, and feels in himſelf a ſtrong call to ariſe and come away to Chriſt as the rock of his Salvation.

4. *HE puts a new* Judgment *into the Underſtanding.* Judgment belongs to the practical Underſtanding, by the exerciſe whereof it gives its determinate advice to the Will, and fully concludes what is to be choſen, what to be refuſed. In order to which determination, the judgment muſt be ſettled. Now in order to this Faith on Chriſt, there muſt be ſuch a light let in, as may bring the judgment to a concluſion; for want whereof all the Knowledge that a natural man hath of divine Truths, never ſettles him upon it. And here are two things,

(1.) *HE makes him clearly to apprehend the incomparable Excellency there is in* Chriſt: That he is the moſt eligible; that there is none like him, none to be compared with him. That there is none in Heaven or Earth to be deſired in compariſon with him; that he is worthy for whom all things are to be forſaken, that we may enjoy him; that there is no diſpute in the caſe, whether we ſhould forſake father and mother &c. to enjoy him; that all thoſe are happy that put their truſt in him; that to loſe all, and gain Chriſt, is a good exchange, and will never repent him that ſo doth; that to miſs of him is to be hopeleſly undone. This is the ſpiritual Diſcerning or Apprehending of Chriſt, mentioned in the Goſpel.

(2.) *HE hereby puts the Underſtanding in a* readineſs *to give in its full verdict for him, as an Object to be truſted in for Life & Happineſs.* And this is the natural reſult of the forecited apprehenſion: For when the Judgment is enlightened in the premiſes, it is ſo fixedly prepared for the concluſion. When the Spirit of God hath thus cauſed the Underſtanding to know Chriſt, it cannot but declare for him.

USE. *THIS conſideration may help us in our* Trial *of our Title to Chriſt, and Life by him.* And it will afford no ſmall relief to the Soul, that may poſſibly doubt about the truth of his cloſure with Chriſt by Faith. It is certain, that if Faith be in the Underſtanding, it is alſo in the Will: but we may have a more clear diſcerning of it in one faculty, than in the other. Now there is certainly a diſtinguiſhing light, let into the Soul in *Effectual Calling*, which is a vaſtly different thing from the cleareſt light that is in a natural man, which is the light of Faith; and it is of the ſame nature with, though of a far lower degree, than the light of Glory. It is a light which carries its own evidence with it; for light is of a manifeſting or evidencing nature. Ask your own Hearts then, what diſcoveries of Chriſt have been made to & in you? Hath the Spirit of God come into your Underſtandings, and given them a renovation? Do you ſee Chriſt with other Eyes than ſometimes you did? Hath the glorious Face of Chriſt been ſo repreſented to you, as to darken all the luſtre in every thing elſe, and make you deſpiſe what ſometimes you admired? Have you ſeen ſo much of Chriſt, as hath made him *precious to you,* 1 *Pet.* 2. 7. Hath it drawn off your Eyes from all other Objects, ſo as to make you ſay as, Pſal. 73. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I deſire beſides thee.* And the more you gaze upon him, the more admiration you conceive of him? Be not diſcouraged, I may ſay to you, as Chriſt did once to his Diſciples, *Bleſſed are your Eyes, for they ſee.*

[APRIL 12. 1698.]

SERMON CXX.

WE have taken an account how the Spirit of God applies himſelf inwardly to the *Underſtanding*, both by Conviction and Illumination. We proceed now to his applying himſelf to the *Will*, and working a ſaving Change in that, which is here called the *renewing of our Wills.* About this Work, the Chriſtian World is full of unhappy diſputes, occaſioned by the eager Patrons of Free-Will. But my buſineſs here is not Polemical. I ſhall not here diſcourſe Phyſically, of the Nature of the Reaſonable Soul; or inquire whether

whether the Underſtanding and Will in it be in themſelves two diſtinct Faculties; or one having in it theſe powers, diſtinguiſhed in themſelves or our conceptions. Our knowledge of the nature of our own Souls, is very ſhallow and confuſed. But for our right Conception of the affair before us, we may obſerve theſe Concluſions,

1. *THAT the product of Effectual Vocation, is our* Believing *on Chriſt for Salvation.* This will afterwards be ſpoken to. Here only I mention it, as a Ground of what follows. We are therefore told in the former, that Faith is wrought in us, in our Effectual Calling. *For, by the Goſpel we are invited to come to Chriſt for Life, and in Believing we anſwer this Call.*

2. *THAT in this Believing there is required both a* Judgment *and an* Election. Faith, according to the Goſpel ſenſe of it, contains both an Aſſent, and a Conſent. There is a judging of Chriſt to be an Object ſuitable for the man to rely upon, and every way ſufficient to do that for us, which we go to him for; and a choice made of him to be the Object of this truſt. For, both of theſe go into every humane action; and it is certain that there is no act of ſaving Faith without both. If we do not judge of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to be ſuch an One as can ſave us, we cannot truſt in him as a Saviour. Pſal. 9.10. *And they that know thy name will put their truſt in thee.* And if we acknowledge never ſo plauſibly the Goſpel Truths, yet if we do not reject all other Objects, and rely upon him on a free choice, we are Unbelievers.

3. *THAT theſe are* two *diſtinct Operations of the Soul.* However there be a concomitancy of them in the act of believing, yet in themſelves they are not one and the ſame thing, but diverſe. It is one thing to declare that we find a thing to be thus and ſo, and another thing to paſs an act thereupon, in either chuſing or refuſing the thing according as it is ſo found. And though this latter is built upon the former, yet it is another thing quite different from it.

4. HENCE, *They infer two diverſe* Powers *in the Soul to exert them.* As paſſing a judgment on a thing, and paſſing an act of choice or refuſal, are in themſelves vaſtly different, ſo we muſt conceive the power of exerting them to be as different; ſo that they muſt flow from two principles, really diverſe one from another. As without knowledge there can be no judgment paſt, ſo without liberty, there can no election be made. Now reaſon tells us, that knowledge is one thing, and liberty another.

5. *THAT the former of theſe is that which we call* Underſtanding, *and the latter the* Will. Which, though they belong to one and the ſame Soul, yet are ſeveral powers of it, and accordingly are generally ſuppoſed to be diſtinct faculties. However, the Word of God every where ſpeaks of them diſtinctly, and aſſigns theſe actions accordingly to them; *That whereby we diſcern things, and give in our verdict about them, is called the* Underſtanding: *That whereby we determine on our Object, and reſolve upon our Actions, we call the* Will.

6. *THAT both of theſe powers are altogether depraved by* Sin, *in reſpect of ſpiritual things.* Not that man's Apoſtacy hath rooted out theſe faculties, or taken away from them their natures, as they belong to meer humanity, for then ſhould man ceaſe to be a reaſonable Creature, or treatable as ſuch. But as theſe powers were put into man, to capacitate him to ſerve God as a free and voluntary Agent, and were accordingly ſanctified by the impreſſion of the image of God upon them; ſo are they ſpoiled by the Amiſſion of that image, and become unable to ſerve to their end. The pravity of the nature of man by ſin is univerſal. All the powers in him are undone by it. As therefore his Judgment is loſt about the things of God, becauſe he hath loſt the power of diſcerning them; (as, 1 *Cor.* 2.14.) So his Elective power is gone, as to any divine Object, and his Will is utterly unable to chuſe Chriſt, and refuſe other objects for him. Hence that, *Joh.* 5.40. And therefore the giving the Will, as well as the enlightning of the Mind, is aſcribed to God in the Goſpel, Phil. 2.13. *For it is God which working in you, both to do will and to do of his good pleaſure.*

7. HENCE, *Both of theſe muſt be reſtored in* Converſion. It is not enough, as ſome think, that the Underſtanding be perſwaded of the Truth, and brought to give a full aſſent to it; as if the Will muſt thereupon ſpontaneouſly follow it, without any more ado. For, tho' when the Mind is ſavingly enlightened, the Will doth ever cloſe in with that light, and reſign itſelf to it, yet the reaſon is, becauſe the regenerating Work of the Spirit is wro't in the whole man at once. He never gives a new Underſtanding, but a new Will with it. The whole body of ſanctifying Grace being created, and infuſed at once. Hence they are put together, Act. 26. 18. *To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveneſs of ſins, and inheritance among them which are ſanctified by faith that is in me.*

THAT therefore which now lies before us, is, to conſider what is done by the Spirit of God in the *renewing of our Wills*, ſo as to put into them a power and inclination to make choice of Jeſus Chriſt, and believe in him to Salvation. For our right taking up whereof, let theſe things be conſidered,

1. *THAT there are two ſorts of Actions performed by the Will, viz.* Elicite *and* Imperate; *the former immediately by it ſelf, and the latter by the affections. The* Elicite *acts of the Will are in chuſing or rejecting the Object before it.* This act is performed inwardly by it, and belongs to the ſovereignty of the Will in the man, by vertue whereof he is a free Agent. Hence ſuch a precept is given us, Amos 5.15. *Hate the evil, and love the good.* And that

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is given as a ſign of a perſons being capable of acting as a man, Iſai. 7. 16. *For before the child ſhall know to refuſe the evil, and chuſe the good. The* Imperate *acts of the Will are thoſe by which it puts its Elections in execution, and purſues them to effect; in which it nextly makes uſe of the Affections, by which it manageth the whole man.* Whether the Affections belong to the Will in man, and are only the various motions of it, or whether they be diſtinct faculties in him, and are ſeated in his inferiour powers, I diſpute not. It is certain, that they are the inſtruments by which the Will performs its *Imperate* actions, and in which it is either carried to or from the object.

2. *THAT both theſe ſorts of Actions are requiſite to* actual Believing *on Chriſt.* The act of Faith which is exerted by the Soul in its cloſure with Chriſt in Effectual Calling, conſiſts of both an abſolute choice made of him, and a going out of the whole Soul to him, as ſuch an Object. The former of theſe is expreſt in that, Pſal. 73. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I deſire beſides thee.* The latter in that, Pſal. 63. 8. *My ſoul followeth hard after thee.* And for this reaſon, the act of Faith is often expreſt by love, deſire, hope, &c. becauſe in every of theſe the Soul is carried out to him, as the Object of its truſt & dependance.

3. *THAT there is a miſerable* impotency *and* malignity *in the Will of fallen man, with reſpect to both of theſe.* The pravity of man's nature, by the efficacy of Original Sin, is not only diſcovered in the blindneſs of his mind, but alſo in the indiſpoſition and perverſeneſs of his Will. And here,

(1.) *IT labours of utter* impotency *to make this choice, or to purſue it.* Sin hath led man to chuſe another object, and they cannot alter it, Iſai. 44. 20. *He feedeth on aſhes: a deceived heart hath turned him aſide, that he cannot deliver his ſoul, nor ſay, Is there not a lie in my right hand?* It hath alienated their hearts from God, and they cannot turn them again. And on this account they are ſaid to be *without ſtrength*, Rom. 5. 6. And *Paul* ſets forth the man's inſufficiency in this regard, as to himſelf, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. The Will indeed remains a Will, and hath not loſt its natural power; it cannot be forced. But they miſtake who think the Will is ſpoiled of its natural liberty, unleſs its retains a power of indifferency to all things that are oppoſite, to chuſe or refuſe on either hand. That it hath ſuch a liberty in ſome things is not to be denied; but then they are things natural, not things ſpiritual. It ſufficeth that the Will is not forced, while it retains its ſpontaneity, and acts willingly, and not contrary to its inclination; which ſpontaneity is conſiſtent with an impotency to ſome actions, and a neceſſity of others. There are ſome things which a man cannot but chuſe and purſue, and others which he cannot but refuſe and avoid, and yet he doth it with a full freedom, or ſpontaneous acting therein.

(2.) *IT alſo labours of woful* malignity. Original Sin hath ſo defiled the Will, as it is filled with an engaged enmity againſt the Will of God, *Rom.* 8. 7. It is perverſly ſet to depart from God, and purſue the things that are contrary to him. And accordingly it is ſet againſt believing on Chriſt, when revealed and offered in the Goſpel. Hence that, *Joh.* 5. 40. The corrupt luſts that are ſeated in it, fill it with all malice againſt the Goſpel-way of Salvation.

4. *THAT as long as the Will is under the* dominion *of this impotency & malignity, it can exert neither of theſe acts upon Chriſt.* The power of Original Sin on the Wills of men is ſuch, that they cannot reſiſt it of themſelves. The Will is made a Captive, and how ſhould it be able to free itſelf whiles it is a voluntary Captive? And ſo it muſt needs be, till releaſed from that Captivity. Luſt, that hath the regimen of the Soul, holds it faſt; the ingenerate contrariety there is in it unto God, keeps it bound. And yet it all this while acts as a Will; though as a depraved and corrupted Will. The viciouſneſs of its nature carries it forth, and holds it faſt to the bias, or corrupt inclination which is upon it. How ſhould the man chuſe Chriſt while other objects have & poſſeſs his heart. Hence that, Joh 5. 44. *How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and ſeek not the honour which cometh from God only?* And how ſhould he go forth after Chriſt, whoſe affections are glewed to other objects? Theſe therefore muſt be ſubdued, if ever this be done.

5. *THAT hence there muſt be a* renewing Change *wrought in the Will, in order to its being thus enabled to cloſe with Chriſt.* Could we ſuppoſe never ſo much light let into the Underſtanding, cauſing it to diſcern all the preciouſneſs of Chriſt as he is revealed in the Goſpel; yet if the Will remain in the ſame poſture it is in in the man's natural eſtate, it would be impoſſible for it to chuſe Chriſt, and to love him. There muſt therefore be a renovation on it. When therefore the Apoſtle had ſpoken of our being *renewed in the image of our mind*, Eph. 4. 23. he exemplifies it with reſpect to the Will, ver. 24. *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs, and true holineſs.* A new Underſtanding, without a new Heart, will never amount to a thorough Converſion. As long as the Will remains poſſeſſed of corrupt luſts, and hath no other power in it, it can never imbrace Chriſt.

6. *THIS renewing Change is wrought, by creating a new principle of ſaving Grace in the* Will *and* Affections. It is certain, that if ever the man believe, he muſt have power to believe. This power is that which we call the habit of Faith; which habit is not infuſed by it ſelf, but togerher with all the other regenerating Graces, which are wrought in the Soul by the Spirit: An Account whereof we before took. This is hat which is called the *giving of a new heart, and the putting*

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in of a new ſpirit,&c.Ezek.36.26.which cannot intend new faculties, but a new ſaving impreſſion of Grace on the faculties of the Soul in the man. Now, how this is done on the Will and Affections, with reſpect to Effectual Vocation, or the diſpoſing of the heart to believing on Chriſt,may be conſidered in three or four particulars,

(1.) *THE Spirit of God, together with the light which he lets into the Underſtanding, puts into the heart an* high eſteem *of Jeſus Chriſt.* Chriſt is propoſed as the Object of Faith, to perſwade the Soul to accept of him as ſuch. He is commended to the man as a Glorious One, in all his fulneſs of ſufficiency. Now not only is the mind irradiated with theſe diſcoveries, ſo as to ſubſcribe to the truth of them ; but there is with it put into the heart an appreciation of him : He is made to it exceeding precious : The Soul hath an impreſſion of his Excellency upon it, ſo as to value him, *the chief of ten Thouſands*, Cant. 5. 10.

(2.) *THE Spirit of God* forms *Chriſt in the Soul.* The Apoſtle hath ſuch an expreſſion, Gal. 4. 19. *My little children of whom I travail in birth again until Chriſt be formed in you.* He then forms Chriſt in the man, when he brings Chriſt into the heart, and gives him a room there ; when the Soul is made to feel thoſe impreſſions on it, whereby Chriſt comes into it, and takes up his dwelling and abode in it. The heart is taken up for him, and Chriſt takes poſſeſſion of it by his Spirit. Hence we read of the *Spirit's dwelling in us*, Rom.8. 11. and of *Chriſt's being in us*, ver. 10.

(3.) *HE herewith puts into the Will, an irreſiſtable* ſpontaneity, *to make Choice of Chriſt, as the Object of his Truſt.* Here is no force put upon the Will, but there is an influence on it ſuitable to its nature. There is ſuch an impreſſion made upon it, that carries it forth with the greateſt freedom. Now this impreſſion it ſelf, is properly the renovation of the Will, as to its elective power, in order to theElicit act : And as it doth it with greateſt freedom,ſo it cannot do otherwiſe. TheSpouſe therefore tells us how it was with her unexpectedly, Cant. 6. 12. *Or ever I was aware,my ſoul made me as the chariots of Ammi-nadib.* And accordingly we are told, in Pſal. 110. 3. *Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power.*

(4.) *AND he puts a new ſpring into the* Affections, *by infuſing the habits of Grace into them, ſuitable to their Operations.* The Affections are of two ſorts, *ſeperating* and *cloſing* ; ſuited to the two ſorts of Elicit acts in the Will, *refuſing* and *chuſing*. Theſe alſo are very exorbitant by reaſon of Sin : But the Spirit of God puts a new inclination into them: He ſanctifies them, by making the ſeperating Affections fit to fly from every other object of truſt, and the cloſing ones to carry the Soul out after Chriſt. The Affections are ſpiritualized, and now *ſet on the things above*, Col. 3. 2.

THUS is the Work wrought in the Soul which belongs to *paſſive Converſion*, and by it, the Grace of Faith, together with all other Graces is planted in the man.

WE now proceed, very briefly, to conſider the reſult of all this, or what poſture it puts the Soul into in order to believing ; which is expreſt in theſe words, *He doth perſwade and enable us to Embrace Chriſt on the Goſpel-Offer.* The word *perſwade*, may be applied either to the Work it ſelf in paſſive Converſion, or to the act of Faith that is conſequent thereupon. We at preſent ſhall conſider it only in the former reſpect. And ſo there are two things here to be obſerved, viz. 1. *That there is a new power put into the Soul to accept of Chriſt.* 2. *That there is alſo a diſpoſition or inclination put into it, thus to do.* I ſhall not diſcourſe of them diſtinctly, only conſidering them together, let us obſerve theſe things,

1. *THAT in the fore-deſcribed Work, there are all the principles of a* ſaving Faith *wrought in the man.* The work of Grace produced in the heart by the Spirit of God in Converſion, is a furniture fitting him for that ſervice which by the apoſtacy he was diſabled for. They are the habits of Graces that are infuſed into the man in it. The ſpiritual Illumination let into the Underſtanding, and the renovation beſtowed on the Will, are the ſeed of Faith in the Soul.

2. *THAT the deſign of their being put into the man is for the acting of* Faith. Doubtleſs all the active principles that are put into the Creature, whether in the firſt or in the new Creation, were deſigned for the Creatures acting them; otherwiſe they had been in vain : whereas it is certain,that God doth nothing in vain. The end of ſpiritual Principles is for ſpiritual Performances. As God gave man eyes to ſee withal, and hands to Work with, ſo he gives a man Faith to Believe withal. The deſign of Grace is to bring men to Salvation. Hence that title, Tit. 2. 11. *For the grace of God that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all men.* And how is that, but by bringing them to compliance with the terms of the new Covenant, in which Salvation is offered them. Now in thoſe terms, actual Believing is called for, and thereupon the promiſe ſo runs, Mar.16.16. *He that believeth and is baptized ſhall be ſaved.*

3. HENCE, *They muſt needs bring ſuch a power with them into the man, as to* enable *him to* imbrace *an offered Saviour.* Elſe they would ſtill be in vain. For a thing is then vain,not only when it is for no end, but alſo when it miſſeth of its end, and eſpecially when it ſo doth, for want of ability to anſwer it. It is true, all the gracious habits put in by the Spirit have a neceſſary dependance on his co-operation for their acting. As Phil. 2. 13. *For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleaſure.* Joh. 15.5. *I am the vine, ye are the branches : He that abideth in me,and I in him, the ſame bringeth forth much fruit : for without me ye can do nothing.* But ſtill

ſtill they have in them an ordinate power, *i e.* they are by them *furniſhed for every good work.* The man is now alive, and ſo fitted for life-acts, Eph. 2. 1. *And you hath he quickned who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.* The man is able in his ſphear, to anſwer the call of Chriſt, as the man that hath an Eye, and ſight in it, is able to look upon an object.

4. *AND the very* nature *of theſe Principles, is to diſpoſe the man to Believe.* As they bring with them a power, ſo they put into the man a diſpoſition to believe in Chriſt, to accept of and imbrace him, according as he is thus offered to them. It is true, there is a drawing of the Spirit, in order to our following. According to *Cant.* 1. 4. But the way in which the Spirit draws forth the act of Faith, is by giving to the principle wrought in the man its natural motion; ſo that when the Underſtanding is ſpiritually enlightened, and diſcerns all the glorious Excellencies in Chriſt as an Object of truſt; and the Will is filled with Chriſt dwelling in it, and all the Affections are influenced with this Grace; the operation of them is natural and irreſiſtible. Chriſt is their Object, and they cannot reſt till they carry the man forth to him. He is their Center, and they draw naturally to him. And the man can truly ſay, Pſal. 42. 1. *As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God.*

USE. I. *LEARN hence, that the Work of* Effectual Calling *muſt needs tranſcend the Creatures power of producing in himſelf.* It is not enough for the Spirit of God to offer the Invitation to us in the Goſpel, and uſe the Arguments perſuaſive to allure us to it, and then leave it to our own free will, whether we will accept of it or no. Well might the Apoſtle ſay, Eph. 2. 8, 9. *For by grace are ye ſaved, through faith, and that not of your ſelves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, leſt any man ſhould boaſt.* The Will muſt be perſwaded if ever it imbraces Chriſt; and there is no believing but what is voluntary. And the Will muſt be renewed if ever it be perſwaded. The *carnal mind is enmity it ſelf*, Rom. 8. 7. And till that enmity be taken away, and the heart a new diſpoſed, it can never comply. In vain therefore do men pretend to Faith, who never had ſuch a Work of power wrought in them. For ſo the Apoſtle ſtiles that, 2 Theſ. 1. 11. *Wherefore alſo we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleaſure of his goodneſs, and the work of faith with power.* Eph. 1. 19. *And what is the exceeding greatneſs of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power.*

USE. II. *THIS tells us whether to go, and where to wait for this Grace.* Truly we are to be found in the uſe of all the means of God's appointment: For we are told, Rom. 1. 16. *For I am not aſhamed of the goſpel of Chriſt: for it is the power of God unto ſalvation, to every one that believeth, to the Jew firſt, & alſo to the Greek.* But we muſt here wait for the operations of the Spirit in and with theſe means; and accordingly renounce all dependance on the means, or on ourſelves in uſe of them.

USE. III. *ARE we* Effectually Called; *Let us then aſcribe the whole Praiſe of it to God.* Let the whole Glory be aſcribed to him: Are we *new born? It is not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God*, Joh. 1. 13. Let us then thankfully celebrate his kindneſs, and confeſs that it is *by the Grace of God that we are what we are.*

[MAY 10. 1698.]

SERMON *CXXI.*

WE have conſidered what is done by the Spirit of God in a man, in order to the impowering and inclining of him to *Believe*, which is the thing mainly pointed to in the *Anſwer* before us. Here we have the habit of Faith, together with all other Graces produced, in which we are paſſive. But *Effectual Calling* is not compleated in us, till we have anſwered the Call given us by the Spirit, which is done by actual Believing: in which alſo there is his agency or co-operation; which is intimated in that we are told, not only that he *Enableth*; but alſo that he *perſwades us to Embrace* an offered Saviour, i.e. to believe in Chriſt. Under which perſwaſion, we before obſerved, is contained, both a diſpoſing or inclining the man to do ſo, and a drawing forth of that inclination into act. The *former* of theſe is already ſpoken unto; the *latter* now comes under our Conſideration.

TOUCHING the *Nature* of ſaving Faith, our Catechiſm will afterwards call us to a diſtinct account of it. Our preſent buſineſs is to take notice, *How the Spirit of God draws it out into act in Effectual Calling.* And here we may firſt obſerve ſomething in *general* referring to actual Converſion, to which this belongs: And then more *particularly*, to the exertion of this Grace of Faith, in the Souls *embracing* of Chriſt, on the free offer & invitation given it.

I. IN the *General* Conſideration of Active Converſion, let theſe things be obſerved,

1. *THAT there is an* active *as well as a* paſſive *Converſion.* Indeed that was properly deſigned for this. The principles of ſaving Grace are put into the man on purpoſe that he may be enabled to exerciſe ſuch Graces as are required of him. The Spirit's drawing, and our running have a connexion. Cant. 1. 4. *Draw me, we will run after thee.* Man was made actively to ſerve God, without it he loſeth his end. Hence that, Iſai. 43. 21 *This people have I formed for my ſelf, they ſhall ſhew forth my praiſe.* And the *Apoſtle's* way of arguing, Gal. 5. 25. *If we live in the Spirit, let us alſo walk in the Spirit.* Grace would be in vain put into us, if it ſhould not be exerciſed.

2. *THAT when the Spirit hath done the firſt work, there is now an* active Principle *in the man.* He was before *dead*, but now he is *quickned*, *Eph.* 2. 1. It is of the very nature of that Work, to make the man alive again, who before had no ſpiritual life in him. It puts an ability into him to perform gracious actions: For *Grace in the habit, is a power of acting graciouſly.* He now hath ſtrength, who before had none. Hence that, Phil. 4 13. *I can do all things through Chriſt which ſtrengtheth me.*

3. *THAT all the* actions *of this Converſion, are truly and properly done by the man himſelf.* The new Creature is not a lifeleſs Inſtrument; but his gracious actions are done by a living Agent, exerting an inward principle of life, that is its own. Though the ability is from God, yet it is an ability that he hath infuſed into the man, and made his. God therefore acknowledgeth theſe acts to his People. And *Paul* could ſay, *I live*, Gal. 2. 20.

4. *THAT yet theſe actions cannot be done, without the efficiency of the* Spirit. No true Convert can act graciouſly, without his help. There is a dependance of all the activity of our Grace on his co-operation. He doth not only give Grace, but alſo helps it in its work. What elſe is intended, in Joh. 15. 5. *Without me ye can do nothing.* There could be no improvement of our ſpiritual life, but for him, *Gal.* 2. 20. Indeed, the Creature depends on him, as to all its natural actions. The fire burns not, &c. but by his concomitant influence, *Act.* 17. 28. And if it be ſo, in actions purely natural, can it be otherwiſe in thoſe that are ſpiritual and ſupernatural?

5. HENCE, *There is the* Operation *both of the Spirit of God, and of the man himſelf, in the acting of theſe Graces.* And this is one main difference between the firſt and ſecond Converſion: in that the Spirit only was active, and the Soul paſſive, but here, *both* are active. In that the power was given, in this it was exerted, not only in, but alſo by the man. And therefore, though the efficiency be attributed to the Spirit, in regard of his neceſſary co operation; yet the *formality* of the action is aſcribed to the man himſelf. The Spirit helps us to believe, to repent, to pray, &c. but it is not he that believes, &c. but we. Theſe two are therefore put together, Phil. 2. 12,13. *Work out your own ſalvation with fear & trembling. For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleaſure.*

6. *THAT the Spirit, & the man, do not act in* Co-ordination. This is warily to be obſerved. They do not act as two joynt efficients, dividing the work between them, as being equally concerned in it; and ſo take each his part to do: or, as if we were to do what we can, and the Spirit were to do the reſt. But there is an entire ſubordination in this affair. We work out our own Salvation, and yet he works, *Phil.* 2. 12, 13. And let it be well obſerved, that the Spirit works as the principal Agent, and firſt mover, and we as the leſs principal, who being moved, do move. They offer a great affront to the Spirit of God, that aſſign him only the place of an adjuvant efficient, working under us. The beginning of every gracious action in us, is of God, he ſets us on work: when he moves them, then our Graces do move. So *David* underſtood, *Pſal.* 119.32. Why elſe is it, that if he leaves us, we do not act our Graces, but our Corruption? 2 *Chr.* 32.31.

7. *THAT theſe actions are not* diverſe, *but the* ſame, *in which each of theſe, acts in his order.* We are not here to enquire what of the Work is done by the Spirit, and what of it is done by the Converr, from the principle of Grace in him, ſo as to aſſign this part to the one, and that to the other. But it is the ſame act, whether of Faith, or of Love, &c. in which both are efficients. True, there is corruption mixing with the beſt actions of God's People, which is neither to be aſcribed to the Spirit, nor to the Grace in them, but to their remaining concupiſcence, *Rom.* 7. 20. But their gracious actions belong entirely to both; to the Spirit as the principal, to the man with reſpect to his Grace, as the ſubordinate efficient. Hence he is ſaid to work *all our works in us*, Iſai. 26. 12. *Our works*, i. e. the works that we do, he doth them too: the ſame, and not other. Only let us obſerve this difference, He is only an efficient, whereas the Convert is an efficient and a ſubject too: the Work is wrought in him, as well as by him, and ſo the effect belongs to us attributively, and not to him, i.e. it is not He that is converted, but we, for he doth not work it upon himſelf, but upon us. He improves the Principle that is in us, which by his concurrence exerts itſelf.

8. *THAT though the actions produced are the* ſame, *yet the actings of the Spirit, & of the Convert in them are* diverſe. For they are two diſtinct Agents, and they act in a different order. There is therefore ſomething that the Spirit doth of himſelf, and ſomething that the man doth by the help of the Spirit. So that tho' they concur in the ſame action, yet their Agency is not alike. Here then let us obſerve,

1. THAT in the bringing of the Habits of Grace into act, there are three things more ſpecially done by the Spirit.

(1.) *HE* upholds *the Principle of Grace which he hath wrought in us.* He no ſooner hath ingenerated it in us, but he puts an *Everlaſting Arm underneath* to ſupport and preſerve it. The habit of Grace would die as ſoon as it is made to live, if he did not keep it alive. But his influence falleth upon it in the moment of its production, and never leaves it. Hence that, 1 Pet. 1. 5. *Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation.* And this ſuſtentation is never withdrawn. Hence that is one title put upon Believers, Jude 1. — *Preſerved in Jeſus Chriſt*—.

(2.) *HE* excites *theſe Graces to their act.* He not only keeps the principle in life, but prompts it to its actings. There is a *ſecond hand*

hand of the Spirit *ſet* to the work of Converſion, for the drawing forth of Grace into act, and that is done firſtly by excitation; as there is a quickning in regeneration, ſo there is one after it, which *David* ſo often prays for, in *Pſal.* 119. and elſewhere. And this excitation is both *moral* and *phyſical.* He invites, and uſeth Arguments with the man, and ſo it is moral; but he withal puts in his finger, and makes a powerful impreſſion. And this is the firſt thing wherein the Soul diſcerns the ſpecial Grace of God.

(3.) *HE* aſſiſts *theſe Graces in their act.* The man being thus excited, exerts that grace ſo prompted; but ſtill there is a continuance of the influence of the Spirit, which runs not, only to our *willing*, but our *doing* too, *Phil.* 2. 13. but for which, this act would never be produced. *Paul* diſowns ſufficiency for a *thought* that is good, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. The action would die in the birth, if he did not carry it through.

2. THERE is that alſo, which is *done by the* Convert *in this Affair, viz.* that *he acts as a rational, voluntary, ſelf-moving Inſtrument of the Spirit.* Though all beings have their dependance upon God for their activity, yet he hath put a life into ſome, as a principle by which they act under him. There is alſo in ſome Creatures, reaſon, and will, deliberation, and election; and certainly the Creature hath its activity in ſuch actions; how elſe could the ſame action be counted *righteous as from God*, and charged as *wicked on the Inſtruments*, as *Acts* 2. 23. Here then obſerve,

(1.) *THAT the man, in Converting of himſelf, acts but as an* Inſtrument *of the* Spirit. We have obſerved, that he acts not in co ordination, but ſubordination. Now all ſubordinate Agents, are either adjuvant, or inſtrumental. That he is not an adjuvant, helping the Spirit in his work, is certain; for the Spirit helps him, and not he the Spirit: nor doth the Spirit need his help. What he doth, he doth it of himſelf. It remains therefore, that we can be only inſtrumental.

(2.) *THAT though he be an Inſtrument, yet he is a* living Inſtrument, *he hath a principle of ſpiritual life in him.* He lives, and ſo hath a power of ſelf-motion in him. For *ſpiritual Life is a power of ſpiritual Actions.* And it is not only a moving, but a rational life that he hath. Every faculty being Converted, and having ſuitable principles infuſed into it. *Paul* ſaith, *I can do*, &c. Phil. 4. 13.

(3.) *HENCE the* Grace *in him readily entertains the* Applications *of the Spirit, and imbraceth them.* The Spirit cometh in the Word, ſpeaks in the Soul by it, ſets it home, and the Soul entertains it, and by an act of its own, reflects it back again. Pſal. 27. 8. *When thou ſaidſt, Seek ye my face, my heart ſaid unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I ſeek.* God helps him, but it was his *heart* that ſaid it. So, Cant. 1. 4. *Draw me, we will run after thee.* He engageth by an act of his own: and this is the ſaving act, becauſe it flows from a ſaving principle.

(4.) *HE now accordingly* puts forth *the Grace that is in him, to the doing of the act it ſelf.* The Spirit excites and aſſiſts, and in this ſtrength, he ſets about & doth it. *Job* ſaith, *I repent in duſt and aſhes*, Job 42. 6. And this is the ſame act which the Spirit wrought in him, which he alſo works, as being moved and acted by the Spirit of God. And this is the manner of *active Converſion.*

II. WE proceed to conſider the *Particular Exertion* of the Grace of Faith, in the Souls *Embracing* of Chriſt on the free offer and invitation given it. And there needs the leſs to be ſaid of it, becauſe it is only an exemplification of that one Grace, in compliance with the Goſpel call, bidding of us to believe in Chriſt for Salvation, which is doubtleſs drawn out after the ſame manner, with all the other Graces of the Spirit that are put into us. Here then let a few things be taken notice of.

1. *THAT the Spirit of God having wrought a new Principle in the Soul, holds* Chriſt *as the Object of Faith before it, in all his glorious Sufficiency, inviting him, and encouraging him to believe on him.* There is a general Invitation given to *all* to whom Chriſt is recommended in the publication of the Goſpel. But there is a more ſpecial and peculiar Invitation preſented to *ſome*, in whom the Spirit of God hath been at work, to prepare and diſpoſe them for it. Such is that, Mat. 11. 29. *Take my yoke upon you, & learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye ſhall find reſt unto your ſouls.* The Spirit indeed makes the offer to ſuch as have no inclination to imbrace it; but he continues it to ſuch on whom he hath been at work, to enable and incline them to it, that ſo, having wrought the Will, he may alſo work the Deed. He therefore comes in and with the Word, holds the glaſs before the man, and ſets home upon him all thoſe Arguments by which he may be moved, as a *Cauſe by Counſel*, to give a welcome entertainment to the offer made.

2. *THE* renewed Underſtanding *improves the Conviction and Illumination wrought in it, to give in its verdict for Chriſt, and commends him to the Will as a ſuitable Object of Faith.* The man was before blind, but now he hath eyes, and he can ſee: and the Spirit, together with holding the Object before him, excites him to turn his eyes upon it, and gives him ſuch a ſight of Chriſt, as draws forth a compleat aſſent of his Underſtanding. And now the former Conviction of his ſin and miſery abiding on his Conſcience, keeps in him a lively apprehenſion of his abſolute neceſſity of Salvation by one that is able; and being entirely perſwaded that Chriſt is ſuch an One; diſcerning his glorious Excellencies, every way adapted to afford compleat Salvation to the miſerable Sinner: he comes to this firm Concluſion, that Chriſt, and he alone, is an Object to be truſted in for Eternal Life. As they, Joh. 6. 68. *Lord, to whom ſhall we*

go : thou haſt the words of eternal life. And becauſe the Underſtanding is the Wills Counſeller, it recommends this reſult to the Will, for the determination of its choice. It ſaith, here thou muſt reſt. *He is able*, &c. *Heb.* 7. 25. And *there is Salvation in no other*, &c. *Act.* 4 12. It ſaith, Accept of Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be happy for ever. *Pſal.* 36. 8. He is offered to thee, take him, and he ſhall be thine ; and thou ſhalt never repent of it, but be *ſatisfyed* in it, *Pſal.* 63. 5.

3. *THE* Will *hereupon finds in itſelf a mighty Inclination, and Irreſiſtible, to caſt itſelf upon Chriſt for Salvation.* There are indeed many fears, doubts, reluctancies, fomented by the carnal part in him ; and though they may be, in the very inſtant ſtirring, and diſturbing of him, yet there is a prevalency of the Power and Grace of the Spirit, which draws out the Heart after Chriſt ; he is now willing to forſake all his other truſts for him. It is a ſudden Change, the Will is faced about at once. He that refuſed Chriſt before, now longs for him, and is ready to receive him. As, Cant. 6. 12. *Or ever I was aware, my ſoul made me like the chariots of Ammi-nadib.* And to forſake all for him, *Pſal.* 45. 10. He now reſolves, he muſt have Chriſt, or he dies ; if he have him not, he muſt periſh, and if he comes to him and be rejected, he can but periſh : And this is the Concluſion that he fixeth upon, and he cannot be moved from. Chriſt is the *Pearl of price :* and he reſolves to *ſell all* for him, and let Satan, and the World, and his own corrupt part ſay what they can to beat him off from it, he remains unmoveable.

4. *THE* Soul *hereupon accepts of the Invitation, and conſents to the Call.* The force of this Inclination is drawn forth into act, and ſo the Aſſent given by the Underſtanding, is ſettled with the Conſent of the Will. And there are more eſpecially theſe things in it.

(1.) *IT receives the* Teſtimony *that is given of Chriſt, and acquieſceth in it.* It is of the nature of all Faith, that it receives a report upon the credit of the Author of it. Now, the great things that concern Chriſt as a Saviour, are of *Revelation.* God hath declared them to us in the Goſpel ; and the Spirit is the witneſs of them, in the Hearts of thoſe that cordially entertain them. And this is the foundation of the Souls acceptance and conſent. This therefore *John* commends as a noble act of faith, John 3. 33. *He that hath received his teſtimony, hath ſet to his ſeal, that God is true.* The Underſtanding commends Chriſt, according to the Goſpel diſcoveries made of him, acted upon it with a powerful ſuaſion ; and the Will ſaith, *I receive it*, and dare to adventure for Eternity on the truth of it. And this is that which the *Apoſtle* ſo commends in thoſe whom he writes unto, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8.

(2.) *IT embraceth the Promiſe of the* new Covenant, *in which Salvation is engaged on believing.* As God in the Goſpel diſcovers the ſufficiency of Chriſt to ſave, ſo with it he propoſeth the terms of a Covenant, in which, together with commanding us to believe, he engageth Salvation to us, upon our ſo doing ; which Promiſe is the handle which Faith hath to faſten its hold upon. Now Chriſt hath ſaid, John 6. 37. *All that the Father giveth me, ſhall come to me : and him that cometh to me, I will in no wiſe caſt out.* This is the Souls encouragement to *come*, and it takes him at his word : It ſaith, I am perſuaded, that as he is able, ſo he is faithful, and never did, nor ever will deceive thoſe who dare to adventure upon his word : I am ſatisfied, that upon believing on him, I cannot miſs of obtaining the *crown of Life.*

(3.) *IT hereupon adventures itſelf on Chriſt as a* Saviour. Chriſt invites him, and holds forth the Promiſe to him, and the heart being moved by it, moves to him, and embraceth him. He ſaith, *Come to me, caſt thy burden on me, take me for thy Salvation :* And the Soul replies, *Behold I come* ; and in coming to him, it lets go and utterly relinquiſheth every other reliance that it had. It ſaith as, *Hoſ.* 14. 4. It ſees that there is no help to be had in any other object ; and now it concludes that he ſhall be its Object, as, *Pſal.* 142. 4, 5. And this Adventure is an act of Faith ; it is the full reſult of the Will, and by it the Soul enters into Chriſt, and takes poſſeſſion of him, as his habitation, and rock of ſafety. And indeed it is beyond the power of nature to make ſuch an adventure, as a Soul periſhing doth, when under the deepeſt ſenſe of Sin and Unworthineſs, it caſts itſelf upon Chriſt.

(4.) *IN this Adventure it freely commits itſelf to* Him *for Safety.* Hence that of *Paul*, 2 Tim. 1. 12. *I know whom I have believed, and I am perſuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him againſt that day.* He now puts his very Life and Soul into the hands of Chriſt. As he, *Pſal.* 31. 5. He reſolves that Chriſt hath *a mighty Arm*, that is able to ſecure him from all danger ; that in him there is ſecurity againſt all the Curſes of the Law, againſt all the endeavours of the *roaring Lion that ſeeks to devour* him ; that he is *an high Tower*, and *a munition of Rocks.* He therefore makes himſelf over unto him, puts himſelf into his Hands : Saith as, Pſal. 62. 5, 6. *My ſoul wait thou only upon God : for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my ſalvation : he is my defence ; I ſhall not be moved.* He gives himſelf up to Chriſt as the high Prieſt, Prophet and King of his Salvation ; reſigns himſelf up to be juſtified by his Righteouſneſs, directed by his Spirit, and governed by his Laws, and depends now intirely upon him for all that conduct whereby he may be brought to enjoy *the purchaſed Poſſeſſion :* And ſaith as he, Pſal. 73. 24. *Thou ſhalt guide me with thy counſel, and afterward receive me to glory.*

(5.) *AND now it takes up its* ſtand, *& reſts here forever.* He had been wandring from mountain

mountain to hill, but now he is gotten into his Rock, and there he will abide, *Pſal.* 12. 7, 8. He makes an abſolute choice of Chriſt, without any reſerves; gives himſelf up to him in *an everlaſting Covenant never to be* broken; reſolving *to be for him, and for no other* hence forward and forever. Thus the Spirit draws, and thus the Soul follows, and ſo enters into *the rock of Ages*, where he ſhuts the door, by *truſting in the Name of the Lord, and ſtaying himſelf upon his God.*

USE I. *LEARN hence, How* few *there be that are Effectually Called, and how vain the pretence of the moſt is, to a title to Salvation.* It is certain, that none ſhall be ſaved but ſuch as are gotten into Chriſt by a ſaving Faith, and all that are ſo have not only had the outward Call of the Goſpel given them, inviting them to come to him, or the inward Motions of the Spirit, ſtriving with them, for of ſuch Chriſt ſaith, Mat. 20. 16. *Many be called, but few choſen.* But they have been drawn, won, powerfully perſuaded; they have forſaken all other objects of truſt, diſcovered the excellency, glory, ſufficiency of Chriſt, and choſen him for their Prince and Saviour; they have accepted of the terms of the new Covenant, and complied with them, taken him for their *Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs*, &c. their Lord, and their God, and their all. And now they are for him and no other. Would you not then be deceived in your hopes, take heed of building on a ſandy bottom; ſee that this thorough Change be wrought in you; that you are turned from Sin, Fleſh, and World, and gotten into the Lord Jeſus Chriſt by a living Faith: Elſe all your other pretences will deceive you, and you will be found among the *workers of iniquity.* You ſee what it is to be a Believer. And remember what is the ſolemn Seal of the Goſpel, Mar. 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not ſhall be damned.*

USE II. LET me offer a Word of *Conſolation* to all thoſe that are thus *Effectually Called.* Have you found the efficacy of the Grace of God in you, making Sin *an evil and bitter thing* to you; diſcovering to you the glorious Excellency of Jeſus Chriſt in his Perſon and Offices, and been won thereby to come away from all other vain Objects, on which you ſometimes leaned the weight of your confidence, and upon his Invitation and Promiſe, have caſt your ſelves upon him, for pardon of Sin, for peace with God, for ſafe conduct, and direction and influence, to lead you on your way, and make you *meet for the Inheritance:* and reſt here; reſolving to go no where elſe? You are then Called; the Everlaſting Covenant between him and you is Sealed. And let this be your Conſolation, that this truſt ſhall never fail you. You may ſay as he, in Pſal. 20. 7, 8. *Some truſt in chariots; and ſome in horſes: but we will remember the Name of the Lord our God. They are brought down and fallen, but we are riſen and ſtand upright.* And with the *Apoſtle*, Rom. 8. 38. *For I am perſwaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, ſhall be able to ſeperate us from the love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.* Here is the foundation laid, which ſhall be certainly built up. And you ſee the indiſſoluable connexion, ver. 30. *Moreover, whom he did predeſtinate, them he alſo called: and whom he called, them he alſo juſtified; and whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified.*

[JUNE 7. 1698]

SERMON *CXXII.*

QUESTION XXXII.

WHAT Benefits do they that are Effectually Called partake of in this Life?

ANSWER.

THEY that are Effectually Called, do in this Life partake of Juſtification, Adoption, and Sanctification, and the ſeveral Benefits which do in this Life, either accompany or flow from them.

WE have taken a brief Account of the firſt part of the Spirit's Work in Application, *viz.* Our Union to Chriſt in *Effectual Calling*; by vertue of which Union we are entituled to his Perſon in an Everlaſting Covenant, which is thus ratify'd between him and us, and ſo we come to be owners of that precious Redemption which he wrought out for us. We are now come to the *ſecond Part* of it, which conſiſts in Communion with Chriſt, in thoſe Glorious Benefits which he hath purchaſed, and laid in for us, by that Redemption of his. It is certain, that that Great and Admirable Work of Chriſt, was not for nothing, but had a worthy Deſign in it, which he did unfailingly accompliſh. And, though there was a Mediator's Glory ſecured to him in the Eternal Compact, which he had a reſpect unto in the Work he did, which he bare up upon; According to *Heb.* 12. 2. and therefore upon the finiſhing of it he challengeth it, Joh. 17. 4, 5. *I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finiſhed the work which thou gaveſt me to do. And now, O Father, glorifie thou me with thine own ſelf, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.* Yet his Doing and Sufferings, bare a next aim

aim at thoſe, whom he undertook to redeem. His active and paſſive Obedience were not for himſelf, but for thoſe whom his Father had given him, and they were to be made partakers in the precious fruits thereof. Union then with Chriſt, is the ground of Communion with him; the Spirit therefore having made us owners of them in vocation, thereupon makes us to ſhare in the vertue and efficacy of them. Theſe *Benefits* are many and great, containing in them our compleat deliverance from all Miſeries, and our advancement to perfect Felicity: They contain in them *Grace and Glory*, and all that is good, *Pſal.* 84. 11. They are ſummarily comprized in *Bleſſedneſs* Hence that, Pſal. 2. 12. *Bleſſed are all they that put their truſt in him.* Which *Bleſſedneſs* conſiſts, in a freedom from all Evil, and a participation in all Good. This Bleſſedneſs is either inchoated in this Life, or perfected in another. This Perfection the Soul arrives to at Death, and both Soul and Body at the Reſurrection. Accordingly our *Catechiſm* ranks theſe *Benefits* under *three* Heads; thoſe that *we partake in in this Life*; thoſe that we are entertained with at *Death*, and thoſe that we ſhall enjoy at the *Reſurrection.* The firſt of theſe we are pointed to, and have an account of in the *Anſwer* before us. A perſon is no ſooner put into Chriſt, but immediately a Change infinitely for the better paſſeth upon him. He hath not theſe *Benefits* only in reverſion, but there are ſome that he is actually poſſeſſed of, whereof we have an account before us. There are *four* here mentioned, every whereof is exceeding comprehenſive; *Juſtification, Adoption, Sanctification*, and *Glorification.* For that I ſuppoſe to be intended by *the ſeveral Benefits, which in this Life accompany or flow from* the other, and may be evidenced when we come to ſpeak of them. *Divines* do uſually diſtribute theſe under two Heads, which they diverſly expreſs, *viz.* ſuch as make only a *Relative* change in us, or ſuch as change our *Nature*; ſuch as are compleated or perfected in one individual act, or thoſe that are imperfect at firſt, and are carried on to perfection by degrees. To the former Head belong *Juſtification* & *Adoption*; to the latter *Sanctification* & *Glorification.* In what order theſe are to be treated of, is a matter of ſome debate. And though poſſibly the thing in it ſelf would not be of ſuch moment as to thoſe Controverſies about it, yet the perverſe improvement that hath been made by ſome, calls for ſomething to be ſaid on this account. Here then let us obſerve, that in a gennetical method, the order of things is warily to be conſidered, for the avoiding of Confuſion, and falſe Principles drawn from ſuch a miſtake. Thus ſome placing Sanctification before Juſtification, have inferred our Works to have a cauſal influence into our Juſtification, which is a pernicious error, and which the putting of theſe things in their right place would help to prevent. Let us then take notice, that if we ſpeak of *Time*, there is no order of priority or poſteriority between theſe benefits, becauſe they all come in together, and at the ſame inſtant. In the ſame moment which we are Called, we are Juſtifyed, &c. But if we ſpeak of the *order of Nature*, there is that to be obſerved in the relation which theſe things bear each to other, which will give us light and reaſon for the placing of them in the method of Divinity. *Effectual Calling* muſt needs go before all theſe *Benefits*; for though that alſo be a fruit and benefit of the *Covenant of Redemption*, yet it is that which brings us into the *Covenant of Grace*, and ſo to the enjoyment of the benefits of it. And though the benefits come with it, yet it brings them, and hath the priority of a Cauſe. Among theſe *Benefits* themſelves alſo there is an order; for though our ſtate and our nature are changed together, yet in as much as the former of theſe is compleated in an inſtant, by one act, whereas the other is begun at firſt, and carried on in a work, that ſeems to challenge the firſt place; beſides that Sanctification, and Glorification are truly Priviledges appropriated to the Juſtified and Adopted. And the admiſſion of a perſon into a ſtate of favour, ſeems to be in Nature before his participation in the ſpecial favours which are reſerved only for thoſe that are in ſuch a ſtate. As to the order between Juſtification and Adoption, there ſeems not ſo much need of being curious, ſince they both refer to the change of ſtate; only there ſeems to be a rational priority in Juſtification, in as much as the Adopting a perſon into heirſhip, ſuppoſeth a being entirely reconciled to him. This therefore is firſt treated of in our *Catechiſm*; which is now to be looked into.

QUESTION XXXIII.

WHAT is Juſtification?

ANSWER.

JUSTIFICATION is an Act of GOD's Free Grace, wherein He Pardoneth all our Sins, and Accepteth us as righteous in His ſight, only for the Righteouſneſs of CHRIST, imputed to us, and received by Faith alone.

I Have not long ſince, Publiſhed a brief Diſcourſe concerning this Article of *Juſtification*, and had ſome thoughts of waving any further treating of it here, and ſo have referred you to that Treatiſe. But, conſidering it to be a Fundamental Point of the *Chriſtian Religion*, and therefore never too much inculcated by the Goſpel Miniſtry: That it is not a little undermined & depraved in the preſent Age, and ſo had need to be defended by all ſuch as love the honour of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: That the true Conſolation of every Believer depends upon it; and

and ſo they cannot hear too much of it; and that the omiſſion of it will make a needleſs interruption in theſe *Catechiſtical Expoſitions*, I ſhall therefore eſſay to offer an *abſtract* of this Doctrine. And here I ſhall only give a brief Explication and Confirmation of the Truths contained in the Deſcription before us.

And here,

I. THE thing intended by *Juſtification* is to be *ſtated*. For how ſhould we think or ſpeak right of a thing, until we know what we intend by it? If I take Juſtification for one thing, and another miſtakes it for ſomething elſe, our notions and reſentments about it, muſt needs be different. A great part of the Diſputes between the *Papiſts* and us, are grounded on this difference. They confound Juſtification & Sanctification, and make them one and the ſame thing; pretending the meaning of the words in the *notation* of them, ſuppoſing that to *juſtify*, muſt needs ſignify to *make a man juſt*, as *ſanctify*, ſignifies, to *make one holy*. But ſuppoſing the Etymology of the word ſhould favour them, yet it is a rule, *that words are to be underſtood according to uſage and cuſtom of the Nations among whom they are uſed*. Now, Proteſtant Divines that have waded into this Affair, have made to appear, that the *Hebrew* & *Greek* words uſed in the Old and New-Teſtament, which are tranſlated to *juſtify*, are not in more than two places uſed for making a perſon to be righteous, by inherent righteouſneſs; and theſe alſo diſputable. And that in all other places they are uſed forinſecally, for the declaring or the adjudging of one to be righteous. Nor is it eaſy, if poſſible, to produce any Claſſick Latin Author, who uſeth the word Juſtify in any other ſenſe. Yea, the *Papiſts* themſelves do, after all their alterations, acknowledge the thing we plead for, *viz.* That there is ſuch a thing, as God's declaring the perſon to be righteous, as he is a Judge; though they build it upon his being firſt made inherently righteous: Their miſtake wherein will in the Sequel be detected.

BY *Juſtification* then, we here underſtand, *An Authoratative pronouncing of a perſon to be Righteous upon a fair Trial.* Which is excellently ſhadowed by the proceedure of Civil Courts of Judicature, upon a perſon that hath been cited before them, and upon the Examination and Judgment of his Cauſe, is found not only innocent of the Crimes alledged againſt him, but alſo to have demeaned himſelf worthily; whereupon he is cleared from the Court, and his honeſty vindicated. This then is the matter before us, and to be laid forth in all the parts of it in the Sequel.

II. WE have the *General Nature* of it, expreſt in thoſe words, it *is an Act of God's Free Grace*. For as it derives from God's free Grace to us, ſo it agrees with all the other benefits which derive from Chriſt to us. That is the Fountain of them all. And as it is an Act ſo it agrees with Adoption, which is alſo thus deſcribed. Here we may obſerve *three* things,

1. THE *Author of it*, and that is *God*. This the *Apoſtle* plumply aſſerts, *Rom.* 8. 33. *It is God that juſtifieth.* And it is ſo appropriated to him, that it is incommunicable to any other, ſo to juſtify as he doth; i. e. Authoritatively. There is indeed a declarative Juſtification, ſo called improperly, which men are capable of. This is done charitably by one Neighbour for another, when he ſtands in his defence, and pronounceth his innocency. And there is an Eccleſiaſtical Juſtification, when thoſe whom Chriſt hath authorized to *bind* and *looſe* on Earth, do according to the Goſpel Rules, acquit a perſon, and ſet him right in the Church. But this is no farther right than approved by God: And it is only a declaration of what God himſelf doth for ſuch an one. And hence it proceeds in his Name. That the Juſtification under conſideration, is proper to God, will appear for theſe *Reaſons*,

(1) BECAUSE *He only is man's Judge in this Affair.* Authoritative Juſtification is a judicial act, and ſo is proper to him that is Judge. But this is God's prerogative and property, *Pſal.* 75. 7. *God is the Judge.* & 50. 6. The Law on which it proceeds, hath him for its Author, and he only hath the power to call man to account about it. And for that reaſon he hath that title put on him, Gen. 18. 25. *The Judge of all the Earth.*

(2.) BECAUSE *it is the Juſtification of the Ungodly.* So it is expreſs'd, Rom. 4. 5. *But believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly.* i. e. One that before this was ſuch an one, & was ſo till this act paſs'd upon him. And to juſtify ſuch an one righteouſly, is beyond the power of any but God to do. There is ſo much required to the Juſtification of a Sinner, that none leſs then God can do it, as will be ſeen when we come to conſider what it is.

(3.) BECAUSE *Pardon of Sin belongs to this Juſtification, which none hath power of but God.* How, and wherein this appertains to it, will be ſeen afterwards. But if, in the juſtifying a Sinner, there muſt be a Pardon beſtowed upon him, it muſt be peculiar to God, for *none can forgive Sins but he.* This the *Jews* reſented when they ſaid, Mar. 2. 7. *Why doth this man thus ſpeak blaſphemies? who can forgive ſins but God only?* Men may forgive to one another the wrong done to them, but the Sin they cannot forgive, becauſe ſin is only againſt God, Pſal. 51. 4. *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned, and done this evil in thy ſight.* And who ſhall deliver us from his Judgment but himſelf?

(4.) BECAUSE *Juſtification ſets the man free from Condemnation.* It reſtores the man to *peace with God*, Rom. 8. 1. & 5. 1. And if God himſelf doth not give the man this diſcharge, and receive him into favour, he muſt needs be obnoxious, and ſo, far from being in a ſafe ſtate.

2. *THE Quality of this Juſtification is expreſt in that it is called an Act.* And herein it in general agrees with Adoption, which is alſo

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called an *Act*, and differs from Sanctification and Glorification, which are called *Works*. The difference between an act and a work hath been before obſerved. And that theſe are applicable to Juſtification, will appear.

For,

(1.) *JUSTIFICATION is of the Perſon.* It is the man himſelf that is Juſtifyed. Whatſoever reſpect the Proceſs in it may have to the things which the man hath done, yet, the Juſtification that is conſequent upon it terminates on the perſon. And thus we ſhall find the word every where applied in Scripture. *Pſal.* 143. 2. *Iſai.* 50. 8. *Rom.* 4. 5. & 5. 1.

(2.) *JUSTIFICATION only makes a change in the man's ſtate, and not on his nature.* There is indeed always a change in the nature of the perſon juſtified concomitant with it. Juſtification & Sanctification are ever inſeperable in the work of Application, yet they are in themſelves diſtinct things. In Juſtification the man paſſeth from a ſtate of Condemnation, in which he before was, into a ſtate of Reconciliation and Abſolution. He is now *delivered from* his *Judge*, as *Job* 23. 7. And may ſay as he did, Pſal. 118. 17. *I ſhall not die but live, and declare the works of the Lord.*

(3.) HENCE *Juſtification is perfected at once.* The ſtate of the man is changed in an inſtant. The ſame moment wherein the ſentence paſſeth upon him, he is entirely paſs'd from his former ſtate. The Law hath no more hold of him. Rom. 6. 14. *For ſin ſhall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.* There is nothing can ſo be laid to his charge, as to be faſtned upon him, Rom. 8. 33. *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that juſtifieth?* He can never again be condemned, Rom. 8. 1. *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Chriſt Jeſus.* A Believer is as much juſtified in the very moment of his believing, as ever he ſhall be; and is as ſecure from Condemnation, as thoſe who are now in Glory. There are no degrees in Juſtification. For, becauſe it is the perſon, that it terminates upon, either he is not juſtifyed at all, or he is entirely ſo. It is true, there are degrees of Aſſurance of this ſtate that men may have, but that belongs not to Juſtification, but Glorification. And let the man be never ſo much in the dark, & doubtful about it, it makes not the leaſt alteration in his real eſtate. If it be inquired, Whether Juſtification be a tranſient or a continued act? It may be ſafely anſwered, that Juſtification, as it proceeds from God, and changeth the ſtate of the perſon, is a tranſient act, it is done in time, at what inſtant the man believes, and ſo it is at once. But if we conſider the vertue & efficacy of this act, ſo it continues, becauſe God is *one mind*, and changeth not, *Job* 23. 13. And ſo the man abides in this ſtate for ever.

3. THE *Fountain from which this Act proceeds*; *the free Grace of God.* Hitherto are all theſe benefits which derive to us through Jeſus Chriſt to be aſcribed. It is true, that Juſtification, in the very notion and ſenſe of it, points us to the conſideration of the Righteouſneſs of God, which muſt be manifeſted in it, otherwiſe it could not be truly called Juſtification: The manifeſtation whereof in this Affair, will afterwards be conſidered. But, as it is applied to ſinful man, ſo it carries in it a glorious diſcovery of the riches of Grace. *Grace* is in Scripture taken in a twofold ſenſe; ſometimes from the inward principle from which a favour derives, and ſometimes for the favour it ſelf ſo beſtow'd. We are here more eſpecially to underſtand it in the former ſenſe. And there are theſe *Conſiderations* that will diſcover the Abundance of Grace appearing in it.

(1.) *JUSTIFICATION is it ſelf a great Priviledge.* There is nothing leſs than happineſs contained in it. How ſafe, how ſecure is that man, who is put out of all danger of periſhing? Who ſhall never be hurt by *the Second Death*? Who hath peace with God, & with his own Conſcience? Who hath a claim to Eternal Life, and may challenge it as his own? Who ſhall ſtand in the Judgment, and look his Judge in the face without terror, and in the Great Day hear the joyful Sentence, *Come thou bleſſed?* This honour and happineſs hath every juſtified perſon.

(2.) *IT is a Priviledge that none deſerves, but the contrary.* It is the *juſtifying of the ungodly*, Rom. 4. 5. Now ungodlineſs expoſes men to condemnation: They were by ſin & ungodlineſs brought under the curſe & threatning of the Law, and deſerved to die. If God had proſecured that Sentence againſt them to their eternal deſtruction, their mouths muſt have been ſtopp'd; for all the World ſtood guilty before him: ſhame, and confuſion belonged to them When therefore God abſolved them, he might have done execution upon them, and been juſt.

(3.) *IT is a Priviledge which God beſtows upon ſome, and not upon others, who are alike in their natural eſtate.* It is certain, that all are naturally alike, there is no difference, Rom. 3. 9. *What then? are we better than they? No in no wiſe: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under ſin.* The *Apoſtle* puts himſelf in, *Eph.* 2. 3. *Tit.* 3. 3. God acts his Sovereignty in this great Affair. Rom. 9. 18. *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.* It therefore muſt be Grace that determines the ſubject of this benefit.

(4.) *IT is a Priviledge for the obtaining whereof they could do nothing.* Juſtification is a Sentence for the paſſing of which, there muſt be a Righteouſneſs, elſe there would be injuſtice in the paſſing of it. To declare a perſon righteous, without a righteouſneſs for it, is to err in Judgment. Now theſe have no righteouſneſs perſonal of their own, which will bear the trial of the holy Law, ſo as to acquit them; nor can they reach to

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ſuch an one by their utmoſt endeavours. Hence we have ſuch acknowledgments made by holy men in the word of God. *Pſal.* 130. 3, 4. *Iſai.* 64. 6. *Dan.* 9. 18. and elſewhere.

(5.) IT *is a Priviledge to make way for the conferring of which, he himſelf hath laid in a coſtly Righteouſneſs.* Without a Righteouſneſs we could not be juſtified; we had none of our own: No meer creature could afford one for us. He therefore ordained and ſent his Son into the World to provide & lay in ſuch a Righteouſneſs as might anſwer this deſign. Hence that, Rom. 3. 24, 25, 26. *Being juſtified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus: Whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of ſins that are paſt, through the forbearance of God. To declare I ſay, at this time, his righteouſneſs: that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him that believeth in Jeſus.* Rather than we ſhould not be juſtifyed, he would condemn his own Son. Hence that, 2 Cor. 5. 21. *For he hath made him to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* It is therefore called *the Righteouſneſs of God*, Phil. 3.9. And he is ſaid to *bring it in*, Dan. 9.24. And certainly, when theſe things are laid together, it will appear to be a tranſcendent act of Grace herein expreſt to any, to whom this is applied. Nor doth it in the leaſt impair, but indeed greatly enhance the Grace of it, in that it juſtifies none but on the account of a Righteouſneſs of God's own providing for them.

USE. LEARN we hence, *How vain a thing it is for any to ſeek their Juſtification with God, in any other way but that of his free Grace.* True, we muſt ſeek it through Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, but therein is the elevation of Grace. But if we think to obtain it by any Works of our own, we deceive our ſelves, and go about to *fruſtrate the Grace of God.* Let this alſo encourage Chief Sinners, to hope for Juſtification, and ſeek it of God, ſince, as there is ſufficient Righteouſneſs laid in for it, ſo, where *Sin hath abounded, Grace can the more abound.*

[JULY 5. 1698.]

SERMON *CXXIII.*

III. WE proceed to conſider the *Special Nature of it*, in the reſt of the *Anſwer.* In which there are ſeveral things to be taken notice of, that are put into the Deſcription.

1. WE *are to obſerve the act it ſelf, or the thing that is done in Juſtification.* And that is laid down in two Articles, or there are two things that are done for the man in this act, *viz.* God *Pardoneth all his Sins, and Accepteth him as Righteous in his ſight.* Divines do generally make thoſe to be the two parts of our Juſtification; and accordingly do handle them diſtinctly: for though they go together inſeperably in this act, and the man cannot be ſaid truly to be juſtifyed, if either of them be wanting, yet the things themſelves are diverſe, and flow from a different Cauſe. For, Juſtification, being an Authoritative Sentence, pronounced by a Judge, on a perſon upon Trial; ſuppoſeth a Law, according to which, a righteous Judge will exactly proceed. Now, the Law of God, which he at firſt eſtabliſhed as the rule of his Relative Juſtice, in his proceeding with Mankind, and unto which man's Juſtification muſt needs refer, had a double Sanction hypothetically added to it; *viz.* there was a reward of *Life* promiſed to perfect obedience, *Rom.* 10. 5. and there was *Death* threatned to diſobedience, *Gen.* 2. 17. Man by his Apoſtacy is departed from his obedience, and ſo hath forfeited the Life that was promiſed him if he had kept his integrity; and he is become a Sinner, and ſo come under the threatning denounced againſt diſobedience. Hence that man may be ſet right again, and made a bleſſed man, as every juſtifyed one is, he muſt both have the Threatning repealed & removed from him, which is done by an act of Pardon, and the Reward of Life adjudged to him, which is done by declaring him worthy of it. And as both theſe things muſt be co-incident in the compleating of this act, ſo there muſt be a ground on which Juſtice muſt proceed to the doing each of them.

(1.) FOR the *removing of the Threatning*, in order to the man's Pardon, by taking off the Sentence of Condemnation that is out againſt him, there muſt be *a Satisfaction made to the Law, which requires a Paſſive Obedience*; becauſe that dooms the man to die. And for this reaſon we have that expreſſion, Heb. 9.22. *And almoſt all things are by the law purged with blood: and without ſhedding of blood there is no remiſſion.*

(2.) FOR the *reſtoring him to Life*, by giving him a title to the promiſed Reward, there muſt be an *Active Obedience to the Law*; perfect and compleat: without which the condition on which Life was promiſed cannot be performed, or the perſon righteouſly adjudged to receive it. For, if God declare the man righteous, there muſt be a Righteouſneſs on account whereof he ſo doth. And there is more goes to that than a finding of him not Guilty. Chriſt therefore being to lay in for this, declares that he muſt *fulfill all righteouſneſs*, Mat. 3. 18. We may therefore take an account of theſe ſeverally.

I. *IN this act of Juſtification, God Pardoneth all our Sins.* The Doctrine of *Forgiveneſs of Sin* is much celebrated in the Word of God, and it is fit that we ſhould be well acquainted with the ground and nature of it, ſince our Eternal Welfare depends upon it. For this end we muſt know to what head in Divinity it belongs, elſe we ſhall not take up right ſentiments about it. Now, all the Orthodox do truly and properly refer it to

the head of *Juſtification*: And hence the nature and grounds of it muſt be calculated according to that. There may be a pardon given out to an Offendor, by an act of arbitrary Sovereignty or Prerogative, which ſupercedes the Law, and lays by any reſpect to it. Here is a diſcharge indeed given to the perſon, but it cannot properly be called a Juſtification, becauſe it is not the act of a Judge, but of one that challengeth a Superiority, and a diſpenſing Power. Whether God by his abſolute Sovereignty might thus have pardoned the Sinner, is a matter of diſpute. But that as a righteous Judge he cannot ſo do, is granted on all hands, and that becauſe, he hath conſtituted a rule of proceedure with the reaſonable Creature, unto which he bound himſelf in a Covenant Obligation, and for that reaſon there muſt be a concurrence of that Rule in his ſo doing. And therefore he is ſaid to be *juſt in forgiving*, 1 Joh. 1. 4. i. e. He doth no way in the leaſt overlook that Law that he hath eſtabliſhed, but fully complies with it. Now ſuch a forgiveneſs belongs to Juſtification, as may pardon the ſinner and yet maintain the righteouſneſs of the Law, unto which the ſinner ſtands related. So that Grace and Juſtice muſt *meet together* in this thing. According to, Pſal. 85. 10. *Mercy and truth are met together; righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed each other.* And becauſe in this forgiveneſs there is an entire reſpect had to the Law, that all its demands be anſwered, in order to the paſſing of it, it is therefore properly a Juſtification. But for a more diſtinct clearing of this Point, we may a little Inquire into *the Nature of that Forgiveneſs which God beſtows upon Sinners in their Juſtification.* For which let the following *Concluſions* be obſerved,

1. *THAT Forgiveneſs always preſuppoſeth Guilt.* There can be no Pardon needed or beſtowed, where there hath been no fault committed. An innocent perſon needs not to ask, nor can receive a Pardon. I mean, where there is no guilt imputable to him. For, that a perſon may be perſonally innocent, and yet guilty by imputation, is a Truth that we muſt believe, if we hope to be ſaved. He that asks forgiveneſs, doth always either implicitly or explicitly confeſs himſelf faulty. So, Pſal. 25. 11. *For thy Names ſake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity: for it is great.* Mat. 6. 12.

2. *THAT Guilt is properly an Obligation to ſuffer penalty for a fault.* It ſuppoſeth ſome Law that the perſon is under, & ſome ſanction of that Law, threatning a puniſhment to him that ſhall tranſgreſs it. Now there is a double ſentence, which the perſon ſo tranſgreſſing may come under, *viz.* the ſentence of the Law, and the ſentence of the Judge pronouncing according to Law. This latter is more properly a *Condemnation*, but the former is *Guilt*, the Law's having hold of him. Hence there are two words uſed for Guilt in the Goſpel, both of which imply thus much; as, Mat. 5. 21. *Whoſoever ſhall kill, ſhall be in danger of the judgment.* *In danger*: *Beza* and *Tremelius*, *reus erit*, it ſignifies, *held in, intangled or bound.* The other, Rom. 3. 19. *Now we know that what things ſoever the law ſaith, it ſaith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.* Which ſignifies, *under Judgment, or under a ſentence of Juſtice.* The Law ſaith, ſuch an one ſhall dye, and the man, by becoming ſuch an one, makes himſelf a man of Death, and that is to be Guilty.

3. *THAT hence Forgiveneſs conſiſts in the removal of this Obligation.* A Pardon doth not make that which was a fault before, to be none; only it frees the perſon that committed it from ſuffering the puniſhment of it. The ſin is the ſame in its nature and merit after, that it was before remiſſion, only the Bond is cancelled, which bound him over to die for it. Hence this forgiveneſs is expreſſed by God's not *ſeeing iniquity*, in the perſon, Numb. 23. 21. *He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he ſeen perverſeneſs in Iſrael.* By his *covering* of it, *Pſal.* 32. 1. By his *hiding his face from it*, Pſal. 51. 9. His *not remembring* it, *Pſal.* 25. 7. And other words of like import: all of which refer to the penalty.

4. BECAUSE *it is by the Fault that the perſon is rendred Guilty, hence it is called Forgiveneſs of Sins.* This therefore is the frequent Scripture expreſſion, Pſal. 32. 1. *Bleſſed is he whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven.* Act. 5 31. *To give repentance to Iſrael, and forgiveneſs of ſins:* and elſewhere uncountably. If there had been no ſin, there had been no guilt; for the Law ſentence proceeds upon the ſuppoſition of ſin laying the foundation for it. Hence ſometimes men are ſaid to be guilty of ſin, Jam. 2. 10. *For whoſoever ſhall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.* But moſt commonly, *guilty of death*, Num. 35. 31. *Mat.* 26. 66. Intimating, that it is by being chargeable with ſin, that men are expoſed to Death; according to Rom. 6. 23. *The wages of ſin is death.*

5. YET *becauſe it is the perſon that is under the Obligation, hence Forgiveneſs is truly applied to the perſon, though in reſpect of the Sin.* Sin is always ſuppoſed to be in a ſubject, or there muſt be a ſubject on whom it is charged. Nor can the puniſhment be ſuppoſed to be inflicted, but upon a ſubject; it is not ſin it ſelf, but the perſon upon whom it is charged that ſuffers for it. Hence that, Ezek. 18. 4. *The ſoul that ſinneth it ſhall die.* When therefore ſin is forgiven, it is to the perſon guilty, and the benefit thereof redounds to him. He is, by vertue of it, a *pardoned man.*

6. THAT *hence, the perſon is by this act, freed from the ſentence of the Law.* The Law ſentence paſt upon him before, was, *Thou haſt ſinned, and thou ſhalt dye.* But when a Pardon comes to be applied to it, he reverſeth that Sentence, and ſaith, *Though thou haſt ſinned, yet thou ſhalt not die.* So he to *David*, 2 Sam. 12. 13. *The Lord alſo hath put away thy ſin, thou ſhalt not die.* And then, and not till then, when God hath paſt ſuch an act upon the

the Sinner, is he a pardoned man. Before he was a man of Death, but now he is not so.

7. HENCE, *on the application of this Pardon, the man is justifyed from the condemnation of the Law.* We read, in Rom. 8. 1. *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.* And whence is this? But because the man is now forgiven. The Law had condemn'd him, but now the mouth of the Law is stop'd; it lays nothing to his charge; it *lets fall its action* that it had against him, and will no farther prosecute it. And the reason of this is, because a pardoned man is a justified man, and so is freed from the Law. The *Apostle* therefore argues from our Justification, to our being out of the reach of a Charge to be brought in against us, Rom. 8. 33. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.* i.e. It is the Judge himself that hath acquitted us, and therefore we are out of all danger, by any accusation.

8. *THIS Pardon being a Justification, necessarily supposeth that the Law is satisfied in order to it.* How it comes to be so, belongs to an after-consideration. But if the act of Pardon be a justifying act, it must then be an act of Justice. For we read, Gen. 18. 25. *That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the judge of all the earth do right.* For, though it be an act of meer Grace, in the application of it to the subject, as hath already been observed, yet it must have its foundation in righteousness, which cannot be, unless the Law be fairly treated, and have no violence offered to it. God pardons none, but whom the Law acquits, and saith, it hath nothing against them; for God must *be just in justifying*, Rom. 3. 26.

9. *NOR doth it at all obscure the Grace of God, in that it is founded in exact Justice.* Nay, it inhanceth and puts more orient colours on the Grace of God, in that Justice is first satisfied, in order to the manifestation of this pardoning Grace: in as much, as it is not our righteousness, but the Righteousness of God, that hath procured this for us, *Rom.* 3. 25, 26. He was at all the cost for that: so to make way for his freely pardoning of our sins, when the justice of the Law made its inexorable demands for satisfaction, & would not bate one *iota.*

10. *THIS Pardon extends to all our Sins.* It is not only applied to this or that great Sin, and leaves others under guilt, but it engrosseth them all. A pardoneth man, hath not one sin left standing out against him, but they are *all* covered, they are all comprehended in the act of Oblivion that is past by God. There is none of them remembred. Hence that large promise, Jer. 50. 20. *In those days and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I reserve.* God therefore directs his people so to pray, Hos. 14. 2. *Take with you words, and turn to the Lord; say unto him, Take away all iniquity, & receive us graciously.* And it must be so, else the Pardon were insignificant: for what avails it to have all taken off but one, whiles the guilt of that one remaining, holds the man still, under the sentence of the Law, and he must die for it? Forgiveness of Sin is in order to Eternal Life, and therefore it must be a compleat Pardon, else the man could not say, *I shall not die, but live*; as every pardoned man can: nor could the pardoned man be called *a blessed man*, as he is, *Psal.* 32. 1.

Quest. BUT it will be here Inquired, But *are their future Sins Pardoned, as well as their past and present?* Is not this to give men an indulgence to sin? There are hot Disputes among the Orthodox about this Question; for which reason, some have thought Justification to be a *continued act*, & not compleated in an *instant*: and others are of the mind, that it is not perfected, till in the Day of Judgment Believers are *openly acquitted.* Reserving an awe for this mystery of God's favour, and due respect to all otherwise minded, I shall endeavour to *Answer* this Inquiry in the following *Conclusions*,

1. *PARDON of Sin belongs to Justification.* This hath been already mentioned, and the reason for it given: Though they are in an error who make the whole of Justification to be engrossed in it; yet they also no less mistake, who exclude it from Justification, as being no part of it. God pardons as a Judge, and therefore he doth it so, as to pronounce the person righteously freed from the sentence of the Law, and that it hath nothing justly to impute to him; and that is to justify him from Guilt: And that is something more, than arbitrarily to deliver a man from the Law.

2. *JUSTIFICATION is most properly & essentially of the Person.* Whatsoever respect it hath to Sin, or Righteousness, as certainly it hath a respect to both, yet the act it self terminates on the man. His sin indeed is pardoned, but it is not justifyed, but *he* is so, in the pardoning of it. On this account we shall find the Word of God expresly so determining of it, *Job* 13. 18. *Rom.* 3. 28. *Isai.* 50. 8. *Rom.* 4. 8. And it must be so: for it is the person that is brought on the Trial, that stands at the Bar, and his state is determined according to the Sentence that is past in the issue.

3. *THAT the Justified Person is no longer under the Law as a Covenant.* The Law of God hath a double consideration, *viz.* as it is a Rule of Obedience, or as it is a Covenant of Works. In the former respect, all the people of God are under it, but not in the latter. The Law as a Covenant of Works, is considered with its Sanctions, as it promiseth Life to perfect personal Obedience, and threatneth Death to the least defect in that Obedience. Now in neither of these regards is a Believer under it. Hence that deprecation, Psal. 143. 2.

And enter not into judgment with thy ſervant: for in thy ſight ſhall no man living be juſtified. That therefore is aſſerted concerning every juſtifyed one, Rom. 6. 14. *For ſin ſhall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*

4. *JUSTIFICATION is Immutable.* It is an act, which when once God hath paſſed it upon a man, is never repealed, he never repents of it. It is one of thoſe *Gifts* of his that *are without Repentance*, Rom. 11. 29. Hence, with reſpect to forgiveneſs, the Scripture ſpeaks of it as a perpetual thing, *Jer.* 31. 34. *I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their ſin no more. Iſai.* 43. 25. Hence he ſpeaks of *caſting* them *into the depth of the ſea*, Mic. 7. 19.

5. HENCE, *a Juſtifyed Perſon can never again come under the Law guilt, in a compound ſenſe.* In a divided ſenſe he may, i.e. if God ſhould leave him to himſelf, and take away his Spirit from him, he would fall out of Grace; but conſidered as under the New-Covenant, and the ſure Promiſes of it, ſo he cannot. The Law is then ſaid to have dominion over us, when it reigns unto Death, or when it holds us under condemnation, but we are aſſured, that the Law ſhall never more have *dominion* over a Believer, in *Rom.* 6. 14. & 8. 2. *For the law of the Spirit of life, in Chriſt Jeſus, hath made me free from the law of ſin and death.* And the reaſon is rendred, becauſe the Law as a Covenant, hath nothing to do with him, who is in another Covenant. Hence we read, Rom. 3. 19. *Now we know that what things ſoever the law ſaith, it ſaith to them that are under the law: that every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*

6. HENCE, *no Sins of a Juſtifyed Perſon, ſhall bring him into Condemnation.* That a juſtifyed perſon may ſin, is wofully true by daily experience. That by ſinning he doth things, that in themſelves deſerve Death, is as true, for that cannot be ſeperated from the nature of ſin. But yet, that being juſtifyed, he ſhall never fall under the Curſe of the Law is certain, becauſe then, his Juſtification would ceaſe, which it cannot. It is contrary to the Doctrine of *Perſeverance* to believe it. Yea, the conſideration of the derivation of Juſtification, from the love of God, the promiſe of the Covenant of Suretiſhip, the Redemption of Chriſt, and his Juſtification as our Surety, contradict it; as might be largely inſiſted on.

7. YET, *there is a Covenant of Grace, under which the Juſtifyed Perſon is, in which there are alſo Sanctions.* Though we *are not under the Law*, yet we are *under Grace*, Rom. 6. 14. and the diſpenſation of the Covenant of Grace. God hath not only required Obedience of his People, but aſſured them, that by Sin he is provoked, and they ſhall ſmart for it; tho' they be not exterminated, *Pſal.* 89. 30, &c. And hitherto belong all the ſolemn Warnings given in the Goſpel unto Believers.

8. HENCE *by Sin, the Juſtifyed Perſon expoſeth himſelf to divine Corrections, according to Covenant, which is a ſort of Guilt.* For tho' he is not under Obligation to ſuffer the Curſe of the Law, that being for ever removed from him, yet he is under an Obligation to the Chaſtiſements of God: And hence, when he hath ſinned, his Conſcience ſmites him, and he is put into terror, and expects with *trembling*, to meet with the *Judgments of God.* So, Pſal. 119. 120. *My fleſh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.*

9. HENCE, *God is not wont to apply to the Conſcience, a particular pardon of ſuch Sins, but upon Repentance.* God is angry, and brings his Children under ſenſe of wrath, and hidings of his favour, and makes it evil and bitter, as, *Jer.* 2. 29. *David* expreſſeth the condition he was in on this account, Pſal. 32. 3, 4. *When I kept ſilence, my bones waxed old; through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moiſture is turned into the drought of ſummer.* And ſpeaks of his *broken bones*, *Pſal.* 51. 8. And hereupon, till they are brought to a thorough and cordial Repentance, they abide under God's fatherly diſpleaſure, and the terrible effects of it; he hides his face from them, he ſhuts up the light of his countenance from them, and they are ſometimes brought to the brinks of deſpair, and devote themſelves paſt hope, as, Jon. 2. 4. *Then I ſaid, I am caſt out of thy ſight; I will look again towards thy holy temple.* *Pſal.* 31. 22. But yet all this is not a Law proſecution, but according to one article in the Covenant of Grace, Heb. 12. 6. *For whom the Lord loveth he chaſteneth, & ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth.*

10. *BUT the juſtified Perſon is all this while under a new Covenant ſecurity, that God will give him, both Repentance and Forgiveneſs.* Every juſtified Perſon is under the promiſe of eternal Life, and if the thing be promiſed, the means for the obtaining it are thereby ſecured not to fail, of which that of Repentance is one, & therefore it belongs to Chriſt's mediatorial Office, to give it to *Iſrael*, *Act.* 5. 31. And thus, in a Goſpel ſenſe, new ſins are then pardoned to us, when upon renewed Repentance, and Faith in Chriſt, we wait on God for it; and for this reaſon it is, that juſtified perſons are under duty and neceſſity to pray every day, *forgive our Treſpaſſes.*

USE I. *LEARN hence, what need we have to be very careful, on what ground we perſwade our ſelves, that our Sins are pardoned.* If our hope be built, only on the merciful nature of God, we delude our own Souls. Remember, forgiveneſs of ſins, belongs to Juſtification; you muſt therefore have a diſcovery of the Juſtice, as well as the Grace of God concurring therein, elſe your *foundation is ſandy*, and your confidence will deceive you.

USE. II. *LEARN hence a Reaſon, why Juſtified Perſons, may be under terrible reſentments of the Wrath of God.* Not that they are therefore fallen out of the Grace of God, but be-

cauſe

cauſe the anger of their Father is kindled againſt them, and their own Conſciences accuſe them of dealing falſely in theCovenant, and therefore, till by thorough and ſoaking Repentance, they apply themſelves to God, and by Faith in Chriſt they renew their Covenant with him, they are not to expect the Pardon to be iſſued out; this then is the way, and let us attend it, encouraged by *David's* experience, Pſal. 32. 5. *I acknowledged my ſin unto thee, and mine iniquities have I not hid: I ſaid I will confeſs my tranſgreſſions unto the Lord, and thou forgaveſt the iniquity of my ſin. Selah.*

[AUGUST 30. 1698.]

SERMON *CXXIV.*

II. IN this Act of Juſtification, God *accepts us as righteous in his ſight.* This is by *Divines* called the *ſecond part* of it; and it muſt always be in conjunction with pardon of ſin for the rendring of a perſon compleatly juſtified. For, although a perſon cannot be in any ſenſe juſtified, as long as the Guilt of unpardoned ſin lies upon him, and therefore on ſuppoſition of ſuch a Guilt, he muſt be forgiven in the juſtifying of him; yet a meer Pardon will not amount to Juſtification, but there muſt ſomething more go into it, and that is the finding and declaring him righteous. And for this reaſon it is, that a godly man, is in Scripture ſo frequently called a righteous man, which muſt needs have a primary reſpect to his ſtate of Juſtification. *Two* things then do here come under our deliberation, *viz.* 1. *That in Juſtification, the man muſt be found and declared Righteous.* 2. *That if God accept of him as righteous in his ſight, it is enough for his Juſtification.*

1. *THAT in Juſtification, the man muſt be found and declared Righteous.* And here *two* things may be inquired into, *viz.* 1. *What is that Righteouſneſs that muſt be found for him.* 2. *Why he muſt be found entituled to ſuch a Righteouſneß.*

1. *WHAT is that Righteouſneſs which muſt be found for him?*

Anſw. THERE is a *twofold Righteouſneſs* mentioned in the Word of God; both whereof muſt be found for the Man in order to his Salvation, though it is but one of them that hath any influence into his Juſtification. There is the Righteouſneſs which was required in the *Covenant of Works*, which is wont to be called a *Legal Righteouſneſs*, and it conſiſts in an univerſal and entire conformity to the Law of God, which was given to man for the rule of his Obedience, under the ſanctions of a Covenant; the leaſt defect in one point whereof, whether in omiſſion or commiſſion, renders the man unrighteous, and brings him under the guilt of breaking the whole, Jam. 2. 10. *For whoſoever ſhall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.* And there is the Righteouſneſs which is accepted of us in the *Covenant of Grace*, and is called *Evangelical*, and flows from a new principle of Sanctification infuſed by the Spirit of God in Regeneration, by which the man is wrought to a conformity to the revealed Will of God. Hence ſaid to be renewed in righteouſneſs, Eph. 4. 24. *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs, & true holineſs.* And is at leaſt included, if not altogether intended in that of our Saviour, Mat. 5. 20. *For I ſay unto you, That except your righteouſneſs ſhall exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees ye ſhall in no caſe enter into the kingdom of heaven.* Now, though as a rule, it preſcribes to us an entire perfection, as Mat. 5. ult. *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.* And the gracious Soul is reſtleſly aſpiring after it, as, Phil. 3. 13,14. *Brethren, I count not my ſelf to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting thoſe things which are behind, & reaching forth unto thoſe which are before. I preſs toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.* Yet God in the New Covenant, and through Chriſt, accepts of that which is ſincere, though it be imperfect, *Eph.* 1. 6. Now, though this latter be neceſſary in order to Salvation, yet it hath no manner of cauſality in our Juſtification. And that may be one reaſon why God is ſaid to *Juſtify the ungodly*, Rom. 4. 4. to ſignify the antecedency of our Juſtification, in order of nature, to any inherent righteouſneſs of our own, and conſequently, that our Piety contributes nothing towards it. It is then the former of theſe, *viz. A perfect entire legal Righteouſneſs, and no other, that muſt ſtand for our Juſtification, before God.* That which will bear the exact trial of the Law, and not have the leaſt flaw, defect, or exorbitancy found in it. And this will be made fully evident by the *next.* Hence,

2. *WHY he muſt be found entituled to ſuch a Righteouſneſs?*

Anſ. THE ſubſtance of the Reaſon for this is expreſt, by our Saviour Chriſt, with the ſtrongeſt aſſeveration; in, *Mat.* 5. 18. And the force of the Reaſon fetcht from hence, will be ſeen in the following *Concluſions*,

1. *THE Law was given to man at firſt, to be a rule of relative Juſtice.* God in his ſpecial government over reaſonable Creatures, deſigned the peculiar manifeſtation of thoſe *two* glorious moral Perfections of his, *viz.* His *Juſtice* and his *Mercy.* Now, the former of theſe was provided for in the firſt Covenant. And hence a foundation was in it laid for that purpoſe. God had been eſſentially juſt for ever, though there had been no Subject to diſplay it upon: But his Relative Juſtice is diſplayed in the relation between him and man, and the conſtitution of a Rule according to which, he will proceed with man, in the adminiſtration of his Government over him.

And

And on this account, he is called a righteous Judge, *Pſal.* 7.11. And that Law it ſelf is ſaid to be *juſt*, *Rom.* 7. 12. And indeed, without ſome Rule or Law given to the Subject, there can be no diſcovery of Juſtice in the adminiſtration of Government over him; it being arbitrary Government. Juſtice ſuppoſeth a Rule, and ſhews it ſelf in proceeding exactly according to it.

2. *THAT as man was bound in duty to the Rules of that Law, ſo God was obliged by Covevant to the Sanctions of it.* The Tranſaction between God and man at firſt, is called *a Covenant*, becauſe both ſtood in it mutually engaged. Now the Command was man's part in it, and both the Authority of God over him, and his ſtanding related to God as his Creature, and the equity of the Law it ſelf, being ſuited to man's nature, and proper to direct him to his great end, brought him under a tie of Obedience to it, and man's righteouſneſs conſiſted in that Obedience. And God, to ſhew his Authority over man, treated him with a Covenant Promiſe and Threatning, according as he either kept or violated that Law. The Threatning is in, Gen. 2 17. *For in the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die.* The Promiſe in, Rom. 10. 5. *The man which doth thoſe things, ſhall live by them.* Now God would have his Juſtice manifeſted, as in the Righteouſneſs of the Law, ſo in the execution of the Sanctions of it, and for that reaſon he bound himſelf to proceed accordingly, and did not leave it as an arbitrary thing. And this was ſo expreſt in the confirmation of the threatning, *Gen.* 2. 17.

3. *THAT by theſe Sanctions God alſo deſigned the diſplay of his Holineſs.* We conceive of this Attribute, to be his ſtanding bound for his own Glory in all his Works; but this more peculiarly to be manifeſted in his loving Righteouſneſs, & hating Iniquity. Hence that, Hab. 1. 13. *Thou art of purer eyes then to behold evil, and canſt not look on iniquity.* Hence there can be no greater diſcoveries of it, then in his making the Sanctions of his Law to take place, according as men are related to it. Hence, His Law of Righteouſneſs is diſcovered, in the glorious Rewards which he hath provided to beſtow on them that are found in it; and his Abhorrence of Sin, in thoſe fearful Penalties which he executes upon thoſe, that come under the guilt of it. Hence that, Pſal. 9. 16. *The Lord is known by the judgments which he executeth.* And *Pſal.* 99.8,9. Hence therefore his Honour is engaged, and that not only of his Truth, but of his Holineſs too, to ſee that man be dealt with according to the tenor of the Covenant, which paſt between them.

4. *THAT the Promiſe of Life, was inſeperably connected with man's Obedience, and that perfect too.* There is this difference to be obſerved between a Covenant Promiſe, and one that is Abſolute: That an Abſolute promiſe ſecures the good promiſed to the ſubject of it, without any exception, and therefore he cannot for any after-conſideration revoke it, without being falſe to his word. Whereas, a Covenant promiſe, hath a proper reſpect to the condition to which it is connected, and binds the promiſer to performance, no further then that condition is complied withal; ſo that upon the ſubject's failing in it, he is at liberty from his promiſe, and no challenge can be made of the benefit ſo engaged: yea, and when it ſtands joyned with a Threatning, in caſe of ſuch failure, it then cuts off the ſubject, not only from a claim, but any hope of enjoying it, becauſe he ſo falls under the contrary threatning. So, that there can be no righteous adjudging of the man ſo failing, to receive the Reward of Life, becauſe the rule of Righteouſneſs on which it is to be beſtowed, is not complied withal. Hence that, Rom. 10. 5. *For Moſes deſcribed the righteouſneſs which is of the law, that the man which doth theſe things ſhall live by them.*

5. *THAT the declaring of the man Righteous is in order to his participating in the Life promiſed.* This declaration is ſuppoſed to be made by one that hath power and authority to do it, and that in a juridicial way; and this ſuppoſeth a Trial, in which there is neceſſarily preſumed to be a Queſtion to be decided. And that lies thus: There was a promiſe of Life made in the firſt Covenant to man, in caſe of his perfect Righteouſneſs. Now the Trial of the man is, whether he have a juſt claim to this Life, ſo promiſed; whether, according to the rule of Government, under which he was placed, he is to be pronounced a man of Life or of Death. And in the purſuance of this Queſtion, that it may be rightly decided, the inquiry muſt be, Whether he be owner of ſuch a Righteouſneſs, as that Promiſe was entailed upon: And hence, whatever other righteouſneſs, he may be found owner of, yet if it amount not to this, it is aliene from the caſe under deciſion, and will make nothing to the determination of it. Hence the *Pſalmiſt* makes that acknowledgment, with reſpect to his own righteouſneſs Evangelical, Pſal. 130. 3. *If thou, Lord, ſhouldeſt mark iniquities: O Lord, who ſhall ſtand?*

6. *THE Law is the ſquare or meaſure of that Righteouſneſs, and cannot be baulked.* If it were not ſo, there would be no need of the fulfilling of it in every *iota*, as Chriſt aſſures us that there is, *Math.* 5. 18. If God will as a Sovereign beſtow Life upon any without it, who ſhall call his power or liberty in queſtion; but if he will do it as a Judge, there muſt then be a rule of Righteouſneſs according to which he proceeds to ſuch a Sentence; and that Rule can be no other than the Law of the firſt Covenant, becauſe his ſpecial Government, by which he leads the Creature to an everlaſting ſtate of happineſs or miſery, according to his obedience or diſobedience, was eſtabliſhed in it. The reaſonable Creature is therefore under this Law, ſo as that a regard muſt be had unto

it

it in his Juſtification, elſe it is not fulfilled, but deſtroyed, which may not be.

7. *HENCE the man cannot be righteouſly Juſtifyed without ſuch a Righteouſneſs.* Not but that he may ſo be without ſuch an one of his own perſonal; and wo to all the race of fallen *Adam*, if it were not ſo, in as much as there is no meer man, that ever could or ſhall be able to produce ſuch an one for his Juſtification, and Claim to Eternal Life. But however, ſuch an one there muſt be, and he muſt have a Title to it, elſe his Juſtification, will be no Juſtification, but a force put upon the rule of Juſtice, which is inconſiſtent with the Righteouſneſs of God to do. God muſt be juſt in juſtifying the Believer, and that he may ſo be there muſt be a Righteouſneſs on which this act proceeds, and that muſt be ſuch a Righteouſneſs as comports with the promiſe of Life, and ſhears clear of the threatning of Death: According to *Rom.* 3. 25, 26. And that can be no other, then what we have already taken notice of.

8. *HENCE, the Grace of the New Covenant conſiſts not in that God indulgeth the man by abatement, but that he provides ſuch a Righteouſneſs for him.* Men make a clamour, if God proceed in the Judgment upon this rigour, where is the Grace by which we are ſaved? And for this, ſome carnal minds have found out a more eaſy Righteouſneſs perſonal, accommodated to our infirmities, to be the rule of proceedure. But this contradicts the whole Scheme of the Covenant, and makes the New Covenant not to be a remedial Law, but truly ſubverſive of the firſt. Here therefore the Grace of it appears, that when upon Trial, the Believer is found not to have any ſuch Righteouſneſs of his own perſonal, and cannot be Juſtified on account of his beſt: According to that, Pſal. 143. 2. *For in thy ſight ſhall no man living be juſtified.* God looks upon, and hath reſpect to, a Righteouſneſs that he hath laid in for him, and finding it ſufficient to anſwer the utmoſt demands of the Law, doth for the ſake, and on the account of it, pronounce him righteous, and accordingly adjudgeth him to receive the promiſed reward of Righteouſneſs. How far this is conſiſtent with his Juſtice in this proceedure, will be afterwards conſidered. But this is infinite Grace, and ſo is accommodated to that wonderful and myſterious Truth, celebrated in, Pſal. 85. 10. *Mercy & truth are met togegether; righteouſneſs & peace have kiſſed each other.* And Rom. 3. 26. And is a confirming demonſtration of the truth of that, *ver. ult. Righteouſneſs ſhall go before him; and ſhall ſet us in the way of his ſteps.* For this reaſon it is called the Righteouſneſs of God, as becauſe he was God who performed it, ſo becauſe the infinite wiſdom and powerful Providence of God brought it in: According to *Dan.* 9. 24. *Paul* therefore abjuring his own perſonal as inſufficient, aſpires after a title to and intereſt in this, when he ſhall come upon his trial, Phil. 3. 9. *And be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith.*

2. *THAT if God accept of the man as Righteous in his ſight, it is ſufficient for his Juſtification.* Our *Catechiſm*, thus expreſſeth the 2d part of Juſtification, to let us underſtand that it is of free Grace, in as much as it derives from God's gracious acceptance: But for which, he might ſee enough in us to condemn us. *Pſal.* 130. 3. Yet intimates, that he doth it righteouſly, elſe it would not be a right Juſtification. Let us then look into the ground and ſtrength of this Aſſertion, in the following *Concluſions*,

1. THAT God's *Accepting us for Righteous*, implies *two* things, which are obſervable,

(1.) *Our paſſing in his account and eſteem for Righteous.* That he doth really repute us to be ſo Juridically; according to that in Numb. 23. 21. *He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he ſeen perverſeneſs in Iſrael.* Not that he doth not know all our follies & ſinful infirmities that we labour of, but that in relation to the Law, and Sanctions of it, we are righteous; for he doth not paſs a ſentence upon us contrary to his own mind, but as he eſteems us.

(2.) *HIS declaring us to be ſuch, according to that eſteem.* For in Juſtification there is a Sentence paſt, declared, entred, recorded; which is the perſons ſecurity againſt any after demands or challenges of the Law. Juſtification belongs to Application, and is one of the benefits of Chriſt's Redemption that is applied to us. And being a judicial Sentence, it can be applied in no other way.

(2.) *THAT God in ſo accepting of us, judgeth us worthy of Eternal Life.* The acceptance it ſelf, is a declaration hereof, and it flows from the relation that there is in the Covenant, between that Righteouſneſs, and this Life. The Scripture makes mention of ſuch a worthineſs as this, on this very account, Rev. 3. 4. *Thou haſt a few names in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments, and they ſhall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.* And there is no other account can be given of it but this, *viz.* That as the Covenant declared the reward of Life to be given to ſuch who had a Righteouſneſs anſwering it fully, and they having a Righteouſneſs ſtanding for them in their Trial, which doth fully quadrate with that which was required, ſo it is meet and juſt that they ſhould be adjudged to receive that Reward; and for that reaſon it is called a *Crown of Righteouſneſs*: and ſaid to be given by a *Righteous Judge*, 2 Tim. 4. 8.

3. *THAT God doth this as a Judge.* There is a vaſt difference between the declaration of a private Perſon, and of a Judge. The one can only declare us righteous *Charitably*, whereas the other doth it *Authoritatively*. God accepts, declares, and judgeth us worthy from a Tribunal, as Lord and Lawgiver, and having the power of Life and Death in his hands, and therefore this Juſtification is limited to him, *Rom.* 8. 44.

4. THAT

4. *THAT He doth it as a Righteous Judge.* Righteouſneſs is a vertue neceſſary to be found in every one who occupieth the place of a Judge, elſe he cannot anſwer the end of ſuch an Office. And though men may come ſhort of this quality, and ſo abuſe their Truſt, and do unrighteous actions, yet this is far from God. *Gen.*18.25. This therefore is aſcribed to him in reſpect of his Judging the World, Pſal.96.13. *He ſhall judge the world with righteouſneſs, and the people with his truth.* Yea, for this very reaſon the *Apoſtle* argues the Righteouſneſs of God, *Rom.* 3. 5,6.

5. *THAT hence He hath a reſpect to a Righteouſneſs that anſwers the Law according to which this Judgment paſſeth.* This is a neceſſary inference from the premiſes. For, in paſſing a Judgment upon a perſon, it is impoſſible that it ſhould proceed righteouſly, unleſs the Law according to which it is to paſs, be applied in it, according to the true purport or meaning of it. We may then hence ſafely conclude, that God will not as a Judge, repute any perſon to be righteous, unleſs the Law according to which he ſo doth, be fully anſwered. For,tho' the Believer is not under the Law as a Covenant, but under Grace, *Rom.* 6. 14. Yet he was under it before his Juſtification, being diſcharged from it by this act, and ſo in this diſcharge the Juſtice of God, hath a Righteouſneſs which it reſpects in it.

6. *THAT His Judgment is Supreme,& finally determines the Cauſe.* He hath Authority to reverſe all the Judgments of men, if they paſs wrongfully, and ſo there lies an appeal from them to Him; but there is no appeal from his Judgment to any other, becauſe there is no Court Superiour to his. When once he hath declared the man righteous, it is a vain thing for men or Devils, to bring in Articles againſt that man, or lay any thing to his charge. So the *Apoſtle* argues, Rom. 8. 33. *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that juſtifieth.* If once God ſaith, this man is Righteous, and the Law is ſatisfied in him, the Cavils and Accuſations of men and Devils, will ſignify nothing.

7. *THAT hence upon this Acceptance, we cannot fail of the Reward of Righteouſneſs.* As it isGod who juſtifyeth,ſo it is he who recompenceth; and he will do it according to the Sentence that he hath pronounced. And hence the *Apoſtle* ſpeaks of it, as of a thing already done,Rom.8.30. *And whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified.* And it muſt needs be ſo, for the promiſe is paſt, and God cannot in righteouſneſs withhold the performance of it. Hence that, Tit. 1. 2. *In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promiſed before the world began.* And hereupon the recompence of Glory is attributed to *God's Righteouſneſs*, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 6, 7. Thus ſhall it be done to the man whom God ſhall ſee meet to accept. And what more is neceſſary to a compleat Juſtification.

Use. I. HENCE *it is of Infinite Concernment, what Righteouſneſs we have to rely on for our Juſtification.* How many do ſhew their egregious folly in this reſpect? Did you ever call your ſtate to the bar of your Conſciences, and put your ſelves on this Trial, *Am I Juſtified?* Know it, to be Juſtified, is to be declared Righteous by God; for which you muſt be accepted as ſo, in his account: And that you may be ſo, there muſt be a Righteouſneſs that ſtands for you. But what an one is it? Do you think any ſhort of entire perfection will do? You then deceive your ſelves. And is not your own ſo? Take heed of relying on it: You will not ſtand the charge of your own heart, which tells you, this anſwers not the Law. Reſt not then, till you have gotten a title to one that will bear the moſt exact trial, and be found compleat, which can be no other than that of Chriſt. And how it may ſtand righteouſly for you, as if it had been your own, will afterwards be conſidered. But account this to be your main concern, and do not neglect to proſecute it.

Use. II. *LEARN hence alſo, that it is ſufficient ground of Conſolation, that we are accepted by God in the New-Covenant.* Tho' the Righteouſneſs for which God accepts of us be that which anſwers to the firſt Covenant, yet the acceptance it ſelf is a fruit of his rich Grace, and belongs to the New-Covenant diſpenſation. However,this acceptance of us is according to his Righteouſneſs, becauſe *Righteouſneſs & Peace kiſs each other* in it. Have we then any witneſs of this Acceptance in us? Doth the Spirit of God ſpeak peace to, and in us? We may ſafely infer from hence, that the Law is anſwered, that Juſtice is ſatisfyed, and that there is a Righteouſneſs made ours, for which we are accounted worthy of Eternal Life. And how may we triumphantly hereupon cry out as he, Pſal. 118. 17. *I ſhall not die but live, and declare the works of the Lord.*

[September 27. 1698.]

SERMON *CXXV.*

WE have conſidered the Act of *Juſtification*, or the things that are done in it. We proceed to obſerve,

II. *THE Meritorious and Material Cauſe of Juſtification.* This is expreſt in thoſe words, *Only for the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt.* Theſe are both here included and will call for a diſtinct Conſideration. *The Righteouſneſs of Chriſt* ſupplies the room of both theſe; and that with reſpect to both the parts of Juſtification, *viz.* the *pardon of our Sins*, and the *accounting of us as Righteous.* Here then we may Inquire, 1. *What is that Righteouſneſs of Chriſt which is concerned in our Juſtification?* 2. *How it is the Meritorious Cauſe?* 3. *How the Material Cauſe?* 4. *That it is ſo excluſively of all other.* Of theſe briefly,

1. *WHAT*

1. *WHAT is that Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, which is concerned in our Juſtification.*

Anſw. RIGHTEOUSNESS may be aſcribed to Chriſt in diverſe reſpects: But there is one only, that comes under our preſent Subject. There is a Righteouſneſs that belongs to him as he is God, and as he is a Divine Perſon. Righteouſneſs is one of the Divine Attributes, and ſo it is aſcribed to God in Scripture, *Pſal.* 7. 9. 11. 7. &c. which Righteouſneſs is more eſpecially aſcribed to him, on account of his relative Juſtice, in the ſpecial Government of the reaſonable Creature. There is alſo a Righteouſneſs belonging to Chriſt God man, reſpecting his Kingly Office, in the diſpenſation of the Mediatorial Kingdom committed to him by his Father. Of this it is ſaid concerning him, Pſal. 45. 7. *Thou loveſt righteouſneſs, and hateſt wickedneſs: therefore God, thy God hath anointed thee with the oyl of gladneſs above thy fellows.* And *Paul* calls him *the Righteous Judge*, 2 Tim. 4. 8. But neither of theſe is intended in the matter before us. There is therefore a Righteouſneſs that refers to his Prieſtly Office, as he ſtood engaged in Sureſhip for us, to anſwer all the demands of the Law on our account: In which regard that title is put upon him, Jer. 23. 6. *THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.* And this is that we are enquiring after, and it conſiſts in that whole Obedience which the Son of God in our Nature yielded to the Law of God in his ſtate of Humiliation. Hence we are told, in Gal. 4. 4, 5. *But when the fulneſs of time was come, God ſent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons.* Now this Obedience of his was that which anſwered the Law, under which man was placed by God's ſpecial Government, to the utmoſt extent of it, in both its Sanctions: According to Mat. 5. 17, 18. *Think not that I am come to deſtroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to deſtroy, but to fulfill. For verily I ſay unto you, Till heaven and earth paſs, one jott or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled.* Here therefore we are to conſider, that Chriſt ſtood Surety to the Law for fallen men; for whom he was to work out a compleat Redemption. So that if we would rightly conceive of this Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, we muſt conſider how fallen man ſtands obliged to the Juſtice of the firſt Covenant, and what is requiſite to anſwer thoſe Obligations, that he may be Juſtified: And for this we muſt refer to the Sanctions of that Law, and the Conditions on which thoſe Sanctions were eſtabliſhed: for there was an inſeperable connexion between theſe two. Now the promiſe of Life was made to Obedience, and the threatning of Death was againſt diſobedience. So that, as man by his non-obedience loſt his title to Life, ſo by his tranſgreſſion he came under the ſentence of Death. And though, if man had perſiſted in his integrity, he had not needed the Obedience of another; yet, being come ſhort of it, he muſt have one to anſwer for him, or elſe he can never receive the reward of it, conſiſtent with the terms of the firſt Covenant, which muſt be fulfilled. For, not only doth not man's impotency, by reaſon of ſin, excuſe him from his duty to keep the whole Law of God, but the very tenor of the Covenant requires, that Life be beſtowed on him in no other way, but on account of ſuch a perfect conformity, and his very coming ſhort of the Glory of God in this reſpect, is his ſin. Rom. 3. 23. *For all have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God.* There is alſo a poſitive Obligation lying on ſinful man to die, Ezek. 18. 4. *The ſoul that ſinneth it ſhall die.* And the Juſtice of the Law cannot be anſwered without it. So that, as if man had not ſinned, a Surety had been needleſs, ſo having ſinned, a ſufficient Surety muſt ſtand engaged in both theſe parts, the full accompliſhment whereof is that Righteouſneſs, by which we muſt be Juſtified.

HENCE there is a double Obedience of Chriſt, that goes in to accompliſh the compleat Righteouſneſs on which our Juſtification is built,

(1.) *HIS Active Obedience, whereby he complied with the condition of the promiſe of Life.* When the man is upon his Trial, in order to Juſtification, or with reſpect to his being adjudged to Life, the Queſtion is, *Ought this man according to Law, to receive the Reward of Life?* For reſolution whereof, there are two Inquiries more, *viz.* What is required in order to this Life? And whether the demand is in this regard anſwered by him? And that muſt be, either in his Perſon or Surety. And for this there muſt be a perfect conformity to the whole precept of the Law found. For Juſtice muſt proceed thus, The man hath obeyed, and therefore *a Crown of Life* belongs to him as his due. Here therefore Chriſt's active Obedience is concerned. For which reaſon he himſelf ſaid, Mat. 3. 15. *Suffer it to be ſo now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteouſneſs.* And for this reaſon, his holy, harmleſs, unſpotted Life, is ſo much recommended to us in Scripture, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. 1 *Pet.* 2. 20, 23. *Heb.* 7. 26, &c.

(2.) *HIS Paſſive Obedience, wherein he complied with the condition of the threatning of Death.* In the man's trial, in order to his Juſtification, there is alſo inquiry made about the other Sanction: The Law hath ſaid, the *Sinner ſhall die*; and hereupon there are two Queſtions here alſo to be canvaſed, *viz.* Whether the man have not ſinned? And upon the evidence that he hath ſo done, whether he hath ſuffered the Death denounced? Which ſuffering may be called, our Paſſive Obedience to the Law. And in reſpect of Chriſt, it may be called Obedience properly, becauſe, in compliance with his Father's will, he ſubmitted to it in our room. Hence that, Phil. 2. 7, 8. *But made himſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of men. And*

being found in ſaſhion as a man, he humbled himſelf; and became obedient to death, even the death of the croſs. This therefore belongs to the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, becauſe in it he anſwered the Righteouſneſs of the Law. And for that reaſon he is ſaid to be *made Sin, that we might be made Righteouſneſs*, 2 Cor. 5. 21.

2. *HOW this Righteouſneſs of his, is the Meritorious Cauſe of our Juſtification?*

Anſ. I uſe this term *Meritorious*, that I may not ſeem to innovate, it being the word uſed to expreſs this, by *Divines* generally, both by the Orthodox, and alſo *Arminian* Writers. But the word is to be underſtood *Synechdochically*, in as much as but one part of the Cauſe is expreſt in it, and is taken for the whole, as their Explications on it doth manifeſtly declare. The meaning then is, that it is the procuring Cauſe of our Juſtification: It is that whereby Chriſt hath purchaſed it for us, in compliance with the terms of the firſt Covenant. Now, we have obſerved, that there were two terms in that Covenant, *viz.* Life was promiſed to Obedience, and Death denounced againſt Diſobedience; and Chriſt, by his anſwering of both theſe, did procure for us, that we might be both Pardoned, and accepted as Righteous, conſiſtent with the Law of Juſtice. Hence that, Rom. 3. 26. *To declare, I ſay, at this time his righteouſneſs: that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him which believeth in Jeſus.* Now Chriſt purchaſed that we might be accepted as Righteous by his active Obedience, and that our Sins ſhould be pardoned, by his paſſive Obedience. The former of theſe is called his *Merit*, the latter his *Satisfaction*; both of which are vulgarly aſcribed to the meritorious Cauſe. Here then,

1. *CHRIST merited Eternal Life for us by his active Obedience.* The word, *merit*, is indeed an equivocal word, and had need cautiouſly to be underſtood. The word, merit, may be underſtood either abſolutely, or with a limitation. I ſhall not here inquire how many things are required to an abſolute merit, ſince that which is limited will anſwer our preſent occaſion. And here, that which is proper to our purpoſe is a Covenant merit. And that is, when there is a Reward promiſed, on the account of a work to be done; the party, upon the full performance of that work, hath earned his Reward: and this was proper to the firſt Covenant. For which reaſon the *Apoſtle* tells us, that boaſting was not thence excluded, but from the new, Rom. 3. 27. *Where is boaſting then? it is excluded: By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.* But this doth not of it ſelf exclude Grace. And indeed there was great Grace manifeſted in the Covenant of Works; ſince man's Obedience was a due debt. God had no need of it, and the aſſiſtance and ſtrength to perform it, muſt come from God. However, there was a work to be done, and for that, man was to receive a reward of Life by promiſe. Now, though Chriſt's Obedience came nearer an abſolute merit then ours, in that the Son of God did not owe it naturally, but undertook it voluntarily at his Father's deſire; and in as much as, the Grace and Strength was not borrowed, but his own; yet, in as much as it fully anſwered all the Obligation lying on us to duty, by the Covenant, it therein had a Covenant merit, to procure Eternal Life for us. That therefore muſt neceſſarily, at leaſt in part, if not principally reſpect his active Obedience. Rom. 5. 19. *For as by one man's diſobedience, many were made ſinners: ſo by the obedience of one, ſhall many be made righteous.* And on this account he ſaith he came to *fulfill the Law*, Mat. 5. 17. Beſides, he was the *ſecond Adam*, and we are told, 1 Cor. 15. 22. *For as in Adam all die, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.* And the words, *as* and *ſo*, there uſed, import a ſimilitude, or that it was in like manner; *as* therefore *Adam* loſt our Life by Sin, *ſo* Chriſt purchaſed our Life by Obedience to the Law.

2. *CHRIST ſatisfied the Law for us, and ſo procured our Pardon by his paſſive Obedience.* We had made a forfeiture of our lives into the hands of Juſtice, and were to die for it, but Chriſt ſtept in for us, and took the Penalty upon him, and by that means he purchaſed our diſcharge; and this is more properly called *Satisfaction* then merit, though in a more looſe ſenſe, it may come under that denomination. On this account he is ſaid to die, *the juſt for the unjuſt*, 1 Pet. 3. 18. to *give himſelf a ranſom*, 1 Tim. 2. 6. and we are ſaid to be *bought with a price*, 1 Cor. 6. 20. Yea, the Scripture abounds with expreſſions, witneſſing that his Sufferings were to ſatisfie Juſtice, and expiate our Guilt, and ſo to atone an holy and juſt God to us. And this ſufficeth to prove that his Righteouſneſs was for this very deſign, to procure us pardon and acceptance with God, by taking away the pleas of the Law, which ſtood againſt us. All the demur is, whether there were a fulneſs of Merit and Satisfaction in this Righteouſneſs of his, to anſwer theſe ends of it? And that there was ſo, will appear if we conſider,

1. *IT is a Righteouſneſs that fully anſwers the firſt Covenant, which was the rule of Juſtification.* Were there any defect in it in that regard, it would be deficient; but there is not. The Law could make no more demands either of a man, or a ſinner, then what He entirely complied withal. He kept the Law without the leaſt tranſgreſſion of it. His Life was a perfect exemplification of it: And he bare the Curſe, till Juſtice it ſelf, was now pleaſed to ſay, it is enough, and gave him his diſcharge. So that in his Perſon the Law was fulfilled. There could nothing more be exacted upon a man, than what He accompliſhed by his Obedience.

2. *IT was the Righteouſneſs of One that was God as well as Man, and therefore it had Infinite value in it.* His Perſon put worth into his Obedience. For though, if it had not been coextenſive with that latitude of the Law, it

it being done by a Divine Perſon would not have ſufficed; yet, it being ſo, this made it equivalent with the Obedience of all men, yea, more worth than all. There is therefore *Emphaſis* in calling it *the Righteouſneſs of God*, Rom. 3. 25. And the Blood that was ſhed in it is called the *Blood of God*, Act. 20. 28. Nor could the Juſtice of God ever have been ſo glorifyed, in any other way, as in having the Eternal Son of God ſubjected to it.

3. *IT was the Righteouſneſs of One that was appointed and conſtituted Mediator & Redeemer by God himſelf.* God deputed him, and accepted of him, and made him *Surety*, *Heb.* 7. 22. And our *Righteouſneſs*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. He made him *Sin for us*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. So that it was not only ſufficient for us, but really wrought out in our behalf. Chriſt neither did nor died for himſelf, but for thoſe whom he was to redeem. Hence that, 1 Tim. 2. 5, 6. *For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Chriſt Jeſus. Who gave himſelf a ranſom for all.* Rom. 3. 25. *Whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of ſins that are paſt, through the forbearance of God.* So that the vertue of it muſt needs derive to thoſe for whom it was accompliſhed, and whatſoever of Merit or Satisfaction there was in it, muſt conſequently redound to them.

3. *HOW it is the Material Cauſe of our Juſtification?*

A. THIS is well to be conſidered, becauſe it is a main hinge of the Diſputes of the preſent Age. Many that conſent with us in its being the meritorious, will not yield it to be the material Cauſe. Hence ſome deny the active Obedience of Chriſt, to have any cauſal Influence into our Juſtification, but only to be a thing requiſite to make him capable of being a Sacrifice for Sin in his paſſive Obedience. The dangerous conſequences whereof ſome otherwiſe Orthodox, have not warily conſidered, & hereupon have reſtrained his whole merit to his paſſive Obedience, and confounded it with his Satisfaction. By the *material* Cauſe of Juſtification we can underſtand nothing elſe, but that Righteouſneſs, on the account whereof this Sentence doth paſs. A man that is upon Trial, cannot Authoritatively be juſtified, unleſs there be ſomething found for him, that may deliver him from the Penalty and entitle him to the Benefits of the Law by which he is tried. *It is God that juſtifies*, Rom. 8. 33. Now in juſtifying the man, he declares him to be righteous; now either he is not ſo, or he is ſo; if he were not ſo, there would then be unrighteouſneſs with God, which is blaſphemy to allow; if he be ſo, then the Law hath nothing to lay to his charge, being every way anſwered; for if that have any thing truly againſt him, he is not righteous. The leaſt defect in that Obedience on which he ſtands to be tried, will condemn him, Gal. 3. 10. *For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curſe: for it is written, Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.* And it is certain, that our trial for Juſtification, muſt paſs upon the law of the Covenant of Works, though it paſs according to the tenor of the Covenant of Grace, and ſo the righteouſneſs muſt quadrate to the Precepts of it. This then can be no other than the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and for this reaſon *Paul* dared not to appear in his own, but muſt have this to be found in, Phil. 3. 9. *And be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith.* And the reaſon is, becauſe his righteouſneſs will, and no other can anſwer the demands of Juſtice for us; and therefore it muſt be either that or none. When God declares a ſinner to be righteous, he looks upon the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and doth it for the ſake of that; and this leads to the *laſt* thing.

4. *THAT Chriſt's Righteouſneſs is the meritorious and material Cauſe of our Juſtification, excluſively of all other.* It muſt derive to us by and through this, or not at all. And here theſe *two Concluſions* may be obſerved,

1. *THAT there is no other Righteouſneſs that can obtain our Juſtification beſides this or without it.* If we have not this to plead we cannot be juſtified, by any elſe, whatſoever. If we build our hopes upon any other, it will fail us, and our vain expectations will betray us to Condemnation. Every other confidence will prove a broken reed, and let us fall, if we lean upon it. As to the World, and things of that, they who make it their truſt will find themſelves wofully defeated, *Pſal.* 49. 6, &c. As to Angels & Saints, as they greatly derogate from the honour of Chriſt, who make them Mediators of Interceſſion, ſo they horribly deſpiſe the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, who depend on the merits of theſe for their Juſtification. But there is a Righteouſneſs of their own, which too many truſt to, and ſet it up in oppoſition to that of Chriſt; this was the *Jews* miſtake and undoing, *Rom.* 9. 31, 32. & 10. 3. And it is too apparent, that too many do practically reſt here; their repentances, reformations, exact walking, religious duties, works of charity &c. But if men make a Chriſt of theſe to themſelves, and have no other plea, they will be undone. What ſaith *David*, Pſal. 130. 3. *If thou, Lord, ſhouldeſt mark iniquities: O Lord, who ſhall ſtand?* And, 143. 2. *And enter not into judgment with thy ſervant: for in thy ſight ſhall no man living be juſtified.* They will not bear the trial of the Law, they have ſinful ſtains and defects on them. Hence, *Prov.* 20. 9. *Jam.* 3. 2. 1 *Joh.* 1. 8. There is no merit in them, and if there were, yet they make no ſatisfaction to the wronged Juſtice of God, on the account of that ſin which the whole race of fallen men do ſtand charged with, and for which there muſt be

an atonement, if ever they be juſtified.

2. *THAT there is no other Righteouſneſs that can contribute any thing towards the merit, or matter of our Juſtification.* There is no righteouſneſs of ours, that can here be joined with that of Chriſt, either Co-ordinately or Subordinately, as cauſal of our Juſtification. There is indeed an Evangelical Righteouſneſs, or the Sanctification of our hearts and lives, which is inſeparable from, and a good evidence of our being juſtified, but it neither merits it, nor will it ſtand for the matter of it. There is an Opinion that hath gotten too much rooting among Proteſtants, viz. That though we are beholden to Chriſt for his merit and ſatisfaction, without which nothing of ours would ever obtain acceptance, unto Juſtification, yet in and through him, our gracious actions of new Obedience will ſtand for our Juſtification in the Great Day. And hence they would make it at leaſt one part of the matter of it. And for this, among other Scriptures of like import, they bring that in, *Mat.* 25.34,&c. But this proceeds from a ſcandalous Ignorance of the right notion of the genuine nature of Juſtification, and a confounding of it with the Doctrine of Glorification. That God doth accept of, and will glorioufly reward the holy Lives and Actions of his Children, according to the Promiſe of the Covenant of Grace, is certain, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 24. And accordingly he will declare and make it known in the Great Day; by which alſo he will juſtify his own proceedings, to the confuſion of ungodly men. But what is all this to the Juſtification of a Sinner from the claims of the Law againſt him? In ſum, as there needs no other Righteouſneſs but that of Chriſt for our Juſtification, it being compleat; and therefore it is to derogate from the honour of Chriſt, and the ſufficiency of his Merit and Satisfaction, to eke it out with any other: So our beſt Righteouſneſs hath no capacity of contributing any thing to this Score, becauſe its acceptance is through Chriſt, and of it ſelf, it will not endure a Law Trial. What do the Church acknowledge, Iſai. 64. 6. *But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteouſneſſes are as filthy rags, and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind, have taken us away.* It is God's Grace, that he will ſmell a ſweet ſavour in what we do. And we are told of a Sacrifice on this very ſcore, *Lev.* 16. 16. Our beſt Service needs a pardon and perfume; how then can it be produced for our Juſtification, any farther then an evidence of it, being a fruit of the Spirit accompanying Salvation, in thoſe that are Juſtified?

Use. BE we then all adviſed, *Utterly to refuſe Reliance on any other Righteouſneſs, and to ſecure a title to that of Chriſt.* We muſt be Juſtified, if ever we be Glorified. The extent of theſe benefits, is to the ſame Subjects, Rom. 6. 30. *Whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified?* If we be not delivered from our Judge, we ſhall never be inveſted with the robe of Glory. If we hope for a Pardon without a Juſtification, or for a Juſtification without a Righteouſneſs, we miſtake the method of Goſpel Grace. And if we think any Righteouſneſs, but that which is perfect & entire, will do for this, and ſo hope that any other but that of Chriſt will do for us, we deceive our ſelves. Let us then count it our great intereſt to be able to ſtand in the Judgment, and anſwer the claims of the Law upon us. And accordingly, let us ſee more & more the defects and ſhort comings of our beſt Duties, and caſt off all reliance upon them; and being perſwaded of the ſufficiency of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, let us inquire how we may come to be related to it, and made partakers in it, and never reſt till we have comfortable evidence of our being made owners of it. And for that end, let us go to God for it, and wait upon him, in all the ways wherein it is to be obtained: That being cloathed with that long white robe, all our defects may be covered. And being found in him, we may hold up our heads without dread, as knowing that there can nothing be alledged againſt us, or laid to our charge, but what that Righteouſneſs will abundantly anſwer for, to our Everlaſting Conſolation.

[October 25. 1698.]

SERMON *CXXVI.*

III. WE are now to conſider how *the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt* becomes the formal Cauſe of our Juſtification, *viz.* by *Imputation of it to us.* This is a neceſſary point in the Doctrine of Juſtification, and without which the whole Fabrick of it will fall. And yet we muſt fight for it againſt Armies of Adverſaries, who ſeek to rob us of it. But my buſineſs at preſent is not Polemical, but only to explain and confirm this great Truth. For which end there are *three* Things, that may come under our preſent Conſideration, *viz.* 1. *The proper meaning of the term, Imputation as it is uſed in the Doctrine of Juſtification.* 2. *The neceſſity of the Imputation of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt to us, that we may be Juſtified by it.* 3. *The ſufficiency of this Imputation for our compleat Juſtification.*

1. LET us inquire into *the proper meaning of the word or term, Imputation, as it is uſed in the Doctrine of Juſtification.* It is a needleſs cavil of thoſe that ſay, the word *Impute*, and *Imputation*, is not expreſly uſed in Scripture, in the ſenſe that we put upon it; for, if the thing intended in it, be manifeſtly to be found in the Word of God, it is ſufficient to vindicate the term, in as much, as there are ſeveral other terms uſed, and on all hands allowed for the clearing up of Scripture truths, which are not there in expreſs Words; although the allegation brought in reſpect

reſpect of this, is without ground. Imputation is here underſtood in a Law ſenſe; and ſo a thing is then imputed to a Perſon, when it is in Law reckoned to him as his, and his Caſe is to be determined according to it. This ſo reckoning it as his, is the very proper Imputation, in as much as the Law is to proceed according to that reckoning. This imputation may be either of Sin or of Righteouſneſs. Of the *former* we read, Pſal. 32. 2. *Bleſſed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity.* And that Imputation intends a charging of the Guilt of Sin upon the perſon. Of the *latter* ſee, Rom. 4. 6. *Even as David alſo deſcribeth the bleſſedneſs of the man unto whom God imputeth righteouſneſs without works.* And then it intends the acquitting of the Perſon from Guilt, and reputing him righteous. Now this Imputation may, in both of theſe reſpects, have a double Foundation. Either it is in reſpect of what the Perſon himſelf hath been and done; for a man's own perſonal Sin and Righteouſneſs may be imputed to him. It is one thing to be ſinful, or to be righteous, and another to have theſe in Law reckoned to him. Hence thoſe expreſſions, 2 *Tim.* 4. 16. *Rom.* 4. 4. When theſe things are upon trial, brought in for, or againſt the man, then they are imputed to him. Or elſe relatively, when another's ſin is ſo charged on a Perſon, as he is reputed to bear the Guilt of it, ſo as that Satisfaction is demanded of him for it; or another's Righteouſneſs is reckoned to a Perſon, ſo as he hath a Priviledge or Benefit of it to his acquittance or Juſtification. And for both of theſe we need look no further, then that famous text, 2 Cor. 5. 21. *For he hath made him to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* Both of the things there mentioned, muſt needs refer to this Imputation, and will appear in the Sequel. Nor is this ſort of Imputation a ſtranger from the natural light of men, meerly Heathen, as might be abundantly confirmed.

2. WE proceed to conſider, *the Neceſſity of the Imputation of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt to us, that we may be Juſtified by it*; i. e. That if ever we be juſtified, it muſt be in this way. Let it be here obſerved, that we are conſidering man in his lapſed ſtate; for if he had retained his integrity, and lived in perfect conformity to the Rule of Obedience, which God at firſt gave him, his own perſonal Righteouſneſs had been imputed to him, and he ſhould have been juſtified by it; but the caſe is otherwiſe with fallen man. For the clearing up then of this *Neceſſity*, we muſt go a few ſteps back, and ſo proceed to the demonſtration of it. Let us then take up the following *Concluſions*,

1. *THAT the man muſt have a Righteouſneſs to juſtify him, if ever he be Juſtified.* We are told, *God is Judge himſelf*, Pſal. 50. 6. and that it is he who *Juſtifieth*, *Rom.* 8. 33. and that he muſt *be juſt in juſtifying*, Rom. 3. 26. This Juſtification therefore, muſt have a reſpect to ſome Law, by which the man is to be tried, and according to which he muſt be acquitted; which cannot be, unleſs his caſe be found to anſwer the Law; for if there be a Rule of Righteouſneſs by which the man is to be tried, the Juſtice of the trial, is in conformity to that Rule: The Law therefore muſt ſay, the man is righteous, if the Judge do righteouſly ſay ſo. And hence he muſt have a Righteouſneſs to offer to the Law for this, elſe he cannot be juſtified.

2. *THAT this muſt be a Righteouſneſs, which every way anſwers the demands of the Law of the firſt Covenant for him.* It is true, the way of our Juſtification is accommodated to the Covenant of Grace, according to which only we can have any reaſon to expect it. Both the proviſion, and the application of it to us, is all of Grace, Eph. 2. 8. *For by grace ye are ſaved, through faith, and that not of your ſelves: it is the gift of God.* But yet, the Righteouſneſs it ſelf is ſuch as is commenſurate with the Law of the Covenant of Works, and nothing ſhort of that will do. And the reaſon of it is manifeſt, becauſe the very ground of the neceſſity of our Juſtification, in order to our Salvation, is in our relation to that Covenant, and the eſtabliſhment of the Sanctions of it; ſo as that the demands of it muſt be fully anſwered, before it will give us a diſcharge from the Obligation to it. Chriſt therefore tells us, Mat. 5. 18. *Till heaven & earth paſs, one jot or one title ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled.* So that, whatſoever imperfect Obedience, if ſincere, may be accepted of us, in the way of Grace, through Chriſt: Yet none leſs than, or ſhort of that, which the Law requires, will do for our Juſtification before God.

3. *THERE is no other Righteouſneſs but that of Chriſt, which will thus anſwer the Law for him.* He that conſiders the nature of the Law, and the relation which fallen man bears to it, muſt needs ſubſcribe to this. The Law requires perfect & perſevering Obedience, and the leaſt defect at any time brings the man under the curſe of it, Gal. 3. 10. *Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.* There is not only an active but a paſſive Obedience too, requiſite for the ſatisfaction of the Law, on account of fallen man, and that is nothing leſs than Death, Gen. 2. 17. *In the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die.* Ezek. 18. 4. *The ſoul that ſinneth, it ſhall die.* As for Angels, they are of another kind, and ſo cannot ſtand for man to anſwer the Law on his account. As for men, they are all in the ſame condemnation naturally, Eph. 2. 3. *And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.* And ſo one man cannot anſwer for another, *Pſal.* 49. 6. &c. And as for the man himſelf, he is come ſhort, &c. Rom. 3. 23. *For all have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God.* And ſo cannot be Juſtified, Pſal. 143. 2. *In thy ſight*

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ſhall no man living be juſtified. For, Pro. 20 9. *Who can ſay, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my ſin.* Eccl. 7. 20. *For there is not a juſt man upon earth that doth good, and ſinneth not.* So that he cannot pay the active Obedience which he owes. And in regard of paſſive Obedience, if he muſt ſuffer it in his own Perſon, he muſt then be condemned to it, how then can he be juſtified, and his Sufferings muſt be Eternal, &c. Now there remains no other but the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, for the Juſtification of ſuch an one, but for which, the whole unhappy race of fallen *Adam* muſt needs have miſerably periſhed.

4. *THAT he muſt have a title to this Righteouſneſs as his own legally, if ever it anſwer for him.* Whatever ſufficiency there is in the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, as certainly there is vertue enough in it, to juſtify the whole World, if applied to, and accepted for them, yet the efficacy of it can extend no farther then this Application. That all are not juſtified by it is certain, for then all would be ſaved, which they are not. All have not the offers of this Righteouſneſs made to them, and they are loſt. 2 Cor. 4. 3. *But if our Goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt.* And of thoſe to whom the offers are made, there are multitudes that reject them and it; and refuſing the tenders of this Grace, they come under the threatning of Damnation. Chriſt doth not profit them, becauſe they ſeek a Juſtification ſomewhere elſe. *Every man muſt give an account of himſelf to God.* He muſt therefore have a Righteouſneſs to plead, that is, on the acceptance of the Law, ſome way his own. For the Queſtion is, *Hath this man kept the Law perfectly?* And it is vain to ſay, there is ſuch an one hath kept it, unleſs it can be pleaded, that he did it for him. Hence that, Gal. 2. 20. *I am crucified with Chriſt. Nevertheleſs I live; yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me: and the life which I live in the fleſh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himſelf for me.*

5. *THAT this Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, can be theirs, ſo as to Juſtify them, in no other way but that of Imputation.* On the ſuppoſition, that we muſt have a Righteouſneſs to be juſtified by, of which the word of God hath given us full aſſurance, it muſt be either that that is inherent in us, or imputed to us, for a third ſort cannot be ſuppoſed. If it be inherent in us, it muſt be either congenerate, acquired, or infuſed, for in no other way can we come by it: but in neither of theſe ways do we come to be owners of an inherent Righteouſneſs which will juſtify us, becauſe all perſonal Righteouſneſs whatſoever is diſclaimed, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. Yea, we are aſſured, that *Chriſt is of God, made our righteouſneſs*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. And for that reaſon, he hath that Name put upon him, Jer. 23. 6. *THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.* Now he is ſaid to be ſo, either becauſe he is the Efficient or Author of a Righteouſneſs in us, by infuſion, whereby we are enabled to anſwer the Law fully; or elſe, becauſe he hath in his own Perſon, in our nature, performed ſuch a Righteouſneſs on our account, as may ſtand for us, and give full ſatisfaction to God, which muſt be ours neceſſarily by imputation: But not the former, and therefore the latter. Man hath no Righteouſneſs in him naturally, but is full of all the ſeeds of unrighteouſneſs. We have the deſcription of the natural man, *Rom* 3 10,&c. Man hath not any ſtrength left in him, by himſelf to acquire an habit of righteouſneſs, which may anſwer the Law, Rom. 5. 6. *For when we were yet without ſtrength, in due time Chriſt died for the ungodly.* Eph. 2. 1. *And you hath he quickned who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.* It remains then, that it muſt be either an *infuſed*, or an *imputed* Righteouſneſs. Now that it muſt be this *latter*, will appear from the following *Remarks*,

(1.) *THAT individual Righteouſneſs of Chriſt which ſatisfied for us, cannot be infuſed into us, and therefore if it be ours, it muſt be imputed to us.* Reaſon it ſelf tells us, that individual actions and paſſions, are terminated in the ſubject of them, and ſo cannot actually be done or ſuffered by another. Another may do a like thing, but he cannot do the ſame thing, becauſe it implies a contradiction. Chriſt in his own Perſon performed active Obedience to the Law, and it was mediatorial. On which account he ſignifies that he was obliged to it, Mat. 3. 15. *For thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteouſneſs.* He alſo in his *own* perſon *bare our ſins.* i. e. The penalty of them, and that in Obedience to the Law, and therefore God laid them upon him. Hence ſuch expreſſions, Iſai. 53. 4. *Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our ſorrows.* And ver. 6. *The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* 1 Pet. 2. 24. *Who his own ſelf bare our ſins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to ſin, ſhould live unto righteouſneſs; by whoſe ſtripes we are healed.* And becauſe in this way we come to be juſtified, *viz.* by the vertue of his active and paſſive Obedience perſonal, it muſt needs be by imputing of this to us.

(2.) *THE Righteouſneſs which is infuſed into us is an imperfect Righteouſneſs, & cannot therefore ſtand for our Juſtification.* It is a vain pretence of thoſe that acknowledge Chriſt's perſonal Righteouſneſs to be the meritorious cauſe of our Juſtification, but will have our own duties of new Obedience the matter of it: As if he by his Merits had ſatisfied the Law Covenant, and ſo procured for us an eaſier way of Juſtification by the New Covenant; ſince our Juſtification is properly from the condemnation of the Law, and giving a title to Life conſiſtent with it, which our own holineſs cannot do. The beſt that we do will not bear the trial of the Law, and therefore it cannot juſtify us from it. *David* therefore makes that ingenious acknowledgement, Pſal. 130. 3, 4. *If thou, Lord, ſhouldeſt*

ſhouldeſt mark iniquities: O Lord, who ſhall ſtand. But there is forgiveneſs with thee: that thou mayeſt be feared. And the *Apoſtle Paul* hath ſuch an expreſſion, 1 Cor. 4. 4. *But I know nothing by my ſelf, yet am I not hereby juſtified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.* Juſtification is now conferred upon us, Rom. 5. 1. *Therefore being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* And is not deferred till our Sanctification is perfect, but whiles *in many things we offend all.* It is then unreaſonable to think, that we can be juſtified, on account of that, for which, in the Laws rigour we muſt be condemned; ſuch are our moſt ſincere ſervices: yea, ſuch are our Perſons, whiles we are renewed but in part.

(3.) *TO be juſtified by another's Righteouſneſs, is to be juſtified by Imputation.* Theſe two expreſſions muſt needs be *Synonymical. Paul* manifeſtly oppoſes being *found in his own*, and in that which is *of God by faith, Phil.* 3. 9. And that we are juſtified by another's Righteouſneſs is according to the whole current of the Goſpel; and this is intimated in the *Levitical* Law, when God promiſed forgiveneſs upon the Offering of the Sacrifice, as, *Lev.* 4. 20, 26, 31, &c. And this is plainly intimated in that famous *Text*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. If our Sins were laid upon Chriſt, and his Satisfaction was accepted for us, it muſt needs be by a legal Imputation, that ſuch a tranſlation is made.

(4.) *THAT Juſtification which is of the ungodly, muſt needs be by Imputation.* We have a ſtrange expreſſion uſed in, Rom. 4. 5. *But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteouſneſs.* Which muſt needs intimate, that when God beſtows this Juſtification upon a Sinner he hath no Godlineſs to recommend him to God, for the obtaining of this benefit at his hands, on the account of that. God did not firſt make him Godly, and for that juſtify him; but that Juſtification in order of nature, is antecedent to, and in order of time is coætaneous with Sanctification. Now it is certain, that there muſt be a Righteouſneſs for this man's Juſtification, or elſe the Judge would have no foundation to proceed upon, and ſo ſhould not do that which is right. It is impoſſible that he ſhould find this inherent, in one that is *ungodly*, he muſt therefore find it abroad, and accept it for him, and reckon it as his, and this can be in no other way but by Imputation.

3. *NOW let us take an account of the Sufficiency of this Imputation for our Juſtification.* Fleſh and Blood cavil here; the Oppugners of this Doctrine, call imputed Righteouſneſs, a *putative Righteouſneſs*, a chimerical fancy, no where to be found, but in mens crazed Imaginations. And though ſome do acknowledge it rational in matters pecuniary, to accept of an exchange of perſons, yet they will not allow it, in matters capital, pretending, that Juſtice is not ſatisfied but eluded by ſuch an exchange. That therefore which lies before us, is to make it appear, that the Juſtification of a Sinner, by the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs to him, fully anſwers the ends of God's relative Juſtice. For which, let the following *Concluſions* be conſidered,

1. *THAT the firſt Covenant in which God treated man, was for the diſplay of his Holineſs and Juſtice.* God ſought his own declarative Glory in all his Works of Efficiency, and his infinite Wiſdom contrived all ſuitably for this end. Now that he might make way for the illuſtration of theſe precious attributes of his, He treated with man in a Covenant, in which he eſtabliſhed a rule of his ſpecial government over his reaſonable Creatures, wherein he laid the foundation for the exerciſe of theſe in his after-dealing with them, according to the tenor of this Covenant. It is true, Pſal. 145. 17. *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.* But there are more eminent diſcoveries of theſe, in his tranſactions with men. And for this reaſon is that *encomium* put upon the Law, Rom. 7. 12. *Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and juſt, and good.*

2. *THAT the diſplay of theſe Attributes was peculiarly deſigned, in the diſcovery of his loving of Righteouſneſs, and hating of Iniquity.* That God doth ſo, he hath aſſured us in his Word. This therefore is aſcribed to Chriſt, as God, Pſal. 45. 6, 7. *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the ſcepter of thy kingdom is a right ſcepter. Thou loveſt righteouſneſs, and hateſt wickedneſs.* We are therefore told, that God takes delight in the works of Righteouſneſs, *Jer.* 9. 24. And that he abominates Sin, Jer. 44. 4. *O do not this abominable thing that I hate.* And when the *Prophet* would ſet forth the Holineſs of God, he doth it in ſuch terms, Hab. 1. 13. *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canſt not look on iniquity.* And his Righteouſneſs is accordingly exhibited, *Pſal.* 11. 6, 7. When God rewards Righteouſneſs, and puniſheth Sin, with the greateſt Rewards & Puniſhments, he therein gives an illuſtrious proof of his being Holy and Juſt.

3. *THAT in order to this, the Sanctions of the Law muſt be fully anſwered.* It was by theſe Sanctions that God ſecured the honour of theſe Attributes, in his government of men, and therefore they cannot be ſuitably glorified but in the accompliſhment of them. For this reaſon God did as firmly oblige himſelf to theſe Sanctions as he did man in the Duty required of him in that Law. As therefore man ſtands related to them, ſo they muſt take place upon him, and that not only, becauſe elſe his Veracity might be called in queſtion, with whom it is *impoſſible to lie*, but the Glory of theſe Perfections of his, which he contrived to advance in this way would fail. Hence that *Pſal.* 119. 160.

4. *THAT hence, if theſe Sanctions be ſo anſwered, according to the true intent of them,*

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these Attributes are therein manifested gloriously. if God do advance the glory of his Holiness & Justice, in rewarding Obedience with *Life*, and punishing Sin with *Death*, so as that the design of the first Covenant be fully complied withal, and the truth of his Promise and Threatning therein declared do stand, this will fully manifest his Glory. Indeed if any of these should be losers upon the account, and the Sanctions of the Law be superseded or perverted, that would be derogatory to the Glory of God. And it would be an impeachment of the Wisdom, as well as of the Immutability of God, if he should contrive a way to save Sinners, to the dishonour of any of his Perfections. But we are told, Rom. 3. 26. *To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*

5. *THAT the first Covenant did not exclude the Interposition of a Surety to answer for man, in case there should be need of one.* It is true, it did not *include* one, because that was reserved to be displayed in another Covenant: but it did not *shut one out*; there was no clause in it, that excepted against it, nor needs there any more be said to prove this, but that God upon man's failing in his Obedience to that, presently discovered the way of recovery by a Surety, *Gen.* 3. 15. which he would not have done, if he had not before purposed it. And indeed, the first Covenant was but a foil on which the Grace of the new one was to be drawn, so far as God's Elect were concerned in it. Hence that, Rom. 5. 21. *That as sin hath reigned unto death: even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.*

6. *THAT Christ did thus interpose, and was a sufficient Surety.* He is so called, *Heb.* 7 22. God made him so, and therefore could not but accept of him as such. And touching his sufficiency every way to answer the demands of that Law, both in performing the condition of Life, and answering the condition of Death, according to the tenor of that Covenant, we have already considered, in the treating of his Redemption & Mediatorship.

7. *HENCE the Holiness & Justice of the Law were no losers by this Suretiship of Christ.* The exchange that was made between him, and those for whom he undertook, not only made way for the astonishing discovery of the riches of God's Grace, but did most illustriously exalt the honour of his Holiness and Righteousness; in as much as, not only was the satisfaction made by him to the Law of infinite value, and so sufficient to answer for all on whose account he did it, as hath formerly been made to appear. But, these Attributes shone forth in the clearest demonstration of them, when the Son of God, who was his Father's delight, was not spared, when he stood in our place, and was prosecuted by the Law on our account, but *his Soul was made a Sacrifice for Sin.*

8. *HENCE the Justification of a Sinner by the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ, every way answers the ends of the first Covenant, and exalts the glory of the Grace of the New Covenant.* And what more is requisite to make it sufficient for our Justification? For if that be fulfilled in it, *Psal.* 85. 10 there needs no more If the Law saith, it is satisfied, and the Sinner is hereupon acquitted, the Law and Gospel do intirely harmonize in man's Salvation.

USE. *LET us all then make this our great business to get this Righteousness of Christ ours by Imputation.* Rest not in any other, nor be satisfyed till you have gotten this: Get this long *White Robe*, this *Wedding Garment* on, if you would not be found naked in the Great Day. Wait upon God for this Grace, with most earnest importunity, and let him not alone, till he hath entertained you poor Prodigals with this best Robe. And let all such as have through mercy, obtained this unparallel'd favour at his hands, bless him for it, and rest satisfied in it. And let such as are strangers to the Gospel Grace, flout at you for it, and endeavour to mock you out of it, but do you look upon your selves to be safe, and accordingly rejoyce & triumph in it, being assured, that in this Righteousness you shall stand in the Great Day, when such as relyed on any other, shall be found without a Wedding Garment, and be *cast into outer Darkness.*

[NOVEMBER 22. 1698.]

SERMON CXXVII.

IV. THE *Last* Thing observable, is *the way in which the Righteousness of Christ, becomes ours by Imputation*: wherein we are pointed to the *Instrumental Cause* of our Justification, *viz.* it is *Received by Faith alone.* That Faith is concerned in our Justification, as having some causal influence on it, is certain from divers frequent Scripture expressions about it, especially, when we are said to be justified by it. Rom. 5. 1. *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.* And when it is said to be imputed to us for Righteousness, as, *Rom.* 4. 5. 9 22, *&c.* But the inquiry will be, *To what head of Causes it is to be assigned?* And so, after what manner it may be said to justify, or to be imputed for Righteousness? As to the final Cause, there is none that assigns it thither, for that is no other but the Glory of God, which he aims at in all his Works, and our Faith is subservient to it. As to the Meritorious Cause, it can have no relation to that, for Grace excludes merit. And we are told, Rom. 4. 16. *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.* Besides that

that the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt is that which alone hath purchaſed for us our Juſtification; as hath before been ſufficiently made evident. And conſequently, it cannot be the material Cauſe, for then it muſt juſtify as a Work, whereas the *Apoſtle* evidently oppoſeth Faith and Works, as contrary one to another in Juſtification, Rom. 3. 28. *Therefore we conclude, that a man is juſtified by faith, without the deeds of the law.* Chap. 4. 4,5. *Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteouſneſs.* Beſides, if Faith be the matter of our Juſtification, it muſt then anſwer to the Juſtice of God for, and ſtand in the room of all that Righteouſneſs which the Law required of us; which it cannot. And it is only the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt which did that. Nor yet can it be the formal Cauſe, in as much as that conſiſts in the very act of Imputation, & preſuppoſeth a Righteouſneſs ſufficient for our Juſtification, to be imputed. And, though Faith doth receive this Righteouſneſs unto Juſtification, yet it doth not formally juſtify us, becauſe that is an Authoritative act, and muſt proceed from one that hath power to do it; whenas Faith can do no more but accept of it. It remains then, that it be referred to the efficient Cauſe. That it cannot be the principal efficient is certain, for that is God, Rom. 8. 33. *It is God that juſtifieth?* And indeed he is the only Judge, who can with Authority declare a perſon Righteous, acquit him from Condemnation, and adjudge him to Eternal Life. But Inſtruments are alſo annumerated to the efficient, as being made uſe of in the production of the effect: And hitherto the Orthodox generally aſſign the cauſality of Faith in our Juſtification. I ſhall not ſpend time in diſcourſing, whether Faith be properly called an Inſtrument of Juſtification, or not rather a medium to it, or a condition of it; or if it be an Inſtrument, whether it be only a paſſive, or not alſo an active Inſtrument. It is only the thing expreſt in our *Catechiſm*, which I ſhall inſiſt upon. In the opening whereof we may ſee what is the proper intereſt of Faith in our Juſtification. There are then *three Concluſions* contained in this expreſſion, which may now be briefly opened, viz. 1. *That there is a reception of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs requiſite, in order to our being Juſtified by it.* 2. *It is by Faith that we thus receive it:* Which is the only reaſon why Faith is ſaid to be imputed to us for Righteouſneſs. 3. *It is by Faith alone that we do thus receive it.*

1. *THAT there is a reception of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs requiſite, in order to our being Juſtified by it.* It is true, our receiving of it, doth not give it its vertue of juſtifying us, for that it hath intrinſecally in it, as it fully anſwers the Law demands, without which it could not juſtify. Nor doth it draw forth that vertue, and apply it to us, for that is done by the juſtifying act of Imputation, which God doth freely. Nor is there a natural neceſſity of our Faith, in order to our being juſtifyed, ſince, if God accepts of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt for us, and imputes it to us, we are thereby juſtifyed: And this hath no neceſſary dependance, in the nature of the thing, on our acceptance of it, but can be done without it. But it is neceſſary, according to the order and method of God's diſpenſing of his Grace to us by the New Covenant. And we may take this Account of it,

1. *THAT Juſtification is one of the Benefits which we derive from Chriſt in Effectual Calling.* It is therefore declared to be an inſeperable conſequent of it, Rom. 8. 30. *And whom he called, them he alſo juſtified.* It therefore belongs to all that are *Called*, and to none elſe. And thoſe are not they who have only had a Call outwardly offered to them. For ſo we find, Mat. 20. 16. *For many are called, but few are choſen.* But ſuch as have anſwered the Call; according to that, Pſal. 27. 8. *When thou ſaidſt, Seek ye my face, my heart ſaid unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I ſeek.*

2. *THAT Chriſt's Righteouſneſs can no further Juſtify us, than as it is ours.* We are the perſons to be juſtified; Juſtification therefore muſt terminate on us. We are they that are to be judged Righteous by it, and for that there muſt be a Righteouſneſs that may be truly called ours. What avails it us, that another is Righteous, if we are no ways related to it, and can lay no claim to it. And for this reaſon is that title put on Chriſt, *Jer.* 23. 6.

3. *THAT Chriſt's Benefits, and his Perſon go together.* He muſt be ours, if his Righteouſneſs be ſo. Hence, it is he Himſelf, that *is made of God to us*, our *Righteouſneſs*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. i.e. God beſtows him upon us, that he may be ſo to us. Chriſt and his benefits are not divided. As he gave himſelf for us in the work of Redemption, ſo he gives himſelf to us in the work of Application. And hereupon the priviledges of Juſtification belong to none but thoſe that are in him, Rom. 8. 1. *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Chriſt Jeſus, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit.*

4. HENCE, in *Effectual Calling*, we accept of, and imbrace Jeſus Chriſt, as he is *Offered to us in the Goſpel.* And there are none that are effectually called, but thoſe who do ſo accept and embrace him. And here,

(1.) *THERE is an Acceptance of the Perſon of Chriſt in this Offer.* There is a tender of Chriſt to all that come within the ſound of the Goſpel, and are under the Treaty of it, but all do not receive him upon it, and theſe are not Effectually Called, but they that do ſo are. Hence that, Joh. 1. 11, 12. *He came unto his own, and his own received him not, &c.* God in the New Covenant, treats with men as Cauſes by Counſel. He forceth Chriſt upon none againſt their will. He offers his Son to men on terms, and requires their compliance with them, in order to the ratifying of the

Covenant between him and them. If they thus comply, the Covenant is plighted, but if they comply not, the treaty is ſuſpended. It is true, He muſt *both Perſwade and Enable them* to it, if ever they come up to it, but yet they muſt ſo do in order to this; and if they refuſe it, it is an article againſt them. Hence that, Joh. 5. 40. *And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.*

(2.) *THIS Acceptance of Chriſt is, as He is offered in the Goſpel.* The Goſpel not only offers him, but it tells us, what he is offered for; and if we do not ſo accept him, we do not receive him at all. Now, Chriſt is offered to us in all thoſe Offices of his, which are concerned in the bringing about of our Salvation. And one of theſe Offices is his Prieſthood, in which he hath ſatisfied the Law of God for us, and brought in *an everlaſting Righteouſneſs*, which may ſtand to anſwer on our account, all the demands of it, and ſo juſtify us before God; according to 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. God therefore offers Chriſt to be our *Righteouſneſs*; i. e. to accept of his Righteouſneſs for us unto our Juſtification, in caſe we do embrace it for that end. On this account we are told, Rom. 10. 4. *For Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth.* Now this acceptance is ſo neceſſary, according to the terms of the Covenant of Grace, that without it, Chriſt will not profit us, nor will God impute his Righteouſneſs to us, for our Juſtification. This therefore was the undoing of the *Jews*, Rom. 10. 3. *For they being ignorant of God's righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves unto the righteouſneſs of God.* That man that will rely on his own, and will not entirely depend on the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt for his Juſtification, ſhall not have it imputed to him. How then ſhould he be juſtified by it?

II. IT *is by Faith that we thus receive it*; Which is the only reaſon why Faith is ſaid to be imputed to us for Righteouſneſs. There is hardly any thing more celebrated in the Goſpel, than the great concern of Faith in our Juſtification, or about which there are more miſtakes in the aſſigning of it to this affair. I ſhall here only endeavour to give a plain Scripture account of this matter. Touching the Nature of the Faith by which we are Juſtified, there is a place aſſigned afterwards, for a diſtinct treating about it. I ſhall therefore, here only, by way of anticipation, offer this neceſſary general account of it, *viz.* The word *Faith*, is an æquivocal word, and is uſed for diverſe things in Scripture; and beſides the *metonymical* uſe of it, for the things that are believed, and more particularly, for the Doctrine of the Goſpel, or thoſe Truths that are of divine revelation; it is uſed properly in diverſe ſenſes, or there are ſeveral kinds of Faith mentioned in the word of God. Theſe are uſually referred to *four* heads: An *Hiſtorical Faith*, by which we aſſent to the Truths revealed in Scripture; A *Temporary Faith*, which leads us to do many things, upon the credit ſo given; A *Faith of Miracles*, by which ſome have upon ſpecial Revelation been inſpired for the working of Miracles; And a *Juſtifying*, or *Saving Faith*, by which we believe unto the ſaving of the Soul. Now, though there is an Hiſtorical Faith requiſite in order to that which is Juſtifying, for it is grounded on knowledge; yet it is in it ſelf another thing, and may be found in *Devils*, *Jam.* 2. 19. Whereas this Faith is proper and peculiar to God's Elect. Hence ſo called, *Tit.* 1. 1. And it hath in it, beſides the aſſent of the Underſtanding to the truth, the reliance of the Will, on the Object offered to be believed on. And therefore, although it have all the truths in the Scripture for its object, in reſpect of aſſent, yet it is confined to Chriſt, as he is revealed in the Goſpel, and exhibited in the Promiſes, in reſpect of its affiance. And this leads us to conſider, how it Juſtifieth us. Which cannot be better expreſt than it is in this *Anſwer*, *viz.* as it receives the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt for Juſtification. And hence, when Faith is ſaid to be imputed to the Believer for Righteouſneſs, it cannot intend, that either the Habit, or Act, or Work of Faith is reckoned to be the Righteouſneſs for which God juſtifies us; for that is every where aſcribed to the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt: as hath before been evidenced. Beſides, we have proved, that that Righteouſneſs by which we are juſtified muſt be perfectly commenſurate with that which was required in the Covenant of Works: which Faith is not, nor doth it at all anſwer that Law, any further than it embraceth, and appropriates to it ſelf that Righteouſneſs of another, even Chriſt, which was entire, and had no defects in it. If Faith ſhould thus juſtify us, it would then be our own Righteouſneſs that juſtifyeth us; for, though it be the *Gift of God*, yet it is a Grace inherent in us, and ſo is our own: whereas the *Apoſtle* renounceth all that is his own, and refers himſelf to that of Chriſt, *Phil.* 3. 9. Again, if Faith ſhould thus juſtify us, it would do it as a Work, whereas Faith & Works are oppoſed in this matter, as inconſiſtent, Eph. 2. 8, 9. *For by grace are ye ſaved, through faith, and that not of your ſelves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, leſt any man ſhould boaſt.* And we are aſſured that it is by Faith, that it might be by Grace, *Rom.* 4. 6. i. e. that the free Grace of God might be manifeſted in our Juſtification: and all this to exclude any *boaſting*. Whereas, where this is a Work, there is boaſting, *Rom.* 3. 27. Faith is in itſelf one of the Graces of Sanctification, wrought in us by the Spirit of God, together with all the Graces which are infuſed into us in Regeneration or paſſive Vocation, by vertue whereof we are enabled to believe in Chriſt. Which power or principle, the ſame Spirit draws forth into act; and by it we receive the Lord Jeſus Chriſt with his Righteouſneſs, and ſo we come to be juſtified. We may take this brief account of it,

1. *WE are all in our natural state, under Condemnation.* The whole *Word is guilty before God*, Rom. 3. 19. *Adam*'s fall hath influenced his whole Posterity, and brought them under a curse of Death. The threatning of the Law is out against them, and stands engaged to do execution upon them, *Rom.* 5. 12.

2. *THE Law must be satisfied on our account, or we can never be Justified. Math.* 5. 18. The Law is the rule of relative Justice, and God hath engaged his Truth to it, and so cannot baulk it. It is the Law must justify us, if ever we be justified.

3. *THERE must be a Righteousness adequate to this Law, for our Justification.* It will bate nothing. It *curseth* the man for any one, the least defect, at any time, that may be charged on him, *Gal.* 3. 10.

4. *WE have no personal Righteousness that can answer the Laws demands.* Rom. 3. 10. *There is none righteous, no not one.* We can neither satisfy the preceptive, nor comminatory part of the Law, so as to be justified by it, on account of any active or passive Obedience that we can pay to it.

5. *GOD hath laid in a Righteousness, every way sufficient for us, in Christ.* When the Law could do nothing for our help, then did God, and that was by the Righteousness of Christ, *Rom.* 8. 2, 3. He is therefore said, to bring in *Everlasting Righteousness*, Dan. 9. 24.

6. *THIS Righteousness is revealed and offered to men in and by the Gospel.* Hence we are told, 2 Tim. 1. 10. *But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light, through the Gospel. Rom.* 3. 25, 26. God hath told us that there is such a Righteousness, every way sufficient, how it was brought about, in whom it is laid up, and invites sinners to apply themselves to it, and promiseth them Salvation with it; Isai. 45. 22 with 24. *Look unto me, and be ye saved all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength.*

7. *GOD with this offer, opens the way in which this Righteousness may become theirs.* God treats with men in a Covenant, and it is on their compliance with those terms, that they are made partakers in his Grace. Hence the invitation is given in connexion with the Promises, Mat. 11. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

8. *THAT which is required for the compleating the Covenant of Peace, is their accepting of Christ with his Benefits.* God positively requires this acceptance, and assures us, that in no other way Christ can be ours. Hence that great complaint, and reason of his rejecting this lieth here, *Mat.* 23. 37, 38.

9. *IT is by Faith that this Offer is accepted.* This is that Grace that opens to Christ, and lets him in; this is the hand that receives him. God offers Christ's Righteousness to us, to be ours, but if we believe not, i. e. if we do not entertain it with an entire reliance on it, it cannot be ours, and if not so, we cannot be justified by it. Hence, Mark 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not, shall be damned.*

10. *HENCE, upon our thus believing, and so receiving this Righteousness exhibited in the Promise, the imputation of it, is conferred upon us.* Faith looks on Christ held forth in the promise, with his whole Righteousness, and opens to him, and he comes in, and becomes our Righteousness, and thus it is that Faith justifieth.

3. *IT is by Faith alone that we do thus receive this Righteousness, and so are justified.* And when we say, that Faith alone justifieth, it is in opposition to every other Grace in us, and all the works of holiness and righteousness done by us. That this is the only Grace that hath any hand in the Justification of a Sinner before God. There is a *twofold* Justification more especially to be taken notice of. There is *a Justification before God*, which flows from his imputation of the Righteousness of Christ to us, and there is *a Justification before men*, and in our own Consciences, which flows from the conviction or persuasion of our being in a justified state, by evidence, whether of charity, or demonstration. As to the latter of these, our Works do serve to our Justification: which is the thing aimed at, in *Jam.* 2. 20, 21. But in respect of the former, it is only Faith that is concerned in it. And tho' the word, alone, is not expresly used in Scripture, on this account, yet there are words of the same import. When it saith, we are justified by Faith, without Works, Rom. 3. 28. *Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law.* Gal. 2. 16. *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.* Where, not only are Works denied to be the whole of our Justification, but also to have any concurrent causality with Faith in it. Only, let it be here observed, that when we say, Faith alone justifieth, as a receiver of the Righteousness of Christ, we do not assert, the word, alone, of the Subject, but of the Predicate. We intend not, that the Faith which justifies is solitary, or without other Graces, or good Works in us. No, Faith is a Grace of the New Creature, and all the Graces of it are inseparably together. Justification & Sanctification are never parted. But it designs, that this Grace hath only a causality in our Justification: All the rest have their exercise in order to our Salvation, *Heb.* 12. 14. But they do nothing towards our putting on the robe of Christ's Righteousness, by which we are justified. And the reason of this is, because Faith is the only Grace in us, which is fitted to receive the Lord Jesus Christ, and his Righteousness on the Gospel offers. This is

it only that opens to him, and lets him in; and this is the firſt and moſt proper acting of juſtifying Faith, which no other Grace in us is capable of. They are all of them fitted for new Obedience; but, beſides that Faith fetcheth ſtrength from Chriſt for Obedience, and ſo helps every other Grace. It alſo takes him, truſts in him, relies on him, in the promiſe of the Covenant, and ſo is fit for this Service, which no other Grace is.

USE. I. *LET us then ſee & adore the rich Grace of God herein appearing, that He hath diſcovered to us, a way of being Juſtified by Faith.* Nor can we conceive, how Grace ſhould more oriently appear than in this way: That when we had no Righteouſneſs perſonal, and muſt have elſe periſhed for want of one to anſwer for us, He ſhould be at ſuch coſt to lay in ſuch a ſufficient one; and in the Goſpel Treaty offer it to us to become ours, and the vertue of it to influence us unto our Juſtification, upon our receiving it by believing on him for it, and reſolving our whole hope of acceptance with God into it; and not only ſo, but that he ſhould offer unto us his help to enable us thus to receive him, by putting his Spirit upon us, and creating this Faith in us. What enemies then muſt they needs be to the Grace of God, who ſeek to undermine or obſcure this Doctrine of Juſtification by Faith in the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, or confound it by mixing their own righteouſneſs with it? Would we then give to God, the whole glory of our hope to ſtand in Judgment, let us reſolve it all into Chriſt, and live on it by Faith.

USE. II. WOULD we know whether Chriſt's Righteouſneſs be ours unto Juſtification, let us try it by this, viz. *Have we received it by Faith.* There is vertue enough in it to juſtify the whole World, and that is a great Encouragement: but is actually imputed to none but ſuch as receive it by Faith, and all that ſo do, are juſtified by it: For which reaſon it is called the righteouſneſs of Faith, Rom. 4. 13. *For what ſaith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteouſneſs.* Becauſe, by believing, we appropriate it to our ſelves. And here is our foundation of true Conſolation. And if we have ſo believed, we have then ſeen abſolute need of a Righteouſneſs that is perfect, found our ſelves without any ſuch, or ability to attain to it; diſcovered the fulneſs of ſufficiency for this end in that of Chriſt: renouncing every other Righteouſneſs whatſoever for the ſake of it, and caſt our ſelves upon it, and accordingly, embraced Chriſt the Author of it, in the promiſe, and according to the tenour of it.

[DECEMBER 20. 1698.]

SERMON *CXXVIII.*

QUESTION XXXIV.

WHAT is Adoption?

ANSWER.

ADOPTION is an Act of GOD's Free Grace, whereby we are received into the Number, and have a right to all the Privileges of the Sons of GOD.

WE now proceed to the *Second* Benefit which derives from Chriſt to his Called in this Life, *Adoption*, a moſt Glorious Privilege, the thoughts whereof is enough to put us into raptures of Admiration, 1 Joh. 3. 1. *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the ſons of God.* Before I come to a particular diſcourſe of the Nature of it, there are *two* Doubts briefly to be ſolved, viz. 1. *Whether Juſtification and Adoption, are two diſtinct Privileges?* 2. *Whether Adoption doth in order of Nature follow after, and preſuppoſe Juſtification?* To both whereof I anſwer in the *Affirmative*, and ſhall endeavour briefly to vindicate each aſſertion.

1. *JUSTIFICATION and Adoption are two diſtinct Privileges, and accordingly ought to be handled apart, in the Doctrines of Divinity.* Doubtleſs all the precious Benefits purchaſed for us by Chriſt, & conferred upon us by his Spirit in application, are worthy of our particular Contemplation, and to be meditated on apart, by all thoſe that are ſo highly favoured, as to be made partakers in them. There are that refer Adoption to Juſtification, and becauſe there are two parts in that, *viz.* The *Pardon of our Sins*, and the *Accepting of us as Righteous*, to which latter there belongs an adjudging of us to have a title to all the good that was laid up in the promiſe made to perfect Obedience, which they reckon to be the privileges of Adoption, and therefore refer it thereunto; and the rather, becauſe the *Apoſtle* in the reciting the order of our Salvation, mentions it not diſtinctly, but connect Juſtification and Glorification, Rom. 8. 30. *Whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified.* But it is not for nothing that the Goſpel takes diſtinct notice of theſe two, and puts ſpecial remarks on this of Adoption; as might be plentifully inſtanced, ſee, *Rom.* 8. 14, *&c. Eph.* 1. 5. & elſewhere. And a man may be juſtified, and yet not adopted, I mean, in the nature of the thing itſelf, for in the Application of the new Covenant theſe are inſeparable; and though theſe do both belong to the relative change, yet the relations made by them are very different. It is one thing

to

to be adjudged Righteous, and another to be put among Children: One thing to have God accept us as a Judge, another to do ſo as a Father. And though in both a title to the Inheritance is declared for us, yet it is upon different grounds; and the more claims may be made, the fuller is the evidence. If *Adam* had perſiſted in his Integrity, he had enjoyed this title in way of Juſtification, but not of Adoption; for it has its rooting in the firſt Covenant, whereas this, entirely belongs to, and hath its riſe from the new Covenant. Beſides, there are the Privileges that come by Adoption which are not depending on Juſtification; for doubtleſs, the ſtate of God's Children under the new Covenant, is better than that of *Adam* and his Poſterity, would have been under the firſt, had he kept his uprightneſs. And as Adoption is not named, *Rom.* 8. 30. ſo neither is Sanctification, which yet is a diſtinct Benefit; and as this is included in that of Glorification, ſo that in Juſtification by a frequent Scripture *Synechdoche.*

2. *ADOPTION doth in order of Nature follow after, and preſuppoſe Juſtification.* It is not a matter worthy of hot debate, in what order we put theſe two Benefits, provided we allow them their diſtinctneſs; and yet it is of advantage, to be rightly informed in this, and to help to guard us againſt errors, that are obtruded more eaſily upon us, when we have a confuſed or diſturbed method of our Principles, not agreeable to the *form of ſound words.* That theſe Benefits are together in time, is certain, they come in upon, and with effectual Vocation; in the ſame inſtant that the man is juſtified, he is adopted. But yet, there is a Precedency in the nature of the thing, and there are ſome that give this to Adoption; but ſurely, as it is ſomething more to be adopted, than meerly to be juſtified, ſo it is requiſite that the Sinner be reconciled in order to his being adopted. Adoption in reaſons preſuppoſeth Reconciliation, whereas Reconciliation cannot preſuppoſe Adoption. We cannot with reaſon think that God will take a perſon for a Son and an Heir, and yet hold him under a ſentence of Condemnation, though it is eaſy enough to ſuppoſe Him to be reconciled to one, though He doth not give Him this dignity. Beſides, the firſt Privilege in order of nature, following on Faith, is Juſtification, by which juſtifying Faith we are introduced into this Privilege of Adoption, *Joh.* 1. 12. It now follows, that we look into, and take ſome account of this wonderful Benefit. And here we may firſt conſider the Name, and then the Thing.

1. THE *Name* put upon this Privilege, *viz. Adoption*; the *Greek* word uſed for it in the New Teſtament ſignifies, the *putting of one for a Child*, i. e. the giving of him the Honour and Prerogative, that belongs by right to a Son, and Heir. This word Tranſlators render, by that of Adoption; and the word is not proper, but analogical and alluſive. The Spirit of God making uſe of the civil cuſtom among men, in adopting ſtrangers to bear their names, and inherit after them, to ſet forth this dignity by; though the ſimilitude doth abundantly fall ſhort, and is incomparably exceeded by the thing it is uſed to repreſent. When God uſeth any earthly ſimilitudes, to expreſs any Spiritual thing by, it is in condeſcendency to our Infirmity, and to accommodate it to our manner of underſtanding. But yet it always ſuppoſeth that there is ſome analogy in it, elſe it were in vain propoſed to us, under ſuch a Notion, and inſtead of helping, it would but confound our apprehenſion of the thing. But yet, becauſe ſuch reſemblances do not fully expreſs what they are uſed for, we are not to tarry at them, and reſtrain the conception of the thing to them, but endeavour to uſe them as helps to our Faith, in ſoaring higher in our Contemplation thereof. Accordingly, the agreements and the differences between Humane and Divine Adoption, are well to be obſerved by us. Here,

1. *THE things wherein they agree are, whatſoever is eſſential to an Humane Adoption.* For from thence it is, that the term is borrowed. Now, a man is then ſaid to adopt a perſon, when he doth freely chuſe and conſtitute a ſtranger, to be his Heir. The thing intended to be conferred by the Adopter, on the adopted, is *Heirſhip*; he hath a Name, Honour, and Eſtate of Inheritance at his diſpoſe, which he is willing to convey to another, in doing whereof he puts the title and privilege of a Son upon him. The Subject of this is a ſtranger, i. e. one whom he was not obliged by any bond of nature to beſtow ſuch a favour upon; for, if he were his own Son, the name, title, and heirſhip, would not derive to him, by right of Adoption, but of Nature. The way in which this is introduced, is upon free choice of the perſon; he was at his full liberty, he might have paſt by this Perſon, and put in another, without wrong or injuſtice done him, it was his own meer motion, and the reaſon of it was with himſelf. The act itſelf is in the conſtituting the Perſon to have a ſure right to this Heirſhip. And this is uſually done by a Will or Teſtament, ſigned, ſealed, & atteſted. Now in all theſe reſpects, the reſemblance holds, as will appear in laying open the Deſcription given.

2. THE Differences between theſe are manifold. The moſt obſervable whereof are theſe,

1. IN the *grounds or reaſons of their adopting.* Men indeed act their liberty in chuſing the Perſons, yet there is a ſort of neceſſity conſtraining them to the Thing itſelf, and that is double, neither of which can be ſaid of God.

(1.) *MEN muſt die and leave their Eſtates behind them, and their name would be forgotten, if they had no Heir to ſucceed them.* Pſal. 49. 10. *For he ſeeth that wiſe men die, likewiſe the fool, and the brutiſh perſon periſh, and leave their wealth to others.* They therefore take this

this way to perpetuate their memory after they are gone. But God lives forever, and his memorial is to all generations.

2. *MEN many times fail of Heirs of their own Bodies, and ſo muſt take in a ſtranger if they will have one.* True, Hiſtories give us the account, of ſome that have aſſumed a ſtranger into Co-heirſhip with their own Sons, which more nearly reſembleth this, Rom. 8. 17. *If children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joynt-heirs with Chriſt.* But uſually it is for want of a lineal deſcent, hence that, Gen. 15. 3. *And Abram ſaid, Behold, to me thou haſt given no ſeed: and lo, one born in my houſe is mine heir.* Whereas God hath an *only begotten Son*, who ever pleaſed him, and on whom he hath conferred the heirſhip, *Heb.* 1. 2. And we are adopted in and with him.

2. *AMONG men, the adopted muſt wait for the death of the Adopter, in order to his inheriting.* It comes by ſucceſſion; the one muſt go off the ſtage, to make way for the others entrance, and taking poſſeſſion: whereas in this, there is no ſucceſſion. God lives, and though Chriſt died to purchaſe the Inheritance for us, yet he is alive, and lives forever; and we live, and have a joynt participation; with him; hence that, Joh. 14. 19. *Becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo.*

3. MEN may change their minds while they live, and put one out, and take another in if they pleaſe. So, that as long as they live, the adopted hath no aſſurance, but is at uncertainty, and may on the leaſt diſguſt be diſcarded. Men may make new Teſtaments, and the *laſt Will* muſt ſtand. But God's Adoption is immutable, if once he puts any into the number of his Children, they ſhall abide ſo forever. We read, Rom. 11. 29. *For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.* And this is one of thoſe *Gifts*; for, although it paſſeth in Time, yet it was purchaſed in the days of Eternity, *Eph.* 1. 5.

4. *THEY differ in the impulſive Cauſe that moves them to chuſe this rather then another.* For, though men do act ſpontaneouſly, and without compulſion; yet, they ſee ſomething in the perſon ſo choſen, which is the motive, and determines them, either nearneſs of kindred, or winning natural endowments, or vertuous inclinations, which make them hope they will be a credit to them; and many times, their finding their expectations fruſtrate in their life time, is the reaſon why they alter their Wills; whereas God ſaw no difference, between thoſe whom he purpoſed to adopt, and others, and when he comes actually to apply the Adoption to them, there is nothing in them at all to commend them to him more then others; He doth not *find*, but *makes* the difference there is between his adopted Children and others *Eph.* 2. 2, 3. *Tit.* 3. 3. Hence,

5. *THEY differ in the manner of the introduction of the adopted into Heirſhip.* Men indeed act their own prudence in their choice, and preſume they take ſuch perſons as will prove themſelves worthy; but they take them as they are, and muſt run the riſque of it. They may wiſh, but they cannot infuſe good qualities into them, whereas God, in order to the adopting of any, doth regenerate them; ſo that he makes way to this relative change, by working a real one in them. And here, that we may be diſtinct in our conceptions of the Adoption under conſideration; we muſt obſerve, that there are *two* ways in which we are ſaid in the Goſpel, to become the Children of God, *viz.* By *Regeneration* and *Adoption*, and we muſt beware that we do not confound theſe, and make them one. The change which is wrought in a Sinner, in Converſion or Effectual Vocation, is in Scripture called the *New Birth*, and thoſe that are ſo converted are ſaid to be *born of God*, becauſe, as the work hath a reſemblance to a natural Birth, ſo the Spirit of God is the author of it, and the end of it is, that we may live as Children, to the Glory of God. And, becauſe God will have no adopted Children, but ſuch as ſhall thus live to his Glory. He therefore makes ways to their Adoption by their Regeneration, hence that, Gal. 3. 26. *For ye are all the children of God by faith in Chriſt Jeſus.* And it is on believing that this Privilege is beſtowed upon them, Joh. 1. 12. *But as many as believed on him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his Name.* And indeed, all the new Covenant Benefits come to the people of God upon their being ſo called: Both their Juſtification, Adoption and the reſt, as hath formerly been obſerved. Our buſineſs therefore at preſent, is not with regeneration, by which it is introduced, but the Adoption it ſelf, which is brought in upon it.

LET us proceed to the conſideration of it, as it is laid open before us, in the Deſcription given of it; in which, as in the former, we are to obſerve the *general* and the *ſpecial nature* of it.

1. THE *general nature* of it is, *It is an act of God's Free Grace*, and herein it agrees with Juſtification, which alſo hath the ſame general nature aſſigned to it.

1. *IT is an Act.* What is intended in this, and how it differs from that which we call a *Work*, hath been already taken an account of under the head of Juſtification, which amount in ſum to thus much, *viz.* that the change produced by it being relative, it doth not work any alteration in his nature, but only applies to him a new ſtate, which is done by an act of favour; and hence it is not Regeneration though it accompany it, becauſe in that there is a change in the nature, according to, 2 Cor. 5. 17. *Therefore if any man be in Chriſt he is a new Creature; old things are paſt away, behold, all things are become new.* As alſo becauſe it is paſt at once, and perfected in an inſtant; whereas a Work is ſuppoſed to be ſuccedaneous. There are no degrees

grees in Adoption. A Believer is as much a Child of God, in the firſt inſtant of his being made ſo, as ever; nor are they in Heaven more ſo, than thoſe on Earth, 1 *Joh.* 3. 2. It is true, there are the degrees of the manifeſtation of it, and that both to themſelves and to others; they may now doubt about it; but er'e long it ſhall be put quite beyond Queſtion; the World do not at preſent know them, but they ſhall appear ſhortly like themſelves, 1 *Joh.* 3. 2. Hence we read of *the manifeſtation of the ſons of God*, Rom. 8. 19. And this is intended by the Adoption ſpoken of, *ver.* 23. *viz.* the bringing them to poſſeſs the Inheritance, which they are adopted to. Hence alſo there are ſteps and degrees of their enjoying the privilege of Adoption. They have all now only in Hope, but er'e long they ſhall have it in full poſſeſſion. They now only receive the *firſt fruits and earneſts of the Inheritance*, at Death their Souls go to ſieze it, and Soul and Body after the Reſurrection. But theſe things though they are conſequent upon it, yet do not properly belong to the nature of Adoption, but refer to Glorification, and may be there ſpoken of. Adoption as it is an *Act*, is done by God, though it terminates on the perſon adopted. And here it may be inquired, *Whether it be an immanent and eternal or tranſient and temporary Act?* For both of theſe Acts are attributed to God, in our manner of conception. To this it may be *replied*, that the Foundation for this was laid in the Eternal Decree of God which is an immanent Act; in that he appointed us to be made partakers of this Privilege, and it was there ſecured, ſo that it cannot fail, Eph. 1. 5. *Having predeſtinated us unto the adoption of children by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will.* And indeed, all the good that we partake of in Time, had its beginning there. This Privilege alſo was indented for in the Covenant of Redemption, and accordingly purchaſed for us by Chriſt, and ſo it flows down to us, through his merit, according to the promiſe of the Father, Gal. 4. 5. *To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons.* But the Adoption itſelf, by which we are put among Children, and made actual Heirs of God, is a tranſient temporary Act, and is applied upon our believing in Chriſt. Before this time we were aliens, enemies, in the ſame ſtate with the reſt of the rubbiſh of Mankind. Hence we read, *Eph.* 2. 3. *ver.* 12, 13. We are therefore acquainted with a temporary putting men among Children, and the way how it is brought about.

2. *IT is an Act of God's Free Grace*, i. e. it hath no dependance on any thing in the Creature, to move God to it, but flows from his meer good pleaſure. We have before obſerved, how Juſtification is ſo, all which might be applied hither, and argue as ſtrongly and ſufficiently for this. And indeed, if it were *Free Grace* to juſtify us, who were in our natural eſtate under Condemnation, how much more then muſt it be, to adopt ſuch Creatures as Children, which is an higher Honour put upon them, and a more eminent Privilege. But, beſides that, there may be ſomething more particularly noted here reſpecting the Grace of God, ſhining out in our Adoption. We obſerved, that the Grace appearing in Juſtification, is God's pardoning and pronouncing us righteous, without any merit of ours, yea, when we deſerved the contrary. Now there may be this peculiar remark, made on our Adoption, that God doth it without any lovelineſs or deſireableneſs in us, but the contrary unlovelineſs, and odiouſneſs that was upon us. It is true, in as much as theſe Benefits accompany Converſion, that as God together with juſtifying us, puts an Evangelical Righteouſneſs and Holineſs into us, and doth not leave us under the reigning power of our luſts, ſo together with adopting us, he puts a beauty & a lovelineſs upon us, adorning us with his Image and Grace; which Chriſt declareth how much he is taken with, *Cant.* 4. 4. But this doth not obſcure, but enhance this Grace of his; in as much as he doth it, and it flows from the ſame love wherewith he adopts us. This is excellently ſet forth, in allegorical expreſſions, *Ezek.* 16. *begin.* Here then let us obſerve,

1. *THAT God is an holy God, and loves Holineſs, and hates Iniquity.* This therefore is one peculiar diſplay which he makes of his Holineſs, as we are told, *Hab.* 1. 13. And no wonder, ſince his Holineſs is bound for his Glory, and will advance it in all his Works, and there is nothing that ſets itſelf directly in oppoſition to his Glory but Sin, and that doth, Rom. 3. 33. *For all have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God.*

2. *THAT we in our natural ſtate, are under the moſt horrible Deformity and Pollution; and thereby are juſtly odious to an holy God.* Sin is called the *abominable thing* &c. *Jer.* 44. 4. And the Sinner by it, renders himſelf *vile*, 1 *Sam.* 3. 13. And Sin is in Scripture compared to the moſt filthy and loathſome things; and this is the natural ſtate of all, ſet forth by the ſad condition of an *expoſed Infant*, *Ezek.* 16. *begin.* We are born in the Image of fallen *Adam*, and God cannot but deſpiſe this Image, wherever he ſees it.

3. *WHEN God comes to pick us out of the World, and make us his Children, he finds us thus defiled and loathſome.* We were not only ſo before in our birth, but he found us ſo, and ſaw us ſo, in the very inſtant when he paſt the word on us, by which we were regenerated, *Ezek.* 16. 5. Whatſoever is done preparitorily to make us ſenſible of our Miſery, yet it abides upon us, and is not removed till he comes by his Spirit, to produce it in us, in our Converſion, in which is our firſt paſſage from Death to Life.

4. *THAT in and with His renewing us he Adopts us.* There is indeed an order of *nature*

to be obſerved in theſe things, elſe we ſhall not know the true reference of one to the other. But there is no inſtant of *Time* that paſſeth between them; Adoption is inſeparable from Regeneration; we obſerved therefore, that this relation is introduced upon our believing, from, Gal. 3. 26. *For ye are all the children of God by faith in Chriſt Jeſus.*

5. *HENCE, together with this he puts his own Comelineſs upon us, to make us lovely.* In Converſion, there is a renovation, there is a beauty and amiableneſs which God will beſtow upon his Children: They ſhall have the image and likeneſs of their Father upon them, and be no longer like other men. Hence we are excited to holineſs from the conſideration of this relation, 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16. *But as he which hath called you is holy, ſo be ye holy in all manner of converſation; Becauſe it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy.* And God doth it, by adorning them with the Graces of his Spirit. Hence that, *Ezek.* 16. 9, 14.

6. *HENCE he doth not Adopt us, becauſe we were lovely, but that we might be ſo.* This Benefit, in the conferring it on us, had no reſpect to any antecedaneous deſireableneſs in us, for there was none, but to one that was to follow it, which we were to receive by the indwelling of the Spirit in us, who is given with it, and is for that reaſon called the *Spirit of Adoption*, in, *Rom.*8.15. God ſaw as much beauty in others as in us, and that was none at all. And hence, that yet he ſhould adopt us, is a demonſtration of his unconceivable Grace.

LET then the thoughts of this wonderful Priviledge, and the joynt conſideration of our own vileneſs when God came to bring us into a participation in it, fill us with Soul-abaſing thoughts, and tranſport our hearts with inexpreſſible Admiration, at the incomparable Love of God herein manifeſted to us, & help us to commorate, and make pathetical commentaries on that tranſporting paſſage of the Apoſtle, 1 Joh. 3. 1. *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the Sons of God.*

[JANUARY 17. 1698.]

SERMON *CXXIX.*

2. IT follows that we conſider of the *Special Nature* of this Benefit, in which we ſhall have a further diſplay of the wonderfully *Free Grace of God* eminently appearing in it. For the clearing of this there are *three* Things that lie before us to be inquired into. 1. The *State* that we are admitted into by *Adoption*, viz. *of the Children of God.* 2. The *Way* in which we are admitted into this State, *we are received into the Number.* 3. The Glorious *Advantage* that accrues to us by it, *we have a Right to all the Priviledges of* ſuch. Theſe things may be briefly laid open before us.

1. THE *State* that we are admitted into by *Adoption*, viz. *of the Children of God.* And what greater dignity or honour can be put upon a Creature? The *Apoſtle* look'd upon this very title conferred on us by God, to be a diſplay of his unparallel'd Love, 1 Joh. 3. 1. *BEHOLD, what manner of love the Father hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the ſons of God.* And this is one manifeſt difference between Juſtification & Adoption, in that there is a peculiar honour contained in it, diſtinct from that of the former, though the Subjects be the ſame; and he that is owner of the one, is owner of the other too, and both of them come in upon believing. Juſtification indeed confers a Righteouſneſs upon us, which makes us happy, but Adoption adds to beſtow a Sonſhip on us; and this muſt needs conſtitute a new Relation between God and us, which the other did not, and ſuch a Relation as is aſtoniſhing to think of. If we ſhould conſider no more, but the honour that is put upon us in it, it is tranſcendent; tho' we ſhall afterwards ſee that there is more than that. Honour is one of the Worlds Idols: How ambitious are men of it? And what pains will they be at to compaſs it? And, tho' the World's honours are of little worth, yet there is an Honour that comes from God, that is worthy our ambition. Hence that reflection on them, Joh. 5. 44. *How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and ſeek not the honour that cometh from God only?* The higheſt Honour in any Kingdom, is to be *Monarch* of it, to be King or Supream, and next to that is to be *Son and Heir*; and the greater Potentate this Monarch is, the more elevated is the honour of being ſo related to him. Well, God is the only Potentate, He is an everlaſting King, and Believers are by this Adoption, made his Sons & Heirs. Hence called *Heirs of God*, Rom. 8. 17. The dignity of this is, that God is pleaſed to put his own Name upon them, and is not aſhamed to own the relation. There is therefore *emphaſis* in that of being *called the Sons of God*, 1 Joh. 3. 1. There is more in it then meerly being ſo, *viz.* that God openly owns and acknowledgeth this Relation. Hence we have that remark, in Heb. 11. 16. *Wherefore God is not aſhamed to be called their God.* When therefore God ſent *Moſes* to *Pharoah*, he bad him to uſe that plea, Exod. 4. 22,23. *And thou ſhalt ſay unto Pharoah, Thus ſaith the Lord, Iſrael is my ſon, even my firſt-born. And I ſay unto thee, Let my ſon go, that he may ſerve me: and if thou refuſe to let him go, behold, I will ſlay thy ſon, even thy firſt-born.* And how rich Grace is it, for God to beſtow ſuch a Priviledge upon us? But that which greatly enhauncheth it, is to conſider, who we were, on whom he hath conferred it: Not only *ſtrangers*, and on that account could lay no claim to it by any natural right, any more than thoſe who are left to go without it: but we were his *enemies*, and might have rather expected, that he

he would have destroyed us. We were become ignoble; Sin had made us vile; we had lost all the Honour that was put upon us in our primitive state of integrity, and contracted all the ignominy to ourselves that was imaginable. We were become Sinners, and a worse thing cannot be said; unprofitable, good for nothing, but for Hell's flames: We were become Fools and Mad-men, and fit for nothing but a Bedlam. We had made ourselves Slaves of Satan, and Vassals of every dirty Lust. We were men guilty of Death, under a Sentence of Condemnation in our selves, and going to Execution; and that from our Dunghill and Dungeon, and Scaffold, God should take us into his favour, and give us a name among his Sons and Daughters: *This honour have all His Saints.*

2. THE *Way* in which we are admitted to this *State*, we *are received into this number*. And herein more especially doth the nature of this Adoption appear, and the forecited difference between it and Justification is farther manifested. And here let us in *general* observe,

1. *THAT Adoption is not limited to one, but it extends to a Multitude.* Their is a number of them, and their number is incomputable by us. Men usually bestow this favour but on one, or at most but a very few. And the reason is, because they have but a little in comparison to bestow, and their Grandeur would be lost, if it should be crumbled into too many parcels. But the Glory and Inheritance that God hath to bestow, is sufficient for a World, and hereupon he extends it to a great many. It is certain, every Believer is dignified with this Privilege, John 1. 12. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his Name.* All that are entituled unto Christ by Faith, *Gal.* 3. 26. And they are an uncountable Number, Rev. 7. 9. *After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the lamb, cloathed with white robes, and palms in their hands.* All that belong to the *General Assembly*, Heb. 12. 23. Hence they have that title put on them.

2. *THAT every one of this number is severally admitted to this Privilege.* When and how this is, will presently be considered; but it is certain, that all do not receive it at once, it being, as was before observed, a *transient Act.* It is true, all were at once appointed in the Eternal Counsel of God to this; and hence they are known unto God from Eternity, but they are introduced into it by another Act, in which they are made to receive it, as, Gal. 4. 5. *To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of Sons.*

3. *THAT this Privilege is equally extended to every one that is made partaker in it.* One is as much a Child of God as another, and his right is as good; the whole Inheritance belongs to every one, nor hath one the less, because the other hath all, because there is an infinite fulness in it. For, though possibly there be different degrees in Glory, yet that is not from a greater title that one hath then another, but from the different capacity put into the Subject to receive it. But every Child of God is also a *first born*, *Heb.* 12. 23. But for a more particular consideration of this, we may enquire, 1. *Who it is that receives them into this Number?* 2. *When they are thus received?* 3. *After what manner this Adoption is conferred.* A Word to each of these.

1. *WHO it is that receives them into this Number?*

Answ. *THIS can be no other but God himself, it being his Prerogative.* Who should impose upon the owner of a Name and Estate, whom he shall adopt to it. As therefore *it is God that justifieth*, so it is he that adopteth. It is true, because in the order of Divine Works, this belongs to Application, it is proper to the Spirit's manner of working. As the Father chose us to it, and the Son redeemed us for it; so the Spirit invests us with it. Adoption is a Privilege connected with, and that comes in upon believing, and must therefore have the same Author, which can be no other than God. He is therefore said to give it, *Joh.* 1. 12.

2. *WHEN they are thus received?*

Ans *IN general*; *though they were appointed to it from Eternity, yet it is conferred upon us in Believing.* We were chosen to be made partakers of it before the World was: but it was that we might be adopted, *Eph.* 1. 6. Christ in fulness of time redeemed us for this purpose. But it was that we might receive it, Gal. 4. 5. *To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.* So that it was to be an effect or fruit of the former. But that we might have fellowship with Christ in this Priviledge, we must also be *Called.* The conveyance of what he hath purchased for us, is in this order, Rom. 8. 30. *Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.* God's Election is an immanent act in him, and of it self makes no change in the state of the Creature. Indeed it lays a sure foundation for what passeth afterwards, and makes it future, so that it shall without fail be accomplished in fulness of time. But for all this, God's Elect have in their natural state, a proper relation to the Covenant made with *Adam*, and remain under the tenor of it, till the Spirit of God comes and works Conversion in them, in which they *pass from death to life*; unto which life this Adoption belongs. The *Apostle* therefore tells us, what we all were before this, Eph. 2. 3. *And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.* And applies it distinctly to his *Ephesians*, telling them also, when the change of state was bestowed on them, *ver.* 12, 13. And as this

Priviledge is not received before, so neither is it deferred any longer, but is compleatly applied in our believing, *Gal.* 3. 26. They that make Adoption gradual, inchoated in our Conversion, and perfected in our entring into, and taking full possession of the Kingdom, confound it with Glorification. When God puts us among Children, and bestows on us a title to the eternal Inheritance, we are as much adopted as ever we shall be, and have as sure a title, as those now in Glory.

3. *AFTER what manner this Adoption is conferred?*

Ans. WE may make some guess at this Mystery, in the following *Conclusions*,

1. *THAT Adoption is a Priviledge purchased by Christ for his Redeemed.* God, in the Covenant of Redemption, promised him, not only that he should deliver us from wrath, but that we should be *his Seed, & Generation*, Psal. 22. 30. Isai. 53. 10. *When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.* He therefore, having accomplished this Work, hath a claim to them; they are given him; he hath bought them with his Blood, *Act.* 20. 28. And he did it for this very end, *Gal.* 4. 5.

2. *HENCE, it is a Priviledge belonging to the promise of the New Covenant.* It is therefore exhibited and offered in the treaty of that Covenant. The Covenant of Grace hath its rooting in, and derives from the Covenant of Suretiship: God therefore having promised to Christ, that he shall have such a *Seed*, invites sinful men to come to him, and close with the terms of the Covenant, with such an encouragement as this, that if they so do, they shall be dignified with this Priviledge, 2 Cor. 6. 17, 18. *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye seperate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you: And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons & daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

3. *HENCE the Conveyance of it is, in the Ratification of the Covenant, between God & us.* All Covenant Promises are connected with the terms on which they are made: And hence the claim to them comes in upon the performance of those terms. God, in the Covenant exhibition tells us how we may come to be his Children, and engageth that in this way, he will own us as such. Now, till these terms be performed, the Covenant is in suspense, but when they are so, it is now ratified. Whatsoever was engaged on condition, is secured by the performance of it: And that which before, was ours only hypothetically, is now so absolutely. Such therefore are said *to be heirs of promise, as have fled &c.* Heb. 6. 17, 18. *Wherein God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath. That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before us.*

4. *THIS Covenant is a Covenant of Espousals between Christ and us.* Of all comparisons, the Scripture most frequently makes use of this to set it forth by. We have it patheticaly expresst in the whole *Song of Solomon.* Christ therefore speaks of his being married to his People, Jer. 3. 14. *Turn, O back sliding children, saith the Lord, for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, & two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion.* And he calls the Covenant a Covenant of Espousals, Hos. 2. 19, 20. *And I will betroth thee unto me for ever, yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord.* And *Paul* tells us the great design of his Ministry, 2 Cor. 11. 2. *For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy, for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.* Hence also, the breach of Covenant is in Scripture frequently represented by Adultery, or violation of the bonds of Wedlock.

5. *HENCE this Covenant is ratified in and upon our Union to the Lord Jesus Christ.* It is Christ who upon the opening of the New-Covenant, comes and makes love to poor Sinners. It is his Son whom God the Father offers to them, and invites them to accept of him in this near relation. It is the Person of Christ that is offered, with whom all his Benefits are conveyed inseperably. If we are in Christ, we have then the Condition wro't on which the Promise depends: And now all that is in it belongs to us. This made *Paul* so desirous to be found in him, *Phil.* 3. 9.

6. *THIS Union is made on our part, by our believing in him.* In Marriage Union there is the consent of both Parties necessary. Christ invites us, and declares his willingness, and by his Spirit, he makes us willing also, and gaining our free consent to his offer, we make an absolute choice of him, and take him as he is held forth in the Gospel. Thus Christ and we are made one. And this is the very thing that is done in believing: We give our selves up to him, everlastingly to be his, and take him to be our Lord and Saviour. He therefore is said to *dwell in our hearts by Faith*, Eph. 3. 17.

7. *ON this Union, we are made joynt-heirs with Him who is the Heir of all things.* Christ, as God, is Lord Proprietor of all things; but as Mediator, he is constituted Heir of them. They are made over to Him as his, *Heb.* 1. 2. So that this Heirship is rooted in him, and all that are introduced into it, are so by Coheirship. Hence that, Rom. 8. 17. *And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joynt-heirs with Christ.* It is his right that becomes ours, and it derives as the right in all that is her Husband's belongs to the Wife. God therefore is said, to give every thing else with him, *Rom.* 8. 32. This then is the way, in which we come to be *received into the Number of God's Children.*

3. THE

3. THE glorious *Advantage* that accrues to us by this Adoption; is, that we *have a right to all the Privileges of the Children of God.* And herein Adoption differs from Glorification, in as much as that puts us in poſſeſſion of them, whenas this gives us the right to them. And there are *two* things here to be obſerved, *viz.* 1. *That there are precious Privileges belong to the Children of God.* 2. *That Adoption gives them a right to them all.*

1. *THAT there are precious Privileges that belong to the Children of God.* When God takes us to be his Children, he doth not only give us an empty title, which hath nothing but a noiſe and a name in it, but there are thoſe realities annexed to this relation, which are enough to make them happy now and forever. And the very reaſon why God makes us his Children, is that he may let us know and experience the Love of a Father, and doth accordingly confer upon us the things that are worthy of ſuch a Father. It would be endleſs particularly to enumerate every thing that belongs to this title; for ſo we muſt recount every Promiſe that is made to Believers in the new Covenant, which they have a liberty to claim in right of Sonſhip, and no other can make a challenge of. However, we may as in a Lantskip take notice of the principal heads, to which theſe Privileges do refer. And here,

1. *ONE main & comprehenſive Privilege is, the Spirit of Adoption, which God beſtows on all His Children.* Compare, *Rom.* 8, 15. with *Gal.* 4. 6. It is indeed the ſame Spirit who is the Author of the whole work of Application from the beginning to the end, but there is a peculiar reſpect in which He is called the Spirit of Adoption, and that refers to thoſe effects which he produceth in us, and ſo to us. As ſuch a Spirit then, he *ſeals* us to the certain enjoyment of all the good promiſed us in the new Covenant. Eph. 4.30. *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are ſealed unto the day of redemption.* He ratifies our Sonſhip to be immutable, and confirms our title to all the Promiſes irreverſible. As ſuch a Spirit, he gives his teſtimony in us, to ratify all our evidences, and fully aſſure us of our Sonſhip and Heirſhip, Rom. 8. 16, 17. *The Spirit it ſelf beareth witneſs with our ſpirit, that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joynt heirs with Chriſt.* For though the aſſurance itſelf belongs to Glorification, yet the witneſs of it in us is from the Spirit of Adoption. As ſuch a Spirit, he frees us from the *ſpirit of Bondage*, and helps us ſo to come to God, and preſent our requeſts to him as a Father, *Rom.* 8. 15. And by this means we have acceſs with boldneſs to the Throne of Grace. Eph. 2. 18. *For through him we both have an acceſs by one Spirit unto the Father.* It was he that helped them to that, *Iſai.* 63. 17. As ſuch a Spirit, he upholds our Faith in us unto Perſeverance, notwithſtanding all the infirmities of our fleſh, and ſhocks of temptations, that aſſail us from our enemies. 1 Pet. 1. 5. *Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation, ready to be revealed in the laſt time.* But for which, we ſhould eaſily be drawn away, and fall from Grace. As ſuch a Spirit, he nourisheth Grace in us, and helps us in the exerciſe of it. Hence ſaid to *help our infirmities*, Rom. 8. 26. He takes and leads us by the hand, and ſtays our ſteps for us, that we may not fall, and lifts us up, if at any time we are down. *Finally*, as ſuch a Spirit, he irradiates us with the light of God's Love, whereby we are enabled to rejoyce in it, and in the midſt of all the trials, that we meet with in our Pilgrimage, *Rom.* 5. 3, 5. And what a glorious Privilege is this?

2. ANOTHER Privilege, full of marrow and ſweetneſs, is, that God, having aſſured this Relation of a *Father* to us, *ſtands firmly engaged to be, and to carry to us in all things, as a Father.* And how much is there wrapt up in this? Here is a Field of Contemplation, in which we may well loſe ourſelves; and we may ſafely draw from it, all Soul-ſolacing Concluſions. Is he their *Father?* then he will certainly provide for them, and they may without anxiety rely upon him for it. Hence that, *Mat.*6.31,32. Is he their Father? then he will ſurely be to them a ſafe *Protection* from all that would offer them any injury. He will ſee that none ſhall hurt them, and they need not be afraid of any ſuch thing, Heb. 13. 5, 6. *For he hath ſaid, I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee. So that we may boldly ſay, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man ſhall do unto me.* If any offer them injury, he will be provoked, Jer. 2. 3. *All that devour him, ſhall offend; evil ſhall come upon them, ſaith the Lord.* Is he their Father? He will uphold them in their way, ſo that they ſhall not ſo hurt themſelves, as to undo them. It may be ſaid of them all, as, *Deut.* 33. 27. And that Promiſe belongs to them, *Pſal.* 91. 11, 12. And hence the Miniſtry of Angels belongs to them as Children and Heirs, *Heb.* 1. 14. Is he their Father? He will give them all ſeaſonable inſtruction, to guide them in their way; he will counſel them in their duty, and warn them of their danger. This he preſumed of, *Pſal.* 73. 24. And on this account is that precious Promiſe, *Iſai.* 30. 21. Is he their Father? He will help them in, and give them ſtrength to do their work, that it ſhall not fail in their hands, ſo that ſenſe of their own inſufficiency need not diſcourage them. He hath therefore promiſed to give them *Grace*, *Pſal.* 84. 11. and *Strength*, *Iſai.* 41. 10. Is he their Father? He will ſeaſonably and profitably *chaſten* them when they need it, *Heb.* 12. 6, 9, 11. And he will ſanctify theſe Chaſtiſements to them, 1 *Cor.* 11. 32. They ſhall be able to ſay as, Pſal. 119. 71. *It is good for me that I have been afflicted: that I might learn thy ſtatutes.* And that is no ſmall

Privilege; What ſaith he, Pſal. 94. 12. *Bleſſed is the man whom thou chaſteneſt, O Lord, and teacheſt him out of thy law.* Is he their Father? He will *accept* of and commend their ſincere Service, and overlook their infirmities. He accepted *David*'s very deſire to build him an Houſe, 1 *Kings* 8. 18. And what a commendation gives he to *Abraham*, *Gen.* 22. 16, 17. And for his pity ſee, *Pſal.* 103. 13, 14. And what precious Priviledges are theſe?

3. ANOTHER Priviledge, is *a Glorious Liberty.* There is ſuch an one belongs to them, *Rom.* 8. 21. And this is oppoſed to that bondage in which we are before, from which we are now delivered; both from the ſervitude of the Law, as a Covenant, ſo as that we are no more under the *curſe* of it, *Rom.* 6. 14. *Gal.* 3. 13. Nor are we to ſeek our happ neſs, by the perfect perſonal Obedience required in it, but by Faith in Chriſt, *Rom.* 3. 28. And from the ſervitude of Sin, Rom. 6. 7. *For he that is dead, is freed from ſin.* It ſhall no more reign in us, though it may moleſt us. Rom. 6. 12. *Let not ſin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye ſhould obey it in the luſt thereof.* Nor will God *impute* it to us, 2 Cor. 5. 19. *God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them.* Nor ſhall we ever be *condemned* for it, Rom. 8. 1. *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Chriſt Jeſus, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit.* In a word, there is a full and perfect *freedom* beſtowed upon them through Chriſt, according to, Joh. 8. 36. *If the Son therefore make you free, ye ſhall be free indeed.* Satan's lordſhip & tyranny is deſtroyed, and the Kingdom of Chriſt, which is a Kingdom of liberty is ſet up. And this muſt needs be a very excellent Benefit.

4. THE *laſt* Priviledge I ſhall mention, *is that of Heirſhip.* And this naturally flows from it, Rom. 8. 17. *And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joynt-heirs with Chriſt.* And who can tell what is the Inheritance they are intitled to by it. *All is theirs,* 1 *Cor.* 3. 22, 23. All the Creation is made to ſerve them. The holy Angels are a Safe-guard to them. Pſal. 34. 7. *The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.* Bring meſſages to them, *Dan.* 9. 23. And when they die are a convoy to them, Luk. 16. 22. *And it came to paſs that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abrahams boſom.* Wicked men & Devils ſhall do them ſervice, tho' againſt their will. Yea, every thing ſhall turn to their account. Rom. 8. 28. *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpoſe.* And there are all the Glories of the Eternal Kingdom reſerved for them, and ſhall certainly be in due time beſtowed on them; becauſe they are not Servants, but Sons, Joh. 8. 35. *And the ſervant abideth not in the houſe for ever: but the ſon abideth ever.* But the beſt deſcription we can take of this, is by drawing the Vail over it, 1 Cor. 2. 4. *But as it is written, Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*

2. *THEIR Adoption gives them a Right to all theſe Priviledges.* It doth not indeed put them into actual poſſeſſion; they are at preſent under Age, and muſt, for that, arrive at the ſtature of a *perfect man in Chriſt.* But it makes them all theirs. This introduceth them into this right, they could make no claim to any of theſe before, but upon this, they may call all their own: And this is their great plea, or the reaſon of their claim; not becauſe they were better than others, or had a natural claim to them, or have done any thing to purchaſe them, but becauſe God hath made them his Sons *freely*, Rom. 8. 17. This Adoption alſo brings with it thoſe things, which eſtabliſh and confirm this right to them; they have in it, *the Sealing of the Spirit*, as we have already obſerved; and they have *the Earneſt of the Spirit*, which is ſaid to be the ſame, *Eph.* 1. 13, 14. *In whom alſo after that ye believed, ye were ſealed with that holy Spirit of promiſe, Which is the earneſt of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchaſed poſſeſſion unto the praiſe of his glory.* But yet there is a difference alſo obſerved, 2 Cor. 1. 22. *Who alſo hath ſealed us, and given the earneſt of the Spirit in our hearts.* The *Sealing* it ſelf is one *Earneſt*, but there are alſo with it, the *firſt fruits of the Spirit*, which are to give us the aſſurance of the Harveſt to follow. For which reaſon we have the *Apoſtle* ſo arguing, Phil. 1. 6. *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jeſus Chriſt.* So that a Child of God may ſafely from his Adoption, argue to the certainty of his future participation in all the good that is purchaſed by Chriſt, and laid up in the Promiſe.

USE. *LET the Conſideration of theſe things call on us all, and Children in particular, to labour to make ſure of this Adoption.* Let this be your great Ambition, to be the Children of God: And that, not by an outward relation in the Goſpel Covenant only, but by that which is introduced by Faith in Chriſt, thro' whom only you can obtain Sonſhip & Heirſhip to this incorruptible and never fading Inheritance. Your Earthly Parents muſt dye ſhortly, if they are not gone already, and it is a poor Portion, which they can beſtow on you, which can never make you happy: But if God once be your Father in Chriſt, you are happy indeed: He will be your Father in Heaven. He lives for ever, He will take care of you, He will never fail nor forſake you; He will keep you ſafe through an evil World, and bring you without fail to his Heavenly Kingdom: He will do more for you, then you can *ask or think.* He offers this

this to you, and begs of you to accept it. Receive Chriſt for your Spouſe, and his Father will be your Father, his God your God, and nothing ſhall ever ſeperate you from his Love.

[FEBRUARY 14. 1698.]

SERMON *CXXX.*

QUESTION XXXV.

WHAT is Sanctification?

ANSWER.

SANCTIFICATION is the Work of GOD's Free Grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the Image of GOD, and are enabled more and more to dye unto Sin, and live unto Righteouſneſs.

THE Benefits which God's called ones do, upon Believing derive from Chriſt, are many and great; of theſe, ſome are communicated to them in this life, others are reſerved for them till afterwards; in all which there is a wonderful Change paſſeth upon the Subject that is made to participate in them. Theſe are of *two* ſorts, either ſuch as produce a relative, or a real Change, either change the ſtate, or alſo the nature of thoſe on whom they are beſtowed; the former whereof are called *Acts*, the latter *Works*. Our *Catechiſm* diſtributes them according to the time wherein they are actually conferred; ſome in this Life, ſome at Death, and others at the Reſurrection, but they are all reducible to the *two* forementioned Heads. To the relative Change in this Life, belong Juſtification and Adoption, of which we have already taken an account: To the real Change belong Sanctification and Glorification, which remain to be conſidered. We are now led to inquire into the nature of *Sanctification*, which is the *third* Benefit mentioned, and of which alſo all God's called ones are made to partake in this Life, and it is ever inſeparable from the two former. All thoſe whom God juſtifies and adopts, he alſo ſanctifies. In the deſcription here given of it, as in the former, we may obſerve, the *general* or common, and the *ſpecial nature* of it.

I. THE *general or common nature* of it is, it *is the Work of God's Free Grace.*

And here,

1. THERE is ſomething wherein it agrees with all other ſpiritual Benefits whatſoever, *viz.* it is a fruit of *God's Free Grace*. For we can have no claim, or challenge of any good thing from God, who have forfeited all by Sin, much leſs of any diſtinguiſhing favours, in which we have a Preference to others, as well deſerving as we. And here we are pointed;

1. TO the *Author of this Benefit, who is God.* It is his Prerogative as to juſtify and adopt, ſo to *ſanctify*. It is not in a man's own power to ſanctify himſelf, as will be very manifeſt when we come to conſider what there is in it, and what the man is, before it is wrought in him; nay, this Sanctification is a work of Almighty Power, and is on that account reſembled to the *Creation*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. and to the *Reſurrection*, *Eph.* 2. 1. So that it muſt needs tranſcend the Power of Angels or Men to produce it.

2. TO the *Fountain* from whence it proceeds, which is his *Free Grace.* And here obſerve,

(1.) *SANCTIFICATION is a very great Priviledge*; it is an inexpreſſible Benefit that they enjoy, on whom it is conferred; it is a *paſſing from Death to Life*; it is a reparation of the nature which was undone by Sin: It is the fitting the man to ſerve to the end he was made for, all power whereto he had loſt by the Fall, and by that loſs, laboured under undoing vainity: By it we are capacitated for the Glory of God, of which we are come ſhort by Sin; and by it alſo we are made capable of true Happineſs, which our very Nature, whiles under the power of Original Concupiſcence, cannot be advanced unto.

(2.) *GOD beſtows it upon us freely*, and that is rich Grace. That he is the Author of it we have obſerved; and therefore *Paul* goes thither for it, 1 Theſ. 5. 23. *And the very God of peace ſanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole ſpirit and ſoul and body be preſerved blameleſs, unto the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* And aſcribes it to the Spirit, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 13. As we can do nothing towards it of ourſelves, and ſo are not able to prepare ourſelves for it, ſo God owes it not to us; nay, if all the reſiſtance, of a Nature wholly corrupt, which is a meer lump of Enmity, (as we are told, *Rom.* 8. 7.) could poſſibly hinder the Operation of it in us, we ſhould never be made owners of it; and the contempt, which its reſolute refuſing to accept it, is a high provocation to him to withhold it from us; ſo that it muſt be an unparallel'd kindneſs, which appears herein.

2. THERE is ſomething wherein it differs ſpecifically from Juſtification and Adoption, but holds in common with Glorification, and is ſo far of its general nature, and that is, it is *a Work*: Whereas the two former are called *Acts*: Of the difference between an *Act* and a *Work*, we have already taken notice,

notice, and it would be superfluous, here to call it over again. And, that Sanctification is not a meer relation, but something infused into, or wrought in the man, will appear, when we consider it in its *special Nature.* But this notion of a Work is not appropriated to it, but also belongs to Glorification; for in both of these there is a real Change of the Subject; and in both of them there are degrees, and they are not begun and perfected at once: So that there is a farther difference to be sought between these two; which will be seen in their special nature. The sum of it is, in the one God bestows Grace upon us, in the other Glory. So that the Saying commonly received, that Grace is Glory begun, and Glory is Grace perfected, is warily to be entertained, lest we confound these two Privileges, which are formally diverse, as will be evident in the sequel. Before we pass over to the consideration of the special Nature of this Benefit. It will not be amiss to consider something about the usage of the word, and the true sense in which we are in this place to understand it. The word *Sanctification*, is diversely used in Scripture. In the *Old Testament* it is frequently used to signify the Separation of a Person or Thing from common use, and consecration of it, to that which is sacred; by vertue whereof there is a relative Holiness bestowed. Thus the Sanctuary and all the Utensils of it were sanctified, thus *Aaron* and his Sons, thus the *Levites*; thus the Elements in the *Sacraments*, and thus the Sabbath Day are by vertue of Institution, and Separation sanctified. In this respect also, are a People visibly in Covenant with God, and so separated from others that are strangers from the Covenant, sanctified, on which account they are said to be an holy People, and called Saints. But these are not the Sanctification which we are now inquiring after; for all that is but external, and makes no inward difference in the quality of the things, as this doth. God indeed, in Sanctifying his People, doth separate them for himself, and his special Service, but it is not a meer separation by appointment, but He, by it, fits them for this Service to which in this separation he Consecrates them, and that is, by infusing of the Principles of true Holiness into them, as will appear; whereas men may be partakers in a relative Sanctification without it. I shall not here critically enquire, whether there be any difference between Effectual Vocation, Conversion, Regeneration, and Sanctification, and what is that difference. Only in general we may observe, that all of these do point to one and the same real Change which is wrought in the Subject; and in that regard they are frequently used for one and the same thing. But if we look upon them more strictly, there is a manifest difference to be observed in them. *Effectual Calling* respects either God as the Author of it, and so it points us to the efficient Cause, or the man as the Subject, and there it peculiarly respects the disposing of him, and actually drawing of him from other Objects to Christ, whom we embrace and receive as the alone Object of our trust; and so is restrained to the producing of the habit and act of Faith. Conversion is also considered as passive, in which there is a Change imprinted on all our powers, by vertue whereof we are disposed to Repentance; or active when we exert this Principle, and turn from Sin to God by true Repentance. Regeneration implies, the creation and infusion of the new Principle into us, by the Operation of the Spirit of God; and may be considered, either in the Operation itself, and so it is the Cause, or in the thing wrought by it, and so it is the Effect; and in this last regard it is the same with Sanctification. Sanctification then, differs from the other, as the Effect from the Cause; and hence in order of Nature is posterior to them. And as such, we are now looking upon it. As to the difference which some make between passive and active Sanctification, I shall not inquire into the ground of it; it is only the passive, that we are here to take the account of. That which they call active, I take it to be no other, but Repentance, which we are afterwards pointed to the distinct consideration of. We then come to the consideration of,

II. THE *special Nature of Sanctification*, which is described in the remainder of the *Answer.* And here there are *two* things to be taken notice of in it, *viz.* 1. The *Work itself* that is wrought in us by it, *we are renewed in the whole man after the Image of God.* 2. The things wherein the *efficacy of this Work* is to be discovered: we *are enabled more* &c. We may take up these in their order distinctly.

1. THE *Work itself* that is wrought in us by it; *we are renewed* &c. And here are *three* things observable,

(1.) *THE thing itself that is produced, or that wherein the Essence of this Sanctification consists*, i. e. *The Image of God.* What is peculiarly to be understood by the Image of God, in Scripture language, we have formerly had occasion to inquire, in the consideration of the state, in which man was at first created, which needs not to be here largely again insisted upon. The sum of it is the Sanctification of his Nature, by those Habits of Righteousness and Holiness, which were concreated with it, and by which we were furnished with an innate power of yielding true Conformity to the will of God, revealed in the Command. And whatsoever disputes there are in the World about it, this is a certain rule, that it was something that might be lost, consistent with mans retaining all that is essential to humanity, or his remaining a reasonable Creature, and *Cause by Counsel.* How else is it said to be renewed, and that also by a new Creation; as we

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are aſſured it is, *Eph.* 4. 22, 24. So that, though we are not to ſay, with the *Papiſts*, that it was Supernatural, yet it is more proper to ſay it was Connatural, then Natural; in as much as the Nature of man, as man, abides notwithſtanding the Amiſſion of it; although, if we conſider man as he was made for the ſerving and actually glorifying of God by his rational nature, ſo it was due to his nature, as appointed to ſuch an end, being a moral perfection without which he could not obtain it; and therefore having by Sin loſt it, he is ſo fallen ſhort of the Glory of God, *Rom.* 3. 23. This Sanctification then conſiſts in the body of Graces, which is put into the man, which render him like to God, in his moral perfections, which are therefore called Graces, becauſe they are infuſed Habits put into us by the Spirit of God. But we ſhall have occaſion anon to take a more particular account of them.

(2.) *THE way in which this thing is produced*; i. e. *by Renovation: we are renewed in this Image.* When we are ſaid to be *renewed after the Image of God*, the meaning is, that our Renovation is with reſpect to that Image, or elſe, that the Spirit in this work follows the pattern of the Image that was firſt put upon us; and when it is called a renewing, it intimates to us,

1. *THAT once we had this Image in us.* A thing may be made that never before was, but nothing is renewed, but that which ſometimes hath been. It therefore puts us in mind of that primitive ſtate of perfection, which Mankind enjoyed, according to, *Eccl.* 7. 29. For not only the perſon of *Adam* had it, but the nature of man enjoyed it in him, and if he had retained it, he ſhould have communicated it to his Poſterity in the channel of natural Generation.

2. *THAT when the Spirit of God comes to ſanctify the man, he finds him altogether void of this Image.* It is utterly loſt and gone, there is nothing of it remaining. Man is, by the Apoſtaſy, become altogether Fleſh. The Image of God was good, but *Paul* tells us, Rom. 7. 18. *For I know, that in me (that is, in my fleſh) dwelleth no good thing.* There is another Image contracted, and that is called his own, in oppoſition to that of God, Gen. 5. 1. *In the day that God created man, in the likeneſs of God made he him.* They therefore who talk of the relicts or remainders of the Image of God in man, muſt needs mean ſomething elſe than that which we are ſpeaking of, for man is *become altogether unprofitable*, Rom. 3. 12.

3. *THAT hence this Image is wholly new-made in Sanctification.* It is not like a Fabrick, which is gone to rack and ruine, but yet may, with Coſt be repaired, by ſupplying here and there, where it is defective; but like a Building that is quite fallen, and there is nothing left of it, but muſt be all new from the very Foundation. Hence we are told, 2 Cor. 5. 17. *Therefore if any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature; old things are paſt away, behold, all things are become new.* Sanctification is not only a rouſing & reviving of the drowſy and almoſt-dead diſpoſitions in man, but it is a tranſformation, *Rom.* 12. 2. And for this reaſon, the effect produced in this work, is called the new man, Eph. 4. 24. *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs & true holineſs.*

4. *AND it is only the Image of God that is renewed in us, in this Work.* We are indeed ſaid to be *new Creatures* by vertue of it, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. And to be *born again*, Joh. 3. 3. But this is not intended with reſpect to the natural powers and faculties in us, as to their being; for it is that only that is renewed, which was loſt: whereas man unſanctified, is yet a man as to theſe; he hath a Body and a Soul, tho' both are defiled by Sin: He hath an humane Underſtanding, Will, Affections, Conſcience, Memory, &c. And they are all of them the ſame in their eſſence afterwards, that they were before, but are renewed according to the gracious qualities & principles which are put into them; but becauſe there is ſuch a moral Change by it, made in the whole man, and all that is in him, that makes him look, and account, and live like another man. Therefore the Scripture ſometimes ſo expreſſeth; tho' ſtill it tells us that it is with reſpect to theſe principles, Col. 3. 10. *And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.* *Eph.* 4. 24.

3. *THE Subject of this Sanctification with reſpect to its Univerſality, or Extenſiveneſs; it is in the whole man.* It is an entire Work, the whole Soul, Spirit and Body are made partakers in it. It is therefore compared to a whole man, in reſpect of the integrality of it, *Eph.* 4. 24. Now this integrality may come under a double Conſideration, *viz.* either with reſpect to *Degrees* or *Parts*.

1. *WITH reſpect to Decrees.* It is not uſually begun and perfected at once, but is ſmall at firſt, and carried on ſucceſſively under the means which God uſeth and bleſſeth for that end. So that on this account we are at preſent Sanctified but in part; there is Grace, but there is Corruption too; and at firſt but a little Grace. Hence compared to a Seed that is ſown. Yet the work of Converſion, in which Sanctification is wrought, is compared to a Birth, and Believers at firſt to new-born Babes, and ſuch as muſt have nouriſhment in order to growth, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. *Paul* tells us of his being firſt a Child, and after that a Man, 1 Cor. 13. 11 *When I was a child, I ſpake as a child, I underſtood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childiſh things.* Growing in Grace is alſo enjoyned on us, as a Duty, 2 Pet 3. 18. *Grow in Grace.* And the reaſon is becauſe we are not yet come to perfection. Phil. 3. 13, 14. *Brethren, I count not my ſelf to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting thoſe things which are behind, and reaching forth*

unto

unto thoſe things which are before, I preſs toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus. Only let it be remarked, that this imperfection is not ever to abide. Grace is put into us for growth, and that growth is in order to perfection; and God will at length bring us into it, under and by the means he uſeth, *Eph.* 4. 11, 12, 13. There will a time come, tho' not in this life, when all Sin ſhall be done away, and holineſs ſhall arrive at its fulneſs.

2. *BUT with reſpect to Parts, it is entire at the firſt inſtant of its infuſion.* It is the Image that is reſtored, and in it are contained all ſpiritual and ſaving Graces; and theſe extend to the whole man: And it muſt be ſo.

For,

(1.) *THE whole man was made for the ſervice of God by obedience to his Preceptive Will.* The man owes himſelf intirely to God, and is to make it his whole buſineſs to Glorify God in the whole. As, in 1 Cor. 6. 20. *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your ſpirit, which are Gods.* Hence *David* ſo excites himſelf, Pſal. 103. 1. *Bleſs the Lord, O my ſoul: and all that is within me, bleſs his holy Name.* He is not to be part for God, and part for other objects, but all for God and no other.

(2.) *THE Whole Man had the impreſſion of the Image of God on it at firſt.* It was man that was made after it, Gen. 1. 27. *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.* Man was made *upright*, *Eccl.* 7. 29. All in him was right, he comes in all his powers inclined & furniſhed for his end. There was no jarring Principle in any one of his faculties or members, but a rectitude in all.

(3.) *THE Whole Man loſt this Image in the Apoſtacy.* The Depravation of Nature ſeized every part & power in him: nor was there ſo much as one member in him that eſcaped this Pravity. We have a full account of it given in the whole and in every part, *Rom.* 3. 10, *&c.*

(4.) *HENCE, to render the man fit for his end and ſervice, the whole muſt be renewed.* Man is an Inſtrument, put out of tune by the fall, and the end of his Renovation is, that he may ſound out the declaritive Glory of God, Iſai. 43. 21. *This people have I formed for my ſelf, they ſhall ſhew forth my praiſe.* And if ſo much as one ſtring in this Inſtrument be out of tune, it's harmony and melody will be ſpoiled. Now the whole man is made up of two eſſential conſtituent parts, *viz.* Soul and Body; and both of them go in to denominate him one of theſe ſpecies; and tho' there is a vaſt difference between theſe, and the Body be but the Souls organ, in and by which it performs its imperate actions, and is capable of being and acting, in a ſtate of ſeperation, yet the man is not entire without both. And becauſe the Soul is to be the leader in this ſervice, that muſt needs be Sanctified, elſe it will be a blind & perverſe leader, and carry both to ruine: So alſo becauſe the Body is to be improved by it in this ſervice, it is requiſite that it be Sanctified too, otherwiſe it will no way fit for that ſpiritual Employment, which it is to be uſed in. This Sanctification therefore is ſuited to each, according to the nature, and ſerviceableneſs of them to this great end. Now as, in the Soul, we conſider its ſeveral faculties, ſo, in the Body, its divers ſenſes, whether internal or external, and all the members of it; and the Sanctification of each, is to be conſidered according to the diverſe nature and uſe of it, it being nothing elſe but a fitting and empowering of us to perform holy and acceptable Obedience to God with them. And would we know what this is, we need but to look back, and call to mind, what was the depravation which befell them by the Fall: Of which we had the account, when we conſidered of the *Sinfulneſs of the State into which man fell.* Since Sanctification conſiſts in the reſtoring of that Grace to us in every part, which we loſt by our Apoſtaſy; It may therefore ſuffice, here only to offer at ſome brief hints. Here then,

1. *IN the Soul we obſerve the Underſtanding, Will, & Affections*; the Sanctification whereof is ſuted to their nature. Hence,

(1.) *THE Underſtanding is renewed, by giving it a ſpiritual Diſcerning.* A natural and rational power of Diſcerning it hath before, elſe it were not an Underſtanding, but it is blind to ſpiritual things, and ſo impotent as to ſuch a perception. 1 Cor. 2. 14. *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foliſhneſs unto him: neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.* Hence he prays, Pſal. 119. 18. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.* It is ſaid of natural men, Rom. 3. 17. *And the way of peace they have not known.* And Eph. 4. 17, 18. *This I ſay therefore, and teſtify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the underſtanding darkned, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, becauſe of the blindneſs of their heart.* But there we are told of this Image, Col. 3. 10. *And have put on the new man, which is created in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.* To which knowledge belongs, not only a literal apprehenſion of the notion of things, but a diſcovery of the truth and excellency of the thing ſo apprehended, with higheſt approbation of it.

(2.) *THE Will is renewed, by the reſtoring a power to it of chuſing the Good, and refuſing the Evil.* And this not in reſpect of things natural, for without that it were no Will, but of things ſpiritual. Man was to chuſe God for his laſt end and happineſs, and his will for his rule to guide him to it. This no natural man can do. Joſh. 24. 19. *And Joſhua ſaid unto the people, Ye cannot ſerve the Lord; for he is an holy God: he is a jealous God, he will not forgive your tranſgreſſions nor your ſins.* *Joh.* 5. 40. This power is reſtored in Sanctification,

fication, Phil. 2. 13. *For it is God which worketh in you, both to will & to do of his good pleasure.* He can now forsake all for God, and give himself up to him for ever.

(3.) *THE Affections are renewed, by putting a new & spiritual byas into them, by which they are set on things above.* Col. 3. 2. These Affections are of divers sorts, and were all perverted by the Apostasy, but now they are set right again: And as before they carried the man from God, after *lying vanities*; now they carry him away from them all, after God again. They are the feet of the Soul, and he can say, as Psal. 63. 8. *My soul followeth hard after thee.*

2. *IN the Body we take notice of all the Senses & Members of it.* And the renewing of these is, the fitting of them for the employment of the sanctified Understanding and Will, in the glorifying of God. There is a new inclination put into the Imagination, Cogitation and Memory, a new Eye, and Ear and Hand given. These had all been the Servants of Unrighteousness, and sensually carried forth after sensible objects; whereas now they are made the Servants of Righteousness, and prest for the gracious Employments which they were made for, Rom. 6. 19. *For as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity, even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.* So that the very body which before he could not resent, but took all Service of God as irksome, is now made vigorous, and intense in it, with delectation.

USE. *LEARN we hence, that men do in vain pretend to a title to Justification & Adoption, who are strangers to Sanctification.* It is true, God Justifies and Adops us freely, but when he doth so, he also Sanctifies us freely, and tho' this, in order of nature follows the other, yet is produced at the same instant with them, and is never seperated from them. Let all those then, who know nothing of the Sanctifying Grace of God in their Hearts beware how they boast of their interest in Pardon and Sonship, under a pretence of a Faith in Christ, that is not accompanyed with Holiness; but rather is used as an encouragement to live in Sin. Know who hath said, Heb. 12. 14. *Follow — holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.* And if you are without it, your Faith will be found presumption.

[MARCH 14. 1699.]

SERMON CXXXI.

II. WE proceed to consider the things wherein the *Efficacy of this Work* is discovered, *We are enabled*, &c. And here are *three* things to be observed, 1. That by it there is *a new power or ability put into the man.* 2. *The things for which this power is adapted*; in which we have the two parts of Sanctification, *to die* &c. 3. The *gradual progress of this Principle of Sanctification* in us; *more and more.* A few words to each of these.

1. *IN Sanctification there is a new Power or Ability put into the man.* We are considering of habitual Sanctification, which consists in a real Change that is wrought in the Subject. This indeed is nothing else, but that Image of God in which he is renewed: Of which we have been already speaking. But we are here led to a farther consideration of it, with respect to the usefulness of it, as it serves to impower the man to serve to the end he was made for; and herein the excellency of this benefit will appear. Here then let us observe,

1. *THAT man was made at first for the active Glorifying of God.* God *made all things for himself* as their last end, *Prov.* 16. 4. He is therefore to be glorifyed by them For being the chief Good, he must needs be his own last End, and the last End of every Creature. But there are two ways in which God may have Glory by the Creature; *Passively*, as they are myrrours on which there are instamped the Characters of his glorious Perfections; and thus man serves in common with other beings, and so cannot fail of bringing Glory to God: Or *Actively*, as they are to observe his glorious Perfections, and give him the honour of them, by a free and voluntary Service; for which only intelligent and rational beings are furnished: and this God expects at their hands, *Isai.* 43. 21.

2. *THAT he was thus to Glorify God by practical conformity to his Revealed Will.* God gave man a Law to regulate him in his conversation, by obedience whereunto he was to pay him the honour of his Supremacy over him. As there was a special Government, which God treated his reasonable Creature withal, so there was a law of that Government, which he gave him, and obliged him by Sanctions to regulate himself according to it in all his actions. And by his so doing, God acknowledged himself to be honoured by him: and the coming short of this, was to fail of this end. *Rom.* 3. 23.

3. *THAT he might be disposed, and enabled thus to do, he was furnished with the Image of God.* That man was made after this Image we are told, *Gen.* 1. 26, 27. What this was for, we may read in the nature of it; and that is signified in the Gospel, by the design of the renovation of it, *Eph.* 4. 24. It was by this that the very nature of man was inclined to love and serve God, it being the rectitude in which he was made, *Eccl.* 7. 29. And it made him able as well as willing so to do, being a principle of holiness in him. Nor was it consistent with the Wisdom of God, to make a Creature for an End, and not furnish it with qualities fitting it for the attainment thereof.

4. *THAT when he had lost this Image by Sin, all that power was gone.* That fallen man is

without power to ſerve God, by conformity to his revealed Will, is aſſerted in Scripture, and muſt be experienced by all thoſe that know themſelves, and what is required in that conformity, and compare one with the other. And that once he had this ability is certain: He hath therefore loſt it. And wherein can that be, but by loſing the Image of God? He retains his humanity, but he wants the principle of Obedience. Hence ſaid to be *without ſtrength*, Rom. 5. 6. to be *dead*, Eph. 2. 1. And he *died in Adam*, 1 Cor. 15. 22. And that was, when he loſt that primitive ſtock of Grace, which was depoſited with him for mankind.

5. *THAT by the Corruption of his nature which came in hereupon, he was inclined & ſpirited to diſhonour God.* When man loſt God's Image, he contracted an image of his own, *Gen.* 5. 1. And what elſe was this, but the depravation of his whole nature, which the Scripture frequently calls Luſt, or Concupiſcence? And that is it which hath made them Children of Diſobedience: they are not only impotent to that which is good, but diſpoſed, and eagerly carried forth to that which is evil; they are by it become the Servants of Sin. Such a deſcription we have given of the natural man, *Rom.* 3. 10, *&c.*

6. *THAT by reſtoring of this Image in Sanctification, he is again furniſhed for his End.* That this is that which is renewed in it, hath already been obſerved: And that this is the kindneſs that is done him in and by it, is certain. There is in it a *paſſing from death to life.* And hence this life is evidenced by the fruit of it, 1 Joh. 3. 14. *We know that we have paſſed from death unto life, becauſe we love the brethren: he that loveth not his brother abideth in death.* There is a life reſtored in Juſtification, but that is relative, by removing the ſentence of Death; but there is alſo a life reſtored in Sanctification, which is real, by giving the man a new principle of ſpiritual action or motion: ſo that he, who before could do no good, is now able to ſerve God in truth. This removes the vanity and unprofitableneſs from him, which he before laboured of. Such a change *Paul* obſerves by this in *Oneſimus*, Philem. 11. *Which in time paſt was to thee unprofitable: but now profitable to thee and to me.* Hence that, 2 Tim. 3. 17. *That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furniſhed unto all good works.*

7. *EVERY Grace of the Spirit in him contributes to this Ability.* We obſerved, that *the Image of God* conſiſts in the whole body of the Graces that are put into the man: every one of them therefore is a member of the new Creature, and ſo belongs to this furniture, and hath its uſefulneſs. When therefore the *Apoſtle* had mentioned the ſeveral Graces, which are *the fruits of the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 22, 23. He urgeth from them an exerciſe of a ſpiritual life, ver. 25. *If we live in the Spirit, let us alſo walk in the Spirit.*

8. *HEREBY we may diſcern the Neceſſity and Excellency of this Sanctification.* Certainly, man lives in vain, if he doth not ſerve to the end he was made for, nor can he be happy, except he be holy, *Heb.* 12. 14. And whence is it that the *wiſe man* hath that remark, Pro. 12. 26. *The righteous is more excellent then his neighbour.* But becauſe by this Grace, he is enabled to do that excellent Service, which other men have no power in them to perform. So that, though Sanctification doth not purchaſe for us a title to Eternal Life, yet it ſerves to prepare us for it, but for which we could never come to be poſſeſſors of it.

2. LET us now conſider *the Things for which this Power is adapted*, viz. *to dye unto Sin, and live unto Righteouſneſs.* And in this we are led to the conſideration of the two parts of Sanctification, both with reſpect to the Objects, and the Acts that refer thereunto, *viz.* mortification of Sin, and vivification unto Righteouſneſs. Here let us obſerve, that theſe are the things about which this Sanctification is to be employed; and how it is ſo, will be conſidered, when we come to the Doctrine of Repentance. That which we are now to conſider, is the habitual power and diſpoſition hereto that is wrought in the man, in the infuſing of this Grace into him. The very eſſence of Sanctification conſiſts in our *paſſing from death to life*, in which there are two terms, *Sin* and *Righteouſneſs*; Sin is the term *from* which, and we are enabled to paſs from it by Mortification: Righteouſneſs is the term *to* which, in regard whereof this paſſage is called Vivification or Quickning. And by Righteouſneſs we are to underſtand the whole body of Grace, as it refers to new Obedience, which is called Holineſs, as it refers to Duties of the firſt Table, and Righteouſneſs in reſpect to thoſe of the Second. And when one of them is mentioned alone, it uſually comprehends both under it. The former is called the Old man, the latter the New-man; that is to be put off in mortification, this is to be put on in vivification, *Eph.* 4. 23, 24. Now theſe are conſidered either *paſſively* or *actively*; the latter belongs to Repentance, and will be proper to be conſidered under that: the former is the thing done in Sanctification; and may now be a little conſidered.

IN General let us obſerve, that there is this obſervable difference between the Sanctification of man at firſt in his Creation, and the Sanctification of fallen man; *viz.* that that conſiſted only in the imprinting *the Image of God* on his nature, there being nothing in him antecedently repugnant to it; whereas in fallen man, there is not only a privation of that Image, but together with it, a contrary curſed principle which hath filled him, which is as repugnant to it as light is to darkneſs, as heaven to hell; which muſt therefore be ſubverted, in the bringing in of the other. Sin hath a Throne in the unregenerate man's heart, and muſt be dethroned, in order to the ſetting up of the Kingdom of Grace in it; for which reaſon both theſe parts are neceſſary in it. Here then, 1. *MOR-*

1. *MORTIFICATION is a Work of the Spirit, in which he crucifieth Original Sin in us, by applying to it the Death of Christ.* Here we may observe,

1. *THE Author or Efficient of it; the Spirit of God.* It is a divine Work, and therefore must have God himself to work it in us. It is he that *subdues our iniquities*, Mic. 7. 19. And although, in progressive Sanctification, we are Agents, and are helped by the Spirit of God in killing of concupiscence in us, and for that reason are exhorted to it, (*Col.* 3. 5.) yet in the infusion of this Grace into us, we are passive, and he is the alone Agent; tho' in the order of the bringing it about he useth Instruments, yet he alone doth the work by a creating Power. It is he that takes away our iniquities, and that not only as to the guilt, but also the dominion of them: both are included in that, Hos. 14. 2. *Take with you words, and turn to the Lord, say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips.*

2. *THE Subject upon which this Work is done, is Original Sin in us.* This is the thing that is to be mortified. We indeed are personally said to be crucified, Gal. 2. 20. *I am crucified with Christ.* And 6. 14. *But God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.* And to be dead in sin, Rom. 6. 2. *How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?* But it is with respect to Sin itself, which hath taken possession of our whole man. Now all the Sin that we can be charged with, is either ours, by *Imputation, viz. Adam's* first Sin, and because it is ours only by Imputation, it is not a Subject of Mortification, but must be removed by Justification. Or else it is ours by *Inhæsion*, it cleaves to us, and we do really participate in it, and not meerly relatively; and this is either the Sin of our Nature, or the Sin of our Actions. As to the sin of our Actions, or actual Sin, that cannot properly be said to be mortified, because acts are transient, and being once past, cannot be revoked again; though the remembrance of them ought to humble us, and will do so, if we belong to God, and drive us, by repentance to seek pardon through the Blood of Christ, and thereby become serviceable to help to the mortifying of the Lust from whence they proceed. The Sin of our Nature hath a privative and positive part in it, the former consists in the loss of Original Righteousness; the latter in the actual depravation or corruption of our whole Nature, of which we took a particular account, in the Doctrine of Man's Apostacy. Some reckon both of these to Original Sin. Others, among whom, the Authors of our *Catechism*, restrain it to the latter; nor needs there any dispute about terms, whiles we confess that both belong to the sinful state of fallen man; now the restoring of the lost Righteousness belongs to Vivification, which is the other part of Sanctification. Mortification then, hath that positive corruption or pravity of our Nature for the Subject on which it is employed. This is that which is called the old man, which we are advised to put off, *Eph* 4. 22. It is called the *body of Death*, *Rom.* 7. 24. And on this account it is to be supposed to be made up of a great many members, which intend the several Lusts which are contained in Original Sin; every one whereof is applied to in this Mortification. Hence that advice, Col. 3. 5, 6. *Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and coveteousness which is idolatry: For which things sake, the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.* And that assertion, Gal. 5. 24. *And they that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.* And it is by the Mortification of these that actual Sin is prevented; for actual Sin is nothing else but the breaking out of Original Sin in some Lust or other: those Lusts therefore must be killed in us, if ever we cease from sinning; hence that comparison, Jer. 6. 7. *As a fountain casteth out her waters, so she casteth out her wickedness.* Stop the fountain, and the streams will fail presently. Whereas, if they be only dammed up and restrained, they will swell, and at length break over with greater impetuosity.

3. *THE Work itself is a Crucifying of it in us.* The *Apostle*, therefore compares this Work in himself to a *Crucifixion*, in the forecited, *Gal.* 2. 20. 6. 14. 5. 24. Which manner of death was painful, ignominious, lingring, and certain. Sin is put to death as a Malefactor, the Spirit of God doth arraign, judge, condemn, & execute Sin in us. Now in this Crucifixion, he first takes away the Dominion of Sin, and by degrees, the very Being of it. The first Work of Mortification then, which is under our present consideration, is the taking away of the sovereign power of Sin in us, whereby it is dethroned. Sin in every unregenerate man rules as a King; it not only hath the whole command over him, but it hath his heart and affections, and allegiance; he is a voluntary Subject. Hence that, Rom. 6. 12, 13. *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield your selves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.* And this the Spirit of God doth,

(1.) *BY making Sin bitter to him.* Hence that, Jer. 2. 19. *Know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord of hosts.* He makes him, not only to tast the bitter fruits of Sin, in the Judgments that it brings, but the very root of it; He leads him to the fountain, and shews him what a vile filthy thing it is, and what a loathsome detestable Creature he

is made by it. It was that ſenſe put into *Paul* that made him cry out, Rom. 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death!* The former delectableneſs that he found in Sin is gone; that which taſted ſo ſweet, is now as gall, and wormwood to him.

(2.) *By kindling in him a loathing of Sin, and himſelf for it.* His love is turned into hatred: and it is with him as it was with *Amnon* in reſpect of *Tamar*, 2 *Sam.* 13. 15. He doth not only look on this and that actual Sin, but runs it up to the fountain. *Pſal.* 51. 5. He makes him vile, and confeſs himſelf ſo, and to abhor himſelf in duſt and aſhes. God promiſed it to be ſo with them, Ezek. 36.31. *Then ſhall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and ſhall loath your ſelves in your own ſight, for your iniquities, and for your abominations.* And that they may expreſs this in Repentance, He imprints this upon them in the work of Mortification; it follows upon the *taking away of the heart of ſtone*, ver. 26.

(3.) *By thus putting into him a power to reſiſt the motions of Sin in him.* And this is of the very nature of the Grace of Mortification. So that Sin is mortify'd by the Souls being made alive again. And it is but one work, though diſtinguiſhed in reſpect of the terms. But thus Sin hath not now the full conſent that formerly it had; but he can ſay, as Rom. 7.19,20. *For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not: it is no more I that do it, but ſin that dwelleth in me.*

4. *The manner of doing this Work, is by applying of the Death of Chriſt to Original Sin.* Mortification is not a Legal, but an Evangelical Work: It is not an effect of common, but of ſpecial and ſaving Grace; hence the inſtrument uſed by the Spirit in doing it, is Evangelical. There are Convictions, & Compunctions wro't by the Law; but that which kills Sin in the heart, is the application of the Death of Chriſt. We are therefore ſaid to be *baptized into his Death*, Rom. 6. 3. And that our *old man is crucifyed with him*, ver. 6. to be *dead with him*, ver. 8. And *Paul* received his from *the Croſs of Chriſt*, Gal. 6. 14. Chriſt came to *ſave from ſin*, Mat. 1. 21. And his Death had a direct aim at it. Now, there is a double efficacy of it in this Salvation, *viz.* to ſave us from the puniſhment of Sin, and from Sin it ſelf; and Chriſt had as real a deſign for this as that. Hence that, Eph. 5. 26, 27. *That he might ſanctify & cleanſe it with the waſhing of water by the word, That he might preſent it to himſelf a glorious church, not having ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing: but that it ſhould be holy and without blemiſh.* Tit. 2. 14. *Who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* The Spirit of God applies the bitter Sufferings of Chriſt for Sin, to the Soul with power, and thereby makes Sin ſo bitter to it, that layeth in him the foundation of an everlaſting irreconcileable hatred of it.

2. *VIVIFICATION is a Work of the Spirit, by which he reſtores in us our loſt Righteouſneſs, by the Application of the Reſurrection of Chriſt.* This is always inſeperable from the former; for it is but one work of Sanctification that is wro't in the operation of both. And indeed theſe are wro't after the manner of the introduction of a contrary quality into a Subject, in which as the one comes in, the other muſt go out; yet, the one is thruſt out by the coming in of the other: and doubtleſs the Spirit of God mortifies Sin, by reviving of Grace in us, though the things themſelves are diverſe. And hence, if the Spirit of God be the Author of one, he is of the other too. As to the Nature of this work, it is indeed no other then the reſtoring of the Image to us, or renewing of it in us: Of which we before conſidered; and therefore the leſs needs here to be ſpoken concerning it. However, the conſideration of it, not only as a renewing, but a reviving, will help us to a more diſtinct apprehenſion of it. Here therefore let us obſerve,

1. *THAT the end of the new Creation is, that we may again ſerve God in newneſs of Life.* This was it that we were made for at firſt, and till we are again reſtored to it, we live in vain. We are therefore told what we are a-new created for, in Eph. 2. 10. *For we are his workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we ſhould walk in them.* God not only deſigns the ſaving us from hell, but alſo the being ſerved by us; that we ſhould be holy. Hence we have thoſe titles put upon the regenerate, to let us underſtand what is God's deſign in this affair, 1 Pet. 2. 9. *But ye are a choſen generation, a royal prieſthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye ſhould ſhew forth the praiſes of him, who hath called you out of darkneſs into his marvellous light.*

2. *THAT in order to this, we muſt have our loſt Righteouſneſs reſtored to us.* That it is loſt and gone, in reſpect of us all in our natural ſtate, which is our great infelicity, we are aſſured. And whiles we ſo abide, we remain dead, as to any ſpiritual motion; utterly unable to do God any true Service, ſo much as in a good thought. Hence that, Tit. 1. 16. *They profeſs that they know God: but in works they deny him; being abominable, and diſobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.* If therefore we be ever renewed again to this ſervice, it muſt be by beſtowing this principle on us again; for before that, we are nothing but fleſh. And we are told, Rom. 8. 8. *They that are in the fleſh cannot pleaſe God.* Grace in the habit is our Life. As long as we are without it we are dead: whereas new Obedience is a living to God, which we cannot poſſibly do, except we have a root of Life in us; which we have not till it be thus reſtored to us.

3. *THAT this is done by the Spirit of God in Quickning*

Quickning of us. We are therefore told, Eph. 2. 1. *And you hath he quickned who were dead in treſpaſſes & ſins.* Now a thing is then *quickned*, when it hath a vital power put into it, which it had not before; or if it once had it, yet hath loſt it, and was then without it, when this operation paſt upon it. This Quickning therefore is reſembled to a Reſurrection, *Eph.* 2,5,6. becauſe it ſuppoſeth us, not only lifeleſs, but dead, or deprived of the life we once had, and muſt therefore be again raiſed, if we live. And it muſt needs be the Spirit's work, becauſe it is a Reſurrection, which is a Divine Work: and this is always in conjunction with the former Mortification. For which reaſon the *Apoſtle* puts them together, *Gal.* 2. 20.

4. *THAT in this Quickning he infuſeth into us, all the Graces of Sanctification.* This is the very thing that is called the new Creature. When the habits of theſe Graces are put into us, we then live and not till then. For as Sin is the death of the Soul, ſo Holineſs is the life of it. It is therefore a promiſe of the new Covenant, that God *will give Grace*, Pſal. 84. 11. And this is that *fear* of God which he hath promiſed to *put into the hearts of his people*, Jer. 32. 40 And there is every Grace that is thus infuſed, none wanting, it is a perfect new Creature as to parts, though at firſt but an Infant as to ſtature. And therefore Sanctification is ſaid to be entire, or whole, in 1 Theſ. 5. 23. *And the very God of peace ſanctify you wholly.*

5. *THAT by vertue of this, we are made able to ſerve God again.* We could not do ſo before. Hence that, Joſh. 24. 19. *And Joſhua ſaid unto the people, Ye cannot ſerve the Lord; for he is an holy God: he is a jealous God, he will not forgive your tranſgreſſions nor your ſins.* But now this power is recovered. True, our dependance ſtill is upon his influence, Joh. 15. 5. *Without me ye can do nothing.* But ſtill, there is an active power in us, which before we had not. We are not now moved as dead Machines, but being acted we can act, and put forth our ſelves freely and voluntarily in the Service of God; by the Cooperation of the ſame Spirit who put this power into us. On this account *Paul* ſaith, Phil. 4. 13. *I can do all things through Chriſt which ſtrengtheneth me.*

6. *HE doth this eſpecially, by applying to us the Reſurrection of Chriſt.* It is by the vertue and influence of that upon us, that he produceth it. As Chriſt dyed for us, that we might die to Sin, ſo he roſe again, that we might riſe with him to Holineſs. For this reaſon we are ſaid to be *quickened* and *raiſed together with him*, Eph. 2. 5, 6. And on this account we have ſuch an expreſſion, Rom. 6. 4, 5. *Therefore we are buried with him by Baptiſm into death: that like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeneſs of his death: we ſhall be alſo in the likeneſs of his reſurrection.* Our Sins were all nailed to the Croſs of Chriſt, at his Death, not only that he might ſatisfy for them, but alſo, that he might bury them with him, and take them from us. So, when Chriſt roſe and was exalted, he received all the *Gifts* for his redeemed, for their being made perfect, *Eph* 4. 10, *&c.* And by the influence of that glorious State of his, he works a like glorious Change in us: As we are told, 2 Cor. 3. 18. *But we all with open face beholding as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

USE. IS this one of the Benefits which we receive from Chriſt in this Life, *How vainly then do they pretend to Effectual Vocation, that are wholly without it.* There are indeed thoſe Benefits which are ſecured to his Called now, but they muſt wait for the full fruition of them after time; but this is none of thoſe. But as to this Sanctification, it is wrought in Converſion, and is carried on through the whole life afterwards; and where this work is, there is a Mortification of Sin, in the power and dominion of it, and there is the life of Grace and Holineſs produced. And where theſe principles are, there will be leſs or more of the Exerciſe of them. If Sin be mortify'd it will not have that efficacy that it had before. Though it may moleſt us more, it will command us leſs: and if Grace be revived, it will have its fruits; it being the end for which God put it into us, and he will not loſe his end in it. Do we then hope for, and promiſe to ourſelves Eternal Life, and yet have never felt this ſaving Change in us. Sin is as powerful, and grateful in and to us, as ever, we follow it with as much pleaſure; and Holineſs is as irkſome and undeſireable to us as before, and we take no content in it. Be not deceived, our pretences will fail. Our Confidences will deceive us, our hopes break under us. What ſaith he, 1 Joh. 3. 3. *And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure.* And if we do not ſo, we ſhall be found among, and ſentenced to go with *the workers of Iniquity.*

[APRIL 11. 1699.]

SERMON *CXXXII.*

III. WE proceed now to take notice of the *gradual Progreſs* of this principle of Sanctification in us. The things we are empowered to by it, are Mortification and Vivification, the killing of Sin, and quickening of Grace. But theſe are not begun and perfected at once, but carried on ſucceſſively. *We are enabled* to theſe *more and more.* And whether we aſcribe this to the Ability itſelf, or to the effect flowing from it, it will hold in both. The principle of Sanctification

tification in us is a growing thing, and the fruits or operations of it are anſwerable. We may take the account of this matter in the following *Concluſions*.

1. *THAT the Image of God, and the image of Sin, are two contrary Principles in their own Nature.* This will be evident by conſidering what they are in Scripture ſenſe. The *Image of God* conſiſts in the whole body of ſanctifying Graces, as hath already been made to appear by the Premiſes; whereas the *Image of Sin* is conſtituted of all corrupt Luſts, whereby the man is defiled. One is called the *Spirit*, the other the *Fleſh*, and ſaid to be *contrary*, Gal. 5. 17. They ſerve two contrary Laws, Rom. 7. 25. *With the mind I my ſelf ſerve the law of God: but with the fleſh the law of ſin.* And we have this contrariety further declared, Rom. 8, 5, 6, 7. *For they that are after the fleſh, do mind the things of the fleſh: but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded, is death: but to be ſpiritually minded, is life and peace. Becauſe the carnal mind is enmity againſt God: for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* There is not a greater oppoſition between Light and Darkneſs, Heaven and Hell, than between theſe.

2. *THAT theſe are ſuppoſed to be in men as Qualities in a Subject.* True, ſuch is their cloſeneſs, that ſometimes they have the denomination of the Subject put upon them; but the man is the Subject of them, and theſe are moral habits or diſpoſitions in him, and hence, being ſeparable from the Subject, they may be loſt, and though contraries, yet may be in the ſame Subject in lower degrees. Some indeed count Original Sin to be a privation, or only a loſs of the *Image of God*, but it is certain, there is that which is poſitive in it; man is not only by it indiſpoſed to good, but inclined to evil. *Eccl.* 8. 11. And *Paul* compares it to a Law in the man, which gives its Edicts, Rom. 7. 23. *But I ſee another law in my members, warring againſt the law in my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of ſin, which is in my members.* The Underſtanding, Will, Affections, Senſes, and Members, are influenced and acted by them.

3. *THAT the Apoſtacy hath utterly rooted out the Image of God, and introduced the image of Sin.* That man came out of God's hands in his Creation, furniſhed with the divine Image, we are aſſured, Gen. 1. 27. *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.* But that he hath loſt it by Sin, is wofully true. Were it not ſo there would be no need of having it reſtored again *Eph.* 4. 23. This is that which hath made man become *unprofitable*, Rom. 3. 12. And that it is wholly gone is evident, becauſe there is nothing good remaining in the man, *Rom.* 7 18. And that the image of ſin is come in the room of it appears, becauſe the whole man is ſet upon that which is evil; according to the deſcription given of a natural man, *Rom.* 3. 10, &c.

4. *THAT though the image of God is reſtored in Sanctification, yet the image of Sin is not totally removed.* That the thing done in Sanctification is *the renewing us after the Image of God*, we have already obſerved. This is the new Creature which is produced in regeneration. The man is no ſooner new-born, but he hath all Sanctifying Graces in him: but yet ſo as, altho' carnal concupiſcence be crucifyed in him, yet it remains, and is alive and active in him. *Paul* had not only a new law in his mind, but alſo *another law* in his *members*, Rom. 7. 23. Nor is there any luſt of the fleſh but a Child of God is peſtered with it as long as he liveth. Whence elſe is it that God's Children have been drawn away by Temptation to the commiſſion of theſe and thoſe Sins? It is Luſt within which is the fuel in which the ſparks of a Temptation do kindle. Chriſt who had none, could ſay, as Joh. 14. 13. *The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.*

5. *THAT the Image of God is renewed with a deſign for perfection, and the image of Sin is ſubdued in order to total ſubverſion.* The new man in us, is at firſt but a babe, but is created for a *perfect man in Chriſt*, and the means of Grace are appointed for that end, *Eph* 4. 11, 12, 13. Chriſt reſolves to *preſent* his *Church to himſelf without ſpot*, Eph. 5. 27. And though Sin abide in us for the preſent, yet Chriſt came to take it away, *Joh.* 1 29. And he will leave nothing of it in us before he hath done with us. The *Apoſtle* therefore tells us of ſuch a time, 1 Cor. 13. 10. *But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part ſhall be done away.*

6. *THAT hence the dying to Sin and living to Righteouſneſs, are in the Children of God progreſſive.* They are not begun & compleated at once, but are carried on by degrees: for which reaſon the Children of God are under the obligation of a conſtant duty to be mortifying of Sin, and growing in Grace, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. God carrieth on this work by ſteps, now a little, and then a little. So that the work of Repentance, which is nothing elſe but the exerciſe of Sanctification, is that which God's Children ought always to be at, till Sin in them be no more, and their Grace be arrived at its full ſtature.

7. *FROM the conſideration of the progreſſiveneſs of Sanctification in both parts of it, we are led to the Contemplation of the Spiritual Warfare in a Child of God.* The word of God gives us the account of a War raiſed and maintained in the Chriſtian between Grace & Corruption, Rom. 7. 23. *But I ſee another law in my members, warring againſt the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of ſin, which is in my members.* Gal. 5. 17. *For the fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the fleſh, and theſe are contrary the one to the other.* and elſewhere. Now this War is to be conſidered either in the riſe and grounds of it, or in the management of it. In this latter reſpect it properly belongs to the Doctrine of Repentance; in the former it refers to the head of Sanctification.

Sanctification. It may not then be amiſs to take it together here, where the occaſion of it is diſcovered, that there may be no need to return to it afterwards. We may take a brief account of this Affair in the following Particulars,

1. *THE Subject of this Warfare is a Child of God, or true Believer.* It is only the new born Chriſtian that is capable of it. It is managed within the man, and ſuppoſeth two contrary jarring parties, between which it muſt be maintained. Now beforeConverſion, or the renewing of *the Image of God* in the man, there are no parties in him : Sin in an unregenerate man holds poſſeſſion,and whiles it hath the whole government it keeps quiet. It is the *ſtrong man* of whom our Saviour ſpeaks, Luk. 11. 21. *When a ſtrong man armed keepeth the palace, his goods are in peace.* It is by the new Birth that we are *born men of contention*, Jer.15.10. There are indeed ſome ſcuffles in an unregenerate man, which for the preſent make a noiſe : Sometimes between Conſcience and Concupiſcence, Luſt is inſatiable till gratifyed, and Conſcience is touched, and forced to threaten him. Such a combat there was in *Balaam*, *Numb.* 22. Sometimes between one Luſt and another. The man cannot gratify them all, and whiles one is provided for, the ſupply of the other is withdrawn. If Pride and Voluptuouſneſs be fed, Covetouſneſs is diſoblig'd : and ſo of others. Sometimes between the principles of Morality,and the violence of carnal Affections : Reaſon in the man ſaith, this is folly, and will bring thee to ſhame; but Luſt ſaith, I muſt have,I cannot abſtain. But theſe feuds are quickly compoſed, and do not break out into a War, becauſe all the powers in the natural man are Servants of Original Sin, and that doth all it can to quiet them, knowing that if its *Kingdom* be *divided it cannot ſtand.*

2. *THE reaſon of this Warfare is, becauſe he hath both Grace and Corruption in him.* In all War there muſt be two parties, how elſe ſhould there be a diſagreement, which is the very ground of it ? As if the man had nothing but Corruption in him, there would be none ; ſo, if he had nothing but Grace, all would go on without moleſtation. When therefore Sin ſhall be done away, and Grace be perfected, it will be at an end. In Heaven therefore there will be none of this diſturbance. There doth *Paul* enjoy that glorious deliverance which he ſo earneſtly cries for, *Rom.* 7. 24. But becauſe here he hath *another law in* his *members*, therefore he is now a Warriour, *ver.* 23.

3. *HENCE the Parties that are engaged in thisWarfare are Sin andGrace in the man.* The man himſelf is the Field of this War, but the Combitants are theſe two Champions, the Old and the New man : Theſe are called *Fleſh* and *Spirit.* And we have them ſet forth in their contrariety, Gal. 5. 17. *For the fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the fleſh, and theſe are contrary the one to the other.* The word,*contrary*,is a martial phraſe, and ſignifies to lie in leager, a *metaphor* from an Army that is entrenched againſt,and gives Siege to a Fortreſs : And they are theſe two, i.e. Original Sin, with all the *Luſts* that belong to it, which we are told do *war againſt the Soul*, 1 Pet. 2. 11. This is the *Fleſh.* And Sanctifying Grace, with all the ſeveralGraces of God that are in us, which withſtand the other, this is the *Spirit.* So that all that is in this War,is to be reduced to,and conſidered under one or other of theſe two parties.

4. THAT therefore which maketh this *War*, is *the deadly Antipathy there is between theſe two.* And the more fixt and eager that is, the more furious it muſt needs be. The *Apoſtle* then gives us the reaſon why they are *contrary*, or carry it hoſtily one toward another, *Gal.* 5. 17. becauſe *they luſt one againſt another.* This word *luſt*, ſignifieth not only to deſire, but vehemently ſo to do, being derived of a word that ſignifieth to *burn* ; and it is uſed equivocally both in a good & bad ſenſe, as the Text it ſelf aſſures us, and implies a fixt and unalterable quality. To *luſt againſt* a thing, notes an antipathy in it : ſuch there is between theſe ; and thence the War breaks out. And no wonder if we conſider what an Antipathy it is.

(1.) *IT is a natural Antipathy.* It is rooted in the very nature of theſe principles. I call it natural, in oppoſition to that which is adventitious. Two Perſons may be intimate Friends, and yet occaſionally fall out ; and ſuch a feud we obſerved may be between the ſuperiour and inferiour faculties in an unregenerate man. But this under conſideration, is inſeperable from the being of the thing : it is of the very form of it. As ſoon as there is Fleſh and Spirit, ſo ſoon is this diſpoſition in them, and ſo they cannot but hate one another, becauſe they tend to overthrow each others nature. The antipathy is ſuch as is between Fire and Water ; it flows from contrary principles in them, the one is from the Earth, and is Earthly, the other from Heaven,and isHeavenly. They have contrary Objects, they look two contrary ways, one is fixt upon God, the other ſet upon the Creature, one is for Heavenly, the other for Earthly things. They have contrary deſigns, which they naturally proſecute ; one is bound for the Glory of God, and the Heavenly Inheritance, the other looks no farther than Senſe, and the gratifying of his earthly deſires. So that they neither judge, nor approve, nor purſue the ſame, but things directly contrary : ſo that what ones likes, the other diſlikes, and it is enough to make it abominable to the one, that it pleaſeth the other.

(2.) *IT is a mutual and equal Antipathy on both ſides.* The Fleſh is as much ſet againſt the Spirit, &c. *& contra.* Both luſt, which leads us to the natural reaſon of their oppoſition ; becauſe theſe are both principles of Action ; and contrary principles, and ſeated in

in the ſame Subject,; and hence diſpoſed to preſerve their own being, and deſtroy each other. Each knows it cannot be ſafe, as long as the other is capable of doing any thing. This *Paul* repreſents in *Rom.*7.15,&c.

3. *IT is a mortal feud that is between them.* They are not only at variance, but hate each other; they are two mortal Enemies; the one cannot endure to ſee the other alive, and can be content with nothing leſs then its Death; One world cannot hold them peaceably. Hence the Fleſh is called *Enmity* in the abſtract, Rom. 8. 7. *Becauſe the carnal mind is enmity againſt God: for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* They know that if the one lives, the other muſt die, and ſo one is reſtleſly diſcontent till it ſees the other dead. Corruption knows, that the liſe of Grace muſt be its bane,and Grace is equally ſatisfied, that it can never be ſecure, till Luſt lie dead at its foot.

4. *HENCE it is an irreconcible Antipathy, which is alſo implied in the word luſting.* A natural difference cannot be removed, without deſtroying the nature of the thing. If the Fleſh & Spirit be ever reconciled, either the Fleſh muſt ceaſe to be Fleſh, or the Spirit ceaſe to be Spirit. For this reaſon alſo called Enmity in the abſtract; an Enemy may be atoned, but Enmity never. Fire and Water may as well ſhake hands and agree. Hence Grace is compared to a Spark,&Concupiſcence to Water, Cant. 8. 7. *Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.* And indeed, how ſhould they be reconciled? For they cannot be brought to any terms of Treaty: if oppoſites agree, it muſt be in a third, but they cannot endure the ſight one of another, and ſo can make no propoſals. And indeed, both will do their utmoſt to have the whole Sovereignty in the man. One Thone cannot hold two Kings: they are both reſolved either to conquer or die. If Grace reign, Sin ſhall die before it hath done, *Rom.* 6. 12. And if Sin be alive, Grace ſhall not live quietly; and no wonder, for they ſerve two contrary Maſters: The Fleſh is a Vaſſal of, and hath ſworn fealty to Satan, whereas the Spirit is engaged for the Glory of God, and *what fellowſhip, &c.* 2 *Cor.* 6. 14.

5. *THIS War is in every Faculty and Power of the Man.* This is like the Battle between the forces of *David* and *Abſalom*, 2 *Sam.* 18.8. The whole man is the ſubject and ſeat of it. And the reaſon is, becauſe both of theſe Principles, do influence the whole. Corruption remains in all, though dethroned, and Sanctification is throughout, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 23. In the *Underſtanding* Grace is a Principle of Divine Light, *Col.* 3. 10. The new man hath a *Spiritual Diſcerning*, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. but it is *but in part*, 1 *Cor.* 13. 9. with which the man is not content, but *reacheth* after more, *Phil.* 3. 13. in which it fights againſt remaining Ignorance. Corruption is a Principle of Ignorance and Error about Divine things, *Rom* 3. 12, 13. *Eph.* 4. 18. It miſcalls things, Iſai. 5. 20. *Wo unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs; that put bitter for ſweet, and ſweet for bitter.* By it the minds of the Regenerate are obſcured, darkned, perplexed. And hence he is forced to wreſtle hard for a ſettlement on the Truth, and reſiſting of his carnal Reaſonings. In the *Will*, there is a ſore fight between Faith and Unbelief; ſuch was in him, Mark 9. 24. *Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.* Grace engageth the Soul to truſt in God through Chriſt for Bleſſedneſs, to eſtabliſh it in a firm Reliance on Chriſt. Whereas Corruption perſwades him to Unbelief, to doubt and deſpair of the Love of God, fills him with demurs; or it ſeeks to lead him into Preſumption, and truſt in his own Righteouſneſs. A grievous Combat alſo,between Obedience, and Diſobedience; Grace ſaith this is a Duty, and thou muſt do it; Concupiſcence reluctsagainſt it, and doth all it can to diſſwade from it. Grace commends and graſps after Holineſs, Concupiſcence draws after Sin. In the *Affections*,Sin draws eagerly one way, and Grace another. Grace *ſets* them *on things above*, and Luſt pulls them as hard after things below; what the one loves, the other hates. Grace wings the Affections to mount up to Heaven, but Luſt is an heavy weight on them, that drags them down to the Earth. In the *Bodily Members*, Luſt endeavours to keep them in its ſervice and ſlavery, to do its drudgery, but Grace obligeth them to be the Servants of Righteouſneſs, and employed in the glorifying of God. Sin in them, would have them rebel againſt the ſanctifyed Underſtanding and Will, whereas Grace is engaged to hold them inObedience, ſo that there is no part or power in the man that is at reſt, ſo long as thisWar continueth.

6. *THIS War hath its Abettors on both parts.* Both Grace & Luſt are aided and ſeconded in their withſtanding of each other. Their is the acceſs of Foreign force, which are Auxiliary to theſe two Enemies. And here,

(1.) *THE Fleſh, or Concupiſcence is aſſiſted by the Devil and the World.* The *Devil* is the great *Goliah*, Sin's *Champion*; his great deſign is to maintain a trade of Sin, in the Soul, and defend the life of it; and this makes the War ſo formidable, Eph. 6. 12. *For we wreſtle not with fleſh and blood, but againſt principalities, againſt powers, againſt the rulers of the darkneſs of this world, againſt ſpiritual wickedneſs in high places.* i. e. not alone. And in ſome ſenſe not chiefly, becauſe Satan is now General, and leads up Luſt againſt Grace, whoſe inveterate Malice carries him forth moſt ſeduloufly to ſeek our ruin, 1Pet. 5. 8. *Your adverſary the devil, is as a roaring lion walking about ſeeking whom he may devour.* Whoſe Stratagems are many, and very cunning, 2 Cor. 2. 11. *Leſt Satan ſhould get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.* Whoſe Inviſibility, Immortality, Vigilancy

Vigilancy and Unweariedneſs, Advantage him greatly: The *World* is an Inſtrument improved by Satan, to ſupply the Fleſh and irritate its luſts: The *men of the World*, who are tempters and encouragers of us to and in ſin, and not a little inſinuate; and *the things of the World*, which are Objects ſuited to pleaſe the carnal part in us, and allure us to ſin. Hence thoſe titles given them, 1 *Joh.* 2. 16. *For all that is in the world, the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life.*

(2.) *THE Spirit, or Grace, is aided by God himſelf, and the whole ſpiritual Armour given us by God.* It is by Grace that we reſiſt ſin, and as God is the Author of it, ſo by the exerciſe of it, he enableth us to reſiſt Sin and Satan. Hence *Hope* is compared to an *helmet*, *Righteouſneſs* to a *breaſt-plate*, *Faith* to a *ſhield*, &c. But the great thing is, in all this, God takes part with Grace in his. It is the Lord's battle which is here fought, they are the banners of Chriſt under which the Believer marcheth, and the word is, *for Chriſt:* He is Captain of the Saints Army, his Honour is concerned in the ſucceſs, and therefore He is ever near to help them, and hath ſaid, Heb. 13. 5. *I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee.*

7. *THIS War is managed with various ſucceſs.* There are many particular skirmiſhes between theſe, yet indeed, they are always contrary. Now in theſe, ſometimes Corruption gets the upper-hand, ſometimes Grace hath the better of it. A Believer is too often drawn into the commiſſion of ſin, gets many a ſore fall, and bruiſe, and wound: *Abraham*, *Lot*, *David*, *Jonah*, *Hezekiah*, *Peter*, and many other Wórthies, ſtand as inſtances of this. *Paul* complains, Rom. 7. 23. *But I ſee another law in my members, warring againſt the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of ſin, which is in my members.* This is by divine permiſſion, and God hath holy deſigns in it. At other times Grace hath the better, and indeed it always iſſueth here: but many times it maintains its poſt, and is not ſhaken. *Joſeph* holds his own, &c. *Gen.* 39. *begin.* Sin and Satan are driven back with diſgrace. And if it be born down, yet it is helped, and gets up again, and tho' it falleth, yet it riſeth again by Repentance. So did it in *David* and *Peter.*

8. *IT is ſo managed in the whole, that Grace in a Believer gains, and Concupiſcence loſeth.* In the tract of his courſe and warfare, Grace wins upon Corruption, and its Kingdom is more eſtabliſhed. It is with this, as in 2 Sam. 3. 1. *Now there was long war between the houſe of Saul, and the houſe of David: but the houſe David waxed ſtronger and ſtronger, and the houſe of Saul waxed weaker and weaker.* Grace is put into the Child of God for increaſe, and is under the promiſe and means of growth. *Pſal.* 92. 12, 13. And the growth of Grace is the decreaſe of Corruption; theſe being contrary qualities in us, the prevalency of the one, muſt needs be the decay of the other. Where two contraries are in the ſame ſubject, in remiſs degrees, the more degrees one gains, the other loſeth proportionably. Grace gains by its Victories; every time the Spirit prevails, the Fleſh muſt needs be weakned: yea, and it gets by its foils. Tho' it be wounded and for the preſent weakned, yet infinite Wiſdom ſo orders it, that when he is overtaken with ſin, he is rouſed by it, and Grace will not cry Quarter, but cries to God in Chriſt for help, and by Repentance and Faith he riſeth again, and rallying, he afreſh aſſaults his corrupt part, and is ſo renewed; and is thus more eſtabliſhed, and is made more vigilant and reſolute, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11.

9. *THIS War laſts, as long as the Believer liveth.* This life, and that which is to come, are the proper boundaries between the Church militant and triumphant. *Paul finiſheth* his *fight* and his *courſe* together, 2 *Tim.* 4. 7. There will be ſin in us as long as we dwell here, and if there be Grace too, they will reſiſt each other. Let the fleſh be never ſo much vanquiſhed, and mortifyed, yet whiles it can breath, it will be giving moleſtation, and the more oppreſſed it is, the more it is enraged, and grows more deſperate. As long as there are theſe two irreconcileable Enemies within, the poor Believer muſt be a field of War, and till that happy day comes, wherein *Corruption ſhall be ſwallowed up of Incorruption*, a Believer cannot expect a Ceſſation of Arms, or a Truce, but a conſtant Fighting.

Use. I. LEARN hence, *That a natural man, can contribute nothing to his own Converſion*: Becauſe he hath nothing but Corruption in him, and therefore all he can do, is to withſtand and hinder it.

Use. II. HENCE we ſee, *That he that doth Duty without reluctancy, doth it not ſpiritually nor acceptably.* A literal performance may go off eaſily, but that which is truly gracious, will not be without great wreſtlings. And hence the imperfection of our Obedience.

Use. III. HENCE *a Chriſtians real Work begins, when he is Converted.* Now he is entred the liſts; now muſt he *run* and *fight* for the *prize*, *Phil.* 3. 12, 13, 14.

Use. IV. HENCE *Perſeverence is neceſſary for every one that hopes to obtain a Crown of Glory.* *Rev.* 2. 10. Hence that rebuke, *Gal.* 5. 7. He that will have the *Crown*, muſt *keep the faith.* 2 *Tim.* 4. 6, 7.

Use. V. HENCE, *of all the men in the World, the true Chriſtian hath need of Reſolution and Hardineſs.* Of all the Battels that ever were fought, there is none ſo ſore, ſo furious, ſo durable, as that between Grace and Corruption. The Seat of the Battle is within the man, the Opponents are deadly & irreconcilable Enemies; the War is through the whole man, and carried on without intermiſſion. The War laſts all his Life, and he muſt never lay down his Arms, till Chriſt calls him out of the Field to triumph in Heaven: And the conſequence of the War is of infinite Concernment, 1 *Cor.* 9. 26. What need then of that advice, 2 *Tim.* 2. 3.

[May 9. 1699.]

SERMON *CXXXIII.*

QUESTION XXXVI.

WHAT are the Benefits which in this Life do accompany or flow from Juſtification, Adoption, and Sanctification?

ANSWER.

THE Benefits which in this Life do either accompany or flow from Juſtification, Adoption, and Sanctification, are, Aſſurance of GOD's Love, Peace of Conſcience, Joy in the Holy Ghoſt, Increaſe of Grace, and Perſeverance therein to the End.

WE have here an Account of the ſeveral precious Benefits, that thoſe who are *Effectually Called*, are made ſharers in, during their Pilgrimage in this World, which are aſſigned as concomitant with, or conſequent upon the former, and are accordingly preſented as ſo many ſeveral Heads of Contemplation. I ſhall therefore take them up in the Order wherein they are propoſed. Only to reduce them to the *form of Sound Words*, and give them their proper place in the method of Divinity, let me premiſe: We have formerly obſerved that the fruits of our Communion with Chriſt, which flows from our Union to him in Effectual Vocation, are diſtributed into ſuch as make either a relative or a real Change in the ſubject of them. To the former are aſſigned Juſtification & Adoption; to the latter Sanctification and Glorification: And that the former of theſe are performed in an *Act*, the latter in a *Work*; ſo that thoſe are perfected at once, whereas theſe are carried on by degrees, and accordingly are to be conſidered, in their inchoation, increment, and perfection. Now the beginning and increaſe of them is in this Life, and ſo to be conſidered, but the perfection is reſerved till Afterward, and is to be referred thither. Of the nature & increaſe of Sanctification, we have taken an Account under the former Anſwer; we are now to paſs over to the conſideration of Glorification, as it is begun in this Life; and that it is begun here, and Believers have the firſt fruits of it in this life, is abundantly aſſerted in the Word of God. For this reaſon it is not only ſaid that they *ſhall be*, but that *they are* already bleſſed, Pſal. 2. 12. *Bleſſed are all they that put their truſt in him.* *Pſal.* 32. 1, 2. Now we are led to the Contemplation of the inchoate Glory of the Children of God in the Anſwer before us; for, though the three former do more immediately belong to it, viz. Aſſurance, Peace, and Joy; whereas the fourth, *viz.* Increaſe of Grace, nextly refers to the Augmentation of Sanctification, and the laſt, *viz.* Perſeverance, may ſpecially be referred to Adoption, or that Sealing of the Spirit which is then received. Yet in as much, as Glorification is that which all the other Benefits have an aim at, we may refer them alſo to that. But, not to be curious here, I proceed to take them up as they lie before us.

I. THE firſt of theſe Benefits is, *Aſſurance of God's Love.* The Doctrine of Aſſurance is fully aſſerted in the Scriptures: both that there is ſuch a thing, what it is, and how to be obtained. And the People of God are urged and preſſed to endeavour after it. All our happineſs conſiſts in our enjoyment of God for our Portion. When therefore this is ſettled and ſecured, we are in a ſtate of Bleſſedneſs; and according to the apprehenſions we have of this, ſuch are our reſentments of our felicity. That we may rightly take up the Subject in hand, obſerve, that there is a *twofold Aſſurance of our well-being*; *one reſpecting God, the other our ſelves.* *Reſpecting God*, there is a ſecurity fixed in the *Covenant of Redemption*, in which are written the Names of all thoſe, that are appointed to be made Heirs of Glory, which Regiſter receives no blots, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. But this comes not under our preſent conſideration. *Reſpecting our ſelves* alſo, *Aſſurance is twofold. There is an Aſſurance of States*; when having the Goſpel Condition wrought in us, we are ſo entituled to the Promiſe, which can never fail, Rom. 11. 29. *For the gifts and calling of God are without Repentance.* And there is an *Aſſurance of Knowledge*, when this ſtate is diſcerned by us, and we can argue from it, to our ſafety, 2 Tim. 1. 12. *I know in whom I have believed, & am perſwaded*— That which is mainly intended in this Benefit, is our Aſſurance of knowledge, as it preſumes the Aſſurance of our ſtate, for that muſt be, before this can be. *That* is uſually called the *Aſſurance of the Object*, *this of the Subject.* And that we may take a more diſtinct account of it, let us obſerve this Deſcription of it, *Aſſurance is a part of Glory begun on Earth, whereby the Soul reflecting on it ſelf, and diſcerning its own ſtate of Grace, by the help of the Word and Spirit, is certified of God's Love to him, and conſequently, of his own Everlaſting Well-being.* In which obſerve,

1. THE general *Nature* of it, *it is a part of Glory begun on Earth*; and ſo it belongs to the Doctrine of *Glorification.* And this will appear if we conſider,

1. THAT in order of nature it *ſuppoſeth*, and ſo is *after* Vocation, Juſtification, Adoption, and Sanctification. As to Juſtification and Adoption, they belong to the Object of it, or thoſe things by diſcerning whereof it is obtained,

tained, and they muſt be, before they are diſcerned. And as to Vocation & Sanctification, they are the Evidences of the former, on which this *Aſſurance* is built, and ſo are Cauſes of it, and, at leaſt in order of nature before it; it therefore muſt be ſomething diſtinct from them.

2. THAT *Aſſurance is not the man's good eſtate it ſelf, but the Certainty of it:* and therefore that muſt go before this. A thing muſt be, before it can be known; for the firſt point of knowledge about any thing, is that it is. Now all the forementioned Benefits do belong to the goodneſs of the man's ſtate, this therefore muſt be ſomething different from them all. And what other Head then can it refer unto, but that of *Glorification?* Eſpecially if we conſider the proper fruits of it: Of which afterwards,

2. WE have the ſpecial *nature of this Aſſurance*, in the reſt of the Deſcription. And here in general obſerve, that it is deſcribed under the nature of *an Act*, as it is exerted by the man: and the reaſon of it is, becauſe it is properly ſeated in the *Conſcience*, which eminent Divines Judge to be *an act of the practical Underſtanding.* That it is ſeated in the Conſcience is evident, becauſe it is a Concluſion drawn from premiſes, whereof the minor propoſition is found in our ſelves, and the Concluſion is a judgment of our ſelves, which is the very nature of Conſcience. Beſides, ſupernatural habits are abiding and fixed, whereas one may have this Aſſurance, and want it again; for, tho' the ſtate abide, the apprehenſion of it may be ſuſpended, Iſa. 50 10. *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his ſervants, that walketh in darkneſs.* And it is proper to the nature of acts, to be off and on. Particularly,

1. WE have the *kind of the Act*; *it is a Reflection.* And hereby it appears to be a thing really diſtinct from juſtifying Faith, which is a direct act of the Soul, by which it goes out of it ſelf to Chriſt; whereas this is a going into one ſelf: ſo that they miſtake who put the *Aſſurance of knowledge* into the definition of juſtifying Faith. For indeed, they differ both in the *Object*; for the *Object of Faith* is Chriſt, as One Alſufficient to ſave, and inviting us by his Promiſe to cloſe in with him, for all the good offered us: whereas *the Object of Aſſurance*, is thoſe effects of his Grace in us, by which we apprehend that we have apprehended, or believe that we have believed, 2 Tim. 1. 12. *I know whom I have believed, and am perſwaded*— And in the *End*, the *end of Faith, is Life, Joh.* 5. 40. but the *end of Aſſurance is comfort or ſtability in the hope of Life.*

2. WE have the *Subject of this Act*; viz. a mans ſelf. It is a *ſelf reflection*, or a looking inward, a turning of the eye of the mind upon it ſelf. *Aſſurance* doth not go *out* to the Promiſe, but *in* to find the application of the Promiſe. It doth not ſearch whether there be ſuch Promiſes, but preſumes of that, and looks to find the impreſſion or Seal of them upon us. And hence it is the reſult of Self-Examination, 2 Cor. 13. 5. *Examine whether you be in the Faith.*

3. WE have the *Matter of this Aſſurance*, or the Argument from which it is drawn, viz. *His diſcerning of his ſtate of Grace.* There muſt be ſuch a ſtate, before there can be an Aſſurance of it; for God's purpoſe of giving it, is a ſecret till he hath put the new Nature into us, by which our ſtate is changed: And conſequently, our Evidence by which we diſcern it, muſt be fetched from our finding that in us, which is the condition of the new Covenant, to which the Promiſe is annexed. Now the Evidences by which this Aſſurance is obtained are two and no more, viz. *Faith* and *Repentance*, or *Effectual Vocation* and *Sanctification.* The things teſtifyed, are *our Juſtification* and *Adoption*, but the things teſtifying, are *our Vocation* and *Sanctification.* The thing known is, that we are in a ſtate of favour with God, but the Evidence of it is,

(1.) *FAITH, or Vocation:* viz. that we have truly received and apprehended Chriſt by Faith. If we can find in us the Work of the Spirit, in breaking us off from all our other objects of Confidence, and building us up upon Chriſt by a living Faith, we have then an infallible Argument of our good ſtate, becauſe the Promiſe hath ſecured Everlaſting Life to all ſuch as have ſo done, Joh. 3. 16. *Whoſoever believeth in him, ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life.*

(2.) *REPENTANCE, or Sanctification.* If we have received a new principle of Spiritual Life, from whence do flow the acts of new Obedience. If we are new moulded, and *all things are become new* in us, a new Heart, and a new Life, as 2 Cor. 5. 17. *Therefore if any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature; old things are paſt away, behold, all things are become new.* And by this alſo we have a Scripture Evidence, that we are Heirs of the Promiſe. By theſe we have an evidence of our Juſtification, *Rom.* 8. 1. And of our Adoption, *Gal.* 3. 26. The Conſcience draws its Aſſurance in a ſyllogiſtical way: it finds the firſt Propoſition in the Goſpel, viz. *He that believes and repents ſhall be ſaved.* It finds the ſecond in the man, *I have believed and repented.* And draws the Concluſion rationally, and ſurely, *I therefore ſhall be ſaved.*

4. WE have the *Efficient Adjuvant Cauſe of this Aſſurance:* It is obtain'd by the direction of the *Word*, and the efficacy of the *Spirit.* The man diſcovers his good eſtate, by the help of both theſe,

(1.) *BY the help of the Word*; as an adjuvant inſtrumental Cauſe, by which we come to diſcern our ſpiritual Life. And that wherein the Word mainly promoves this Aſſurance, is by affording a certain ground of ſelf-reflection, on the firſt propoſition in the ſyllogiſm, by which he is guided to a right judgment of his ſtate. It is the Word that diſcloſeth to us the infallible Conditions, upon which God

that cannot lie, hath engaged Life and Salvation to his People, in the Covenant of Grace, and ſo affords us a Rule to lay our ſelves by, ſuch as, *Mar.*16.16. 1 *Joh.*3. 10,14.

(3.) BY the *help of the Spirit*; who works as the ſupream Efficient of all Good to and in the Soul. And here,

[1.] HE is the *Inditer of thoſe Scriptures*, wherein theſe Promiſes and evident Notes are diſplay'd. 2 Tim. 3. 16. *All Scripture is given by inſpiriation of God.* And this is a ground of ſecurity on one hand; the man is certifyed, that the rule it ſelf is certain and infallible, ſo that all doubts and diſputes are removed on this ſide: he muſt either queſtion the veracity of God, or be at a loſs whether the Scriptures be his Word, who is at a loſs about the Truth of that, that whoſoever believes on Chriſt ſhall be ſaved, &c.

[2.] *HE opens the meaning of theſe Scriptures to their Underſtandings, and opens their Underſtandings to conceive it, and to diſcern the true and genuine ſenſe of theſe Rules.* We naturally have not this diſcerning, but he affords it to us, 1 Cor. 2. 11,12. *For what man knoweth the things of a man, ſave the ſpirit of man which is in him? even ſo the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have not received the ſpirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.* Thus Chriſt is ſaid to open their eyes, in Luk 24. 45. *Then opened he their underſtanding, that they might underſtand the Scriptures.*

[3.] *HE enableth the man to compare himſelf by theſe Rules, and ſo come to a true and undeceiving knowledge of his ſtate.* He enableth him to ſee his own face in this Glaſs, and to find the ſame Characters of a true Believer imprinted on his Soul, that are characterized in the Holy Scriptures, and that Original to be truly copied out in his heart. It is by his help that we are enabled to diſcern true Faith from that which is counterfeit; Evangelical Repentance from that which is legal. 2 *Cor.* 2. 12.

[4.] *HE gives in his own Teſtimony to the Soul, bearing witneſs to the Truth of all this.* We muſt diſtinguiſh between the aſſiſtance he gives us to help us to prove and diſcover the truth of our ſtate, by comparing our ſelves with the Word of God, and the witneſs which he, as he is the Spirit of Adoption, leaves to the confirmation of his Truth. So that, by vertue of this there come to be two Witneſſes in us. As Rom.8.16. *The Spirit it ſelf beareth witneſs with our ſpirit, that we are the children of God.* And this witneſs of the Spirit is not the ſame with that of our Spirits, tho' the thing witneſſed, be the ſame. The Spirit firſt helps us to ſee and read the effect of this Grace in us, ſo as to be able to aſſert to our ſincerity. *Pſal.* 26. 4, *&c.* And then he doth effectually perſwade us of the certainty of this; ſo as that we are fully ſatisfy'd in it, and can adventure our ſelves upon it. And there is this whereby it is ever to be differenced from a Spirit of Deluſion, which many are impoſed on by, and made preſumptuous withal; viz. it is never without, but always accompanies the witneſs of our own Spirit's, which is built upon clear Scripture-evidence. The Spirit comes in with the Word.

5. WE have the *Aſſurance it ſelf, or that wherein it terminates*, viz. *the man is certifyed of God's Love to him, and conſequently of his Everlaſting well-being.* For, finding it to be with him, according to the tenor of the New Covenant, he infers this Concluſion from it, and ſits down ſatisfied with it.

Here two Things,

1. *THIS Aſſurance is a Knowlege of Certainty.* The man is certified of theſe things. It is not a bare opinion or conjecture, or probable hope, but it amounts to a demonſtration. It is therefore called *full aſſurance*, *Heb.* 6. 11. 10.22. And that becauſe, the evidence from which it is fetched, is certain, and never fails. For, from proper Cauſes, to proper Effects, the Concluſion cannot deceive. That which agrees, *omni, ſoli, & ſemper*, is indubitable, and leaves no room for heſitation. Faith, Repentance, and Salvation, are juſt as broad and narrow one as the other. The rule by which this judgment is made, is an everlaſting unchangeable Truth; ſo that a Divine Faith receives this teſtimony without doubting. And though the Teſtimony of our own Hearts be humane, and ſo may be in itſelf fallible, yet, when both the Mind is irradiated with a ſpiritual Diſcerning, and the Spirit himſelf gives his witneſs to it, we cannot be miſtaken in it. This witneſs gives us *an Hope, that ſhall never make us aſhamed*, Rom. 5. 5. With what confidence therefore doth the Apoſtle utter himſelf in this regard, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. and elſewhere.

2. *THE things whereof we are aſſured are*;

(1.) *THAT God loveth us.* And this is the foundation of all the reſt. There is a common Love aſcribed to God, which he bears to his Creatures in general, called his Love of Benevolence, in ſhewing kindneſs and doing good to them, *Acts* 14. 17. But this will not afford the Aſſurance under conſideration. And though there be a ſpecial Love of Benevolence to his Elect, from which fountain all ſaving good derives to them, as, Jer. 31.3. *I have loved thee with an everlaſting love.* Yet it is knowable by us, only in the effects. But then there is a Love of complacency which God extends to his own in which he applies himſelf to them as their God, and makes known his purpoſes of good to them, and this is that which they are certified of. They have received the firſt fruits of this ſpecial Love to them, which are the earneſts of the full Harveſt; & becauſe they know that theſe could proceed from no other Cauſe but his peculiar favour for them, they hereby are aſſured that he loves them, 1 Joh.4.13. *Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, becauſe he hath given us of his Spirit.*

(2.) WE alſo by this are aſſured, *of our Everlaſting*

Everlaſting Well-Being. This light of God's Love let into the Soul, enableth us to diſcern all that may confirm us in the belief of our good eſtate. It leads us up to the ancient days of Eternity, and makes us to know our Election, and read *our Names written in the book of Life before the foundation of the World*, 1 Theſ. 1. 4, 5. And by this Aſſurance we know our ſtate of Juſtification, that our ſins are all pardoned, our perſons accepted, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed to us, and we put out of all danger of condemnation, *Rom.* 5. 1. & 8. 1. And by this we conclude upon our Adoption, and be ſatisfyed, that God is our Father, and that he hath put us among his Children, and will always carry it to us as ſuch. By this we are ſatisfyed of our perſeverance and continuing in the Love of God. Joh. 13. 1. *Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.* That being brought into the New-Covenant, we ſhall never fall out of it, nor ſhall adverſe powers be able to make any breach of love between him and us, *Rom.* 8. 38, 39. And by this we are enabled to reſt in confidence, that we ſhall be made everlaſtingly bleſſed in another Life, that we are Heirs of, and ſhall be prepared for, and at length made to poſſeſs Eternal Glory. Pſal. 17. 15. *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteouſneſs: I ſhall be ſatisfied, when I awake with thy likeneſs.* 2 Cor. 5. 1. *For we know, that if our earthly houſe of this tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

THUS we have a brief Account of this Aſſurance: That this is a Benefit flowing from Effectual Calling to the Children of God in *this Life*, is evident from the Scripture Inſtances which have been produced in the Explication of it. Only to prevent miſtakes let me ſubjoyn a few remarks neceſſary to be obſerved,

1. THAT *the Aſſurance of the Believers good Eſtate abides always the ſame.* This can never be loſt. Once in Chriſt, and ever ſo. Rom. 11. 29. *For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.* This will be cleared, when we come to treat of *Perſeverance.*

2. THAT *the Aſſurance of Knowlege, is not alike in all, nor at all times.* It is a Priviledge purchaſed by Chriſt for his Children, and belongs to them, but it is in his Hands to diſpenſe according to his Wiſdom: He acts a great deal of his Sovereignty in it; ſo that the moſt watchful Chriſtian may ſometimes be without it. *Iſai.* 50. 10. And the Children of God do many times hinder themſelves of it, either by darkning their own Evidences, by folly and ſin, whereby alſo they provoke the Spirit of God to hide his face, and withdraw his teſtimony from them, and that leaves them at a miſerable loſs. So it was with *David*, *Pſal.* 51. Or by neglect of their particular duty in Self-Examination, whereby they want the witneſs of their own Spirit's, and how ſhould they expect the Spirits, which is conjoyned with it?

3. THAT *the higheſt Aſſurance in this Life, is that which needs ſtrengthning.* A Believers Grace is imperfect, and his Corruptions are potent, and perfection of Aſſurance is not conſiſtent with imperfect Grace. Hence Believers are put upon it to be ever at the work of ſelf-trial, 2 Cor. 13. 5. *Examine your ſelves, whether ye be in the faith? prove your own ſelves, know ye not your own ſelves, how that Jeſus Chriſt is in you except ye be reprobates?*

4. THAT *there may be infallible Aſſurance, where there are ſome Doubtings.* We muſt diſtinguiſh between the infallibility, and the ſtrength of Aſſurance. A Believers Faith may act weakly, and yet ſurely. What could he ſay? Mar. 9. 24. *Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief.* A Child of God may know that his Grace is of the right ſtamp, although he withal finds it very infirm.

5. THAT *if we would have this Aſſurance, we muſt uſe Endeavours for it.* God doth not ordinarily give it immediately, but by means, and hath required us to be diligent in them, 2 Pet. 1. 10. *Give diligence to make your calling and election ſure.* And hath encouraged it, Hoſ. 6. 3. *We ſhall know if we follow on to know the Lord.*

6. THIS *Aſſurance is a glorious Benefit.* It is Heaven come down to the Soul here upon Earth. It is a thing therefore worthy our greateſt Endeavour in queſt of.

USE. *BE we then adviſed and encouraged, to lay Ourſelves out to the utmoſt for it.* This is that which will give us the comfort of our Faith, and all our other Graces. This is the Anchor-hold of a ſettled Hope. This gives us Joy with breathing. This gives us an Ovation, before we ride home in a Triumphal Chariot. This tells us our ſtate is ſafe at preſent, and ſhall be unconceivably Glorious at laſt. This will fill our Hearts with precious thoughts of God. This will make Jeſus Chriſt exceeding dear to us, who hath purchaſed all this Good for us. This will make the whole Word of God ſweeter to us than honey. This will put abundant Life and Exerciſe into our Faith: embolden our Prayers; make every Duty eaſy and pleaſant; fill us with Courage to endure all Affliction; put a new reliſh into every Mercy; render Ordinances delightful, and forethoughts of Death, Judgment and Eternity precious.

[JUNE 6. 1699.]

SERMON *CXXXIV.*

WE have conſidered of the firſt of theſe Benefits, viz. *Aſſurance of God's Love.* I proceed to the Second, which is, *Peace of Conſcience.* This is no ſmall *part of inchoate Glory.* As there is not a greater repreſentation of Hell in this world, then one under the extream Agonies of an accuſing & condemning Conſcience; ſo there is not any thing that

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more reſembleth Heaven, than one that enjoys the tranquility of a pacifyed Conſcience. And *this very Methodically follows after Aſſurance, in as much as it is built upon it.* For as all trouble of mind which diſquiets the Conſcience, ariſeth from the apprehenſion of God's Wrath, putting the man in expectation of his fiery indignation; and as long as this remains the man can have no peace: ſo Conſcience is alone really pacifyed, by the evidence which it hath of being reconciled to God, and our being entitled to his Love. When therefore we are aſſured that we have Peace with God, the proper reſult of it is, *Peace in Conſcience.* Nor is it poſſible that we ſhould enjoy this, till firſt we have obtained that.

THAT we may take a diſtinct Account of this Benefit, I ſhall offer this Deſcription of it, *Peace of Conſcience is a part of Glory begun, principally flowing from Juſtification, whereby the man apprehending the Pardon of his Sins, and his Reconciliation to God, and thereby compoſed, and quieted in this from fear of evil.*

IN order to the laying open of this Deſcription, let it be premiſed: That there is a double Conſideration of the Peace which belongs to the People of God, viz there is a *State of Peace*, and the *apprehenſion of that State.* The former of theſe may be, where the latter is in a great meaſure wanting; whereas the latter cannot be, till the firſt be made. If men cry, *Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace*, it is a deluſion & vain preſumption. But when God hath given his Peace to the man, and then proclaims it in him, and his Conſcience reſents it, that is Peace indeed. It is therefore the *latter* of theſe which now lieth before us to Contemplate, but ſtill as it depends upon, and flows from the former. Let us then take an account of the Severals contained in it.

1. HERE is the *General Nature of it*; it is *a part of Glory begun.* And herein it agrees with *Aſſurance*, under which this was conſidered. In a word then, whatſoever derives preſent Conſolation to the Souls of God's People, belongs properly to Glorification: inaſmuch as the man is ſo far happy as he doth injoy it. Now nothing doth at preſent contribute more to this, then the Peace under Conſideration. He is an happy man whoſe *Heart condemns him not*, 1 Joh. 3. 21. *Then have we confidence towards God.* He that knows this bleſſed ſound, may walk in the Light of God's Countenance, and rejoyce in his Name all the Day.

2. WE have the *Foundation of it*; *it flows principally from Juſtification.* There muſt be a *State of Peace*, before there can be a *Publication of it* in the Conſcience: in order of Nature at leaſt, it muſt firſt be made, before it can be proclaimed. Now our Peace of Conſcience muſt needs derive from our Peace with God. And this is the proper reſultancy from Juſtification, Rom. 5. 1. *Therefore being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* It is true, the knowlege of our Adoption, will give this Peace, and ſo it may be referred to that; but the main ground of it is in the knowlege of our Juſtification, from whence this Peace truly derives, and on which it depends. As therefore we referred the foregoing Aſſurance mainly to Adoption, ſo we may this Peace to Juſtification.

3. WE have the *Special Nature of it*, contained in the reſt of the Deſcription; the *Man's Apprehending the Pardon of his Sins, and his Reconciliation to God*, is thereby compoſed and quieted within from fear of evil. I ſhall endeavour to lay this open in the following Propoſitions.

1. THAT *Conſcience is properly a Man's reflecting upon himſelf, and accordingly judging of himſelf, as he is accountable to God as a Judge.* I am not here to treat of the nature of *Conſcience* at full; that belongs to another place. However, becauſe that it *is the ſubject of this Peace*, it is requiſite that we conſider *what it is*, how elſe ſhall we underſtand what this Peace is? *Conſcience hath the Office of a Judge in a Man, and on that account it is concerned in two things*, viz. the *Man's Actions and his State*, and it is the *latter* of theſe which we are now to conſider. Now there is a *twofold ſtate*, one whereof belongs to every Child of Adam, viz. a *ſtate of Enmity*, or a *ſtate of Peace*, either God and he are at variance, or they are atoned. Now this ſtate is to be known by the man, and he is to judge of it by the Rule which God hath given man to be judged by; for as he ſtands related to the Rule and the Sanctions of it, ſo is his ſtate either peaceable or peaceleſs. Hence we have each ſo expreſſed, Iſai. 57. *ult. There is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked.* Pſal. 119. 165. *Great Peace have they who love thy law.*

2. THAT hence *the Sentence which Conſcience as a Judge paſſeth upon the Man is one of theſe two*, viz. *either of Condemnation or Abſolution.* Rom. 2. 15. *Their conſcience alſo bearing witneſs, and their thoughts the mean while accuſing, or elſe excuſing one another.* And there is no middle between theſe two. And this is according to the Sanctions of the Rule to which this judgment is referred: Either upon enquiry, it finds him within the compaſs of the threatning of Death, ſentenced by the Covenant of Works, and not abſolved by the Covenant of Grace, and ſo it condemns him; or elſe it finds him gotten under the promiſe of Life, and owner of thoſe things that accompany Salvation, and ſo it abſolves him. So that this Sentence proceeds upon Trial made, and it is the very nature of Conſcience to proceed to the paſſing of this Sentence, according as it finds, or conceives it hath found the caſe.

3. THAT the *Reſult of this Sentence muſt needs be*, according as the matter is found, *either Trouble of Mind, or Peace of Conſcience.* Theſe two ſtand in oppoſition each to other, according as the Sentence proceeds to Condemnation or Abſolution, and will certainly come

come in thereupon. As will be evident if we conſider,

(1.) THAT the *Subject of this Judgment is the Man's ſelf.* He doth not now ſit upon the Trial of another perſon, about whom he might poſſibly not be very ſollicitous, or greatly concerned, whether he be found guilty, or acquitted. But when a man's own ſtate is concerned, it muſt needs affect him; becauſe he himſelf muſt either ſuffer the Evil, or enjoy the Good which is conſequent upon it. For,

(2.) *GOD hath planted in all men's Nature, a Principle deſirous of Good, and abhorring of Evil.* And this is rooted in them, ſo as it cannot be eradicated or extinguiſhed. Every man propoſeth a well-being to himſelf, and ſhuns evil or miſery; and his Nature muſt be deſtroyed before this Principle can ceaſe in him. All men are bound for Happineſs, what courſe ſoever they take to obtain it. Every man is enquiring after Good. Pſal. 4 6. *Many ſay, who will ſhew us any good?*

(3.) HENCE, *when he apprehends Evil coming to him, it cannot but trouble him, and proportionably, when he apprehends Good belonging to him, it cannot but comfort him; and when he is ſatisfyed that it ſhall certainly come, it muſt needs give him Quiet within.* Apprehended Evil gives a man moleſtation, it makes him afraid, Iſai. 33. 14. *The ſinners in Zion are afraid.* And apprehended Good compoſeth him, it makes him confident and joyful. Iſai. 12. 1. *O Lord, I will praiſe thee: though thou waſt angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comforteſt me.*

(4.) AND *this will hold proportion with the Good or Evil reſented.* If theſe be little and of no great Concernment, and he thinks them ſo, he is not much moved with them, but if they be great and momentous, and he ſo reſents them, he cannot but take them to Heart accordingly. Now the affair in which Conſcience is concerned, about the man's ſtate, is of infinite moment. It not only tells him how it now is, but how it is like to be with him forever. It gives him Light to diſcern his Everlaſting eſtate. If Conſcience condemns him, it tells him that unleſs he get out of this eſtate in time, he muſt ſuffer Eternal Vengeance, and that is a fearful thing. If it acquits him, it aſſures him, that he is ſafe for ever, and ſhall be happy Everlaſtingly. And what Peace muſt that neceſſarily afford unto him?

4. *THAT in order to true inward Peace of Conſcience, it is requiſite that we be at peace with all that can do us any real harm.* Conſcience would never fall out with the man himſelf, or give him any inward moleſtation, if it did not apprehend danger from abroad: For tho' it is ſin, that gives the riſe to this trouble, and if man had not ſinn'd, he he had never known what a diſquiet mind had meant, yet the fears and terrors of it are occaſioned by the foreſight he hath of the evil of miſery, which by it he is expoſed unto. Hence Sinners, whiles they can put away from them the fear of evil, live at quiet: Sin it ſelf doth not trouble them. But when once they are perſwaded of the danger they are expoſed unto, now they are diſturbed. That then they may enjoy quiet, this hazzard muſt be put out of the way, and they muſt have ſome good aſſurance of it. Now thoſe that can hurt him, are *either ſuch as can only do it inſtrumentally*, as they are uſed in the hand of another, to execute his righteous diſpleaſure upon us withal; *or he who hath the power in his own hands*, either to employ thoſe inſtruments to this purpoſe, or to with-hold them from it. As to the former of theſe, our Peace or Controverſy with them, is but conſequential, and turn as the Affair goes between him whoſe they are, and us, ſo that it is in vain for us to ſeek Peace with them, whiles we have him for our Enemy: They can afford us none. Our agreement with them is but a combination againſt him, and ſhall not ſtand, and he will ſtill uſe them as Inſtruments to do us hurt, and they will fulfill his pleaſure in it. Whereas, if our Peace be made with him, that will bring with it a Peace with them, ſo far as they ſhall never be able to do us hurt. *Job* 5. 25. Hence therefore, there is only God and the Law, or rather God in reſpect of his Law, whom we are thus concerned withal, and if once our Peace be ſettled here, we have a Peace that will be our full ſecurity againſt all that would offer to moleſt us, Job 34. 29. *When he giveth quietneſs, who then can cauſe trouble.* Here then lies the ſecurity of this Peace of Conſcience: When a man apprehends himſelf to be out of the reach of all danger of harm, he is not then afraid, but ſits down at reſt. When therefore he hath a good Aſſurance, that He who governs the whole World, and without whoſe leave, neither Men nor Devils, nor any other Creature can touch him, is his Friend, and hath received him into his Favour, how confident can this man be? Pſal. 27. 1, 2. —*Whom ſhall I fear?*—

5. THAT *the whole Progeny of fallen Adam, are by Nature without this Peace.* There was once a happy Combination between God and Man, when God plighted the firſt Covenant with Man, which if Man had ſtood to, and not apoſtatized from, he ſhould have had God for his Friend forever: But it is otherwiſe ſince the fall. Every man is *by nature a Child of wrath*, Eph. 2. 3. And this Condition continues as long as men abide under the Covenant of Works. So that all unregenerate men are God's Enemies, He hath a juſt controverſy with them, and is armed againſt them with Wrath and Revenge. There is a Curſe that is fallen upon them, and they lie under the ſentence of Death, which the Juſtice of God ſtands engaged to execute upon them, if they ſo abide.

6. *THAT which makes this Controverſy between God and Man, is Sin, the Guilt whereof is upon them.* God hates none of his Creatures

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as ſuch, but ſin hath made the diſtance. Iſai. 59. 2. *Your iniquities have ſeperated between you & your God.* And it is the quarrel of his holy Law which God here ſtands engaged in, that was by man's ſin violated, to the maintenance whereof he obliged himſelf in the firſt Covenant. God made Man to be an active Inſtrument of his declarative Glory, and having every way fitted and furniſhed him for ſuch a Service He gave him a Law to be the Rule of his Obedience, in perfect conformity whereto, he was to glorify him. And becauſe he would have this to be the Rule of Relative Juſtice between him and man, he annexed both a Promiſe and a Threatning to it, unto the performance whereof, according as man ſhould behave himſelf with reſpect to that Rule, he firmly obliged himſelf. So that his Truth and Holineſs, as well as his Juſtice, ſtood concerned in the Sanctions of this Law. When therefore man had by ſin brought himſelf under the Threatning, and ſo made himſelf a man of Death, the Curſe contained in the Threatning falls upon him, and God purſues it againſt him. And now there is no Peace between them. As long therefore as this Wall is kept up, and the Curſe of the Law ſtands out againſt the man, he is far from Peace. The *Law* muſt be *fulfilled in every jot and tittle* of it, Mat. 5. 18. Man's eſtate therefore, as long as he is under the Covenant of Works, remains a peaceleſs ſtate.

7. HENCE *till God is reconciled to the Man, he can have no ground of Peace of Conſcience.* As long as he ſaith to the Sinner, I am againſt thee, what Peace can he enjoy, or how can his Conſcience declare him ſafe? While God hath a Controverſy with the man, he lies open every moment to all the miſeries recorded in the Word of God. It is vain for him to fortify againſt God, whoſe Arm is able to cruſh the whole World into nothing, or to hide away from him, whoſe infinite Omnipreſence fills Heaven & Earth & Hell. Whence then ſhould his Conſcience fetch any Arguments to quiet him withal? If once he can truly ſay that God is atoned to him, he may then beat a Challenge to the whole Creation, as, Rom. 8. 31. *If God be for us, who can be againſt us?* But as long as God is angry, he is liable every moment to ruine. What ſaith *David*, Pſal. 76. 7. *Who may ſtand in thy ſight when once thou art angry?* Hence, this is the only grand Encouragement to a Sinner, to hope for Peace, that there is a Reconciliation to be obtained; that Jeſus Chriſt is the Mediator of it, and that by getting an intereſt in him by faith, our Sins may be pardoned, and our Perſons accepted, and a Covenant of Peace be plighted between him and us. The evidence of this is that alone on which Conſcience can build its Conſolation; and no farther then we can be ſatisfyed in the reality of it, can we have true Peace within.

8. *THIS Reconciliation and Peace is applied and ratified to us in our Juſtification.* We are are therefore told, Rom. 5. 1. *Therefore being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* And this is upon our Believing on Chriſt; who is therefore called *our Peace*, Eph. 2. 14. It is true, there was a Reconciliation purchaſed by Chriſt for us, in and by his Righteouſneſs. Hence that, 2Cor. 5. 14. *To wit, that God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them.* He ſatisfied the Juſtice of God for us, and received an acquittance in our name, and was juſtifyed for us. He became the *Prince of Peace*, and had the diſpenſation of it put into his Hands. But this notwithſtanding, till we are alſo reconciled actually to God, by accepting the terms of Peace propoſed to us in the Goſpel, which is by believing on him, we remain in a peaceleſs ſtate. There is therefore an Invitation built upon the former, in order to our coming by this, *ver.* 20. And till this be complied withal, we are told how it is with us, *Eph.* 2. 3, 12. There is a Sentence of Death upon us all, which holds us bound under Guilt, till it be taken off, and that is done by an act of Juſtification which paſſeth upon us. When God giveth a free Pardon to a Sinner, he thereby frees him from the Condemnation that was upon him, and receives him into Favour. And now his ſtate is rendred peaceable. And therefore a *Pardoned man*, is pronounced a *Bleſſed man*, Pſal. 32. 1, 2. And this Pardon belongs to Juſtification. When once this is paſt, the man's Sins are to God's Juſtice, as if they had never been. Then is that a truth concerning them, Numb. 23. 21. *He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he ſeen perverſeneſs in Iſrael.* Now the man paſſeth from Death to Life.

9. *THIS Peace comes into the Conſcience by way of Reflection.* Peace in Conſcience is no part of Juſtification, but it is a Benefit conſequent upon it. It is indeed built upon it; but a man may be in a ſtate of Peace, and yet want the witneſs of his own Conſcience to it. When God changeth the ſtate of the Sinner, and blots out the hand-writing that is againſt him, he is then in Peace: But this may be, and the man not ſatisfyed about it; his Conſcience is diſquiet and full of fears. A Sinners Peace may be proclaimed in Heaven, and the glorious Angels may be acquainted with it, before he himſelf is ſatisfyed in it. The way therefore in which the Conſcience is brought to be at quiet about it, is by reflecting inward; and it is after this manner: There are the Terms of Peace that are declared in the Goſpel, and the Promiſe of it ſecured to all thoſe who do cordially comply with thoſe Terms, that hath ſaid, Joh. 3. 16. *For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son: that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* Now, as God is the Author of that Grace, whereby we are made to accept of and cloſe in with theſe Terms; ſo, our having thus done is our Evidence for the Peace that is engaged to all that ſo do. Conſcience therefore reading of the tenor of the

the Gospel, and comparing the man self therewithal, findeth those things in him which accompany Salvation, and unto which God hath made a firm promise of Pardon, & Peace, and Glory, whereupon he concludes himself to be a justifyed Person, and this gives him that inward Peace.

10. *THE Ratification of this Peace in Conscience must be by the Witness of the Spirit of God.* We are told, Rom. 8. 16. *The Spirit it self beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.* And indeed, though our Evidence is built on the things that God hath done in and for us, yet our Settlement and Peace arising from it, must be confirmed by him, or else we shall be in doubts and fears. He must help us to read our Evidences, and must also seal to them, else we shall not be settled. He therefore must give us this Peace, as well as lay the foundation of it in us. Isai. 57. 19. *I create the fruit of the lips; peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord.* So that we see, this Peace depends upon, and flows from the former Assurance, and it is established on the same grounds with that, and holds an exact proportion with it. For when I know that my Sins are Pardoned, that God is atoned, that God hath appointed me to Salvation, and will certainly bring me to Eternal Life, I herein enjoy the very grounds and reasons of this Peace; and if I am in doubt or suspense about these, my Peace must needs be so far unsettled.

11. *THE fruit or effect of this Peace is, that the Soul is composed and quieted from fear of Evil.* It is true, there is a carnal Security, which ungodly men do enjoy & please themselves in, before God comes to awaken their Consciences, and give them disturbance: But that is of a vastly different nature from this under Consideration; it is from a stupid, senseless, benumed Conscience. It is but like the sleep of a man when his House is on Fire over him, who will ere long wake in a fright. But the Peace in a Godly man, is a Settlement he hath gotten after such a time as God hath made him to see his miserable estate, and put him into fear of it, and he could find no rest until he betook himself to Christ, and got under the shadow of his Wings. And now his Peace flows from the Light of God's Countenance, the Smiles of his Favour, the Sealing of his Spirit. From whence he is not afraid of any thing that should offer him mischief. Let the World rage, and Hell vent its malice never so much, yet in all this he is confident; and let him encounter never so many Troubles from abroad, all is calm within; and he is gotten under the Feathers of the Almighty, where he is forever safe. This is one of the Benefits which follow upon Effectual Calling in this Life. And if it be asked, whence then is it, that the Children of God are so often in Trouble and fear about their state of Favour, and enjoy so little Quiet in themselves? It may be answered; Not only that it is a Benefit belonging to this Life, which Christ dispenseth to his Children in manner and measure as his Wisdom sees meet; and he is not to be contended with about it; but there are few, if any true Believers that do not enjoy it, at least in some degree, so far as to have so much Comfort from it, as they would not part with it, for all that the World can afford. And usually, that they enjoy no more of it, is some way their own fault, and their being without it, is a righteous Chastisement of them: Either they too much neglect the great Work of Self-Examination, whereby they should be confirmed in the grounds of their Peace, and by not establishing their Assurance, they miss of this Comfort of it: Or else they have by some Follies of theirs, wounded their own Consciences, darkned their Evidences, provoked the Spirit of God to withdraw his Testimony. And now God puts them to Trouble; and whiles it is so, their Peace is very unsettled. But this will be to humble them, and in that way to fit them for a better use of it; and he will restore to them the Joy of his Salvation.

Use. IS there such a Benefit as this? *Let those that want it seek after it, and those that Enjoy it highly prize it, and seek more and more to establish in it.* Remember, Sin hath deprived *all* of it, the World cannot give it. Jesus Christ is the only dispenser of it, you must get into him by Faith, if ever you be entitled to it. Rest not then in an Unconverted state, nor take up with a false Peace, as multitudes do, which they will rue at last. And doth God vouchsafe us to enjoy any comfortable measures of this Peace, let us rejoyce in it at all times, let it carry us cheerfully through the most difficult Duties, and enlighten us with Consolation under the darkest Providences. Let the Peace of God be a continual Feast to us, and enable us to triumph over all that would seek our harm. And let us be tender of it: Beware of doing any thing that may disturb our own Consciences, and make them to give us molestation, or that may provoke an Holy God to withdraw from us that Light by which alone this Peace can be maintained. Let us be tender of our own Consciences, and that is the way to have God continue Peace in them, by which we may enjoy an Heaven upon Earth.

[JULY 4. 1699.]

SERMON *CXXXV.*

THE Third of the Benefits here mentioned now follows to be considered, viz. *Joy in the Holy Ghost.* And this very methodically follows after the two former, it being a proper fruit or effect of them. For how can that Soul chuse but rejoyce, which is filled with an apprehension of the Love of God, and en-

joys true inward Peace? This alſo belongs to the ſame Head with the other, viz. *Glorification in the Beginning of it.* This is called *Joy in the Holy Ghoſt*, Rom. 14. 17. both becauſe *the Spirit of God is the Author of it in us, and becauſe the Joy it ſelf is Spiritual both in the Cauſes and Effects of it in us.* It hath Spiritual Objects from which it fetcheth its Conſolation, and they are Spiritual Actions by which it doth expreſs it: And in both theſe reſpects it is oppoſed to that carnal joy, that men derive from Worldly things, and diſcover in the frolicks of a mad mirth. We may here in the firſt place take a brief account of *the Nature of Joy in General*, which may help us in the more diſtinct Conſideration of this Spiritual Joy which belongs to the Called of God. *Joy is properly one of the Affections, which are put into ſenſitive and reaſonable Creatures.* I ſhall not here Diſcourſe of the Affections as they are common to Men and Beaſts, but look upon them as they are in Man, conſidered as a rational Being. And ſo they are to be looked on as the poſtures or motions of the Will with reſpect to its Object: or at leaſt as ſubordinate powers in the Soul accommodated to the motions of the Will in its Elections or Refuſals. They are frequently in Scripture expreſt by the Feet, *Eccl.* 5. 1. *Iſai.* 53. 13. and elſewhere: Becauſe the Will moves upon them to or from an Object, and carries the man upon them. Affections therefore are accounted the ſpring of Actions. Now it is the good or evil that is apprehended to be in the Object, which do properly come under man's conſideration and deliberation, in order to the Wills exerting of it ſelf, which hath a natural propenſity to chuſe that which is repreſented to it as Good, and refuſe that which it is perſwaded to account Evil. As therefore Good and Evil are contraries, ſo they produce contrary effects in the Will, by the help of the Underſtanding. When therefore the Underſtanding hath made enquiry into the nature of an Object, and conſidered what it is in it ſelf, and what reſpect it hath to the man, it thereupon paſſeth a Judgment, according to the reſentment it hath of it, and brings in a Verdict in which it declares it to be either Good or Evil. Accordingly there is a natural aptitude in the Will, to embrace it or renounce it; to chuſe or refuſe it. The Goodneſs that is commended, is that which moves the Will to make a choice of it; whereas if it be reported to be Evil, that engageth the Will to reject it. Hence ſuch an expreſſion, Iſai. 7. 16.—*To refuſe the evil, and chuſe the good*— Theſe are the Elicit acts of it, which are followed by the Imperate, unto the exerting whereof the Affections ſerve. Theſe carry the man *to* the Object that is choſen, and *from* that which is refuſed. Hence the Affections are of two ſorts, viz. *the Cloſing, and the Seperating.* Such as bring us to the Object, or ſuch as carry us away from it: *Of theſe Affections, ſome are Primitive, others are Derivative: The Primitive cloſing Affection is Love, the Primitive ſeperating Affection is Hatred.* And theſe ſimply conſidered have a reſpect to the Object, meerly conſidered, as either Good or Evil. *The Derivative are ſuch as have a reſpective conſideration of the Good or Evil in the Object*, beſides meerly that they are ſo, or have a regard to the diverſe poſture they are in, with regard to it: And *theſe Derivative Affections are either ſimple or compound*, either derive from one only, or are mixt. Now *thoſe that do ſimply derive from Love are* three, viz. *Deſire, Hope and Joy:* all of theſe are but the ſeveral effects of Love, and all the difference between them ariſeth from the diverſe ſite of the Object, or reſpect which it bears unto the Will. If the Object be repreſented as Good, and the Will hath made choice of it, it is to be conſidered either as abſent, and not yet enjoyed, or as in hand and poſſeſſed. Now the Abſence of it doth alone cauſe this Love to exert it ſelf, in an eager longing to be poſſeſſed of it, which ſtimulate the man to purſue it with endeavours, and this is Deſire. And when together with the abſence of the Object, there is an apprehended probability or poſſibility of obtaining it, this prompts and encourageth to a cheerful uſe of the means, and is Hope. But when it hath gotten poſſeſſion of it, it is in hand, and actually enjoyed, the Will acts upon it with delight, and this is properly Joy, which ariſeth from Enjoyment.

THUS far have we traced the natural Affection of Joy: Now, *it is the ſame natural Affection, conſidered as Sanctifyed by the Spirit of God, in which this Benefit is rooted, and is to be conſidered as the Subject of it.*

AND that we may take a particular Account of it, I ſhall eſſay to lay it forth in the following Deſcription; *Joy in the Holy Ghoſt, is one piece of Inchoated Glory, whereby the Souls of the Children of God take a preſent Satisfaction in the Apprehenſions and Taſtes they have of God's Love and their own Happineſs.*

THERE are ſeveral things comprized in this Deſcription, that are to be diſtinctly obſerved for our better Conception of it.

1. WE have the *General Nature of it*; *It is a piece of Inchoated Glory.* And herein it agrees with the two former. For howſoever that it is rooted in and flows from Adoption, being the operation of the Spirit of Adoption in the Soul of a Believer, yet is not it ſelf any part of Adoption, but a fruit of it, and reſultancy from it. It is the very Comfort which the Soul injoys in God, and in the Promiſes, and therefore can in it ſelf be nothing leſs then Glory. The Man is actually happy in the activity of it. For what elſe is Happineſs, but the fruition of, and living upon an happifying Object, and ſuch is ſuppoſed to be in this Joy, as will preſently appear. It is an Heaven upon Earth, an Abridgment of the felicity of thoſe that are now in the Place of Bleſſedneſs. But it is only a begun Glory, it is but gradual, there are higher degrees, and more perfect Fruitions

that

that remain for the People of God in another Life: But these are the beginnings, foretastes, earnests thereof; and therefore the present *Rejoycing* of the Children of God, is said to *be full of Glory*, 1 Pet. 1. 8.

2. THE proper *Subject of this Joy is the Children of God.* We observed that it is a Benefit flowing from Adoption, and so there are none that can lay claim to it but God's Adopted. It is *Joy in the Holy Ghost*, and then none can have it, but those in whom he dwells, for it is a resultancy from his indwelling presence. It is a *Joy that no stranger intermeddles with*, Prov. 14. 10. There is indeed a Joy which unregenerate men have, and make a great shew withall, they laugh & are merry, and sing Care away. We are told of them, Job 21. 12, 13. *They take the timbrel & harp, and rejoyce at the sound of the organ. They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.* But it is carnal joy, and tho' it derives from their present enjoyment of those things which they call Good, and are so in their kind, yet all things considered, it is a causeless groundless Joy: For the state they are in, notwithstanding all the common favours of God that they partake in, is a sorrowful state, and would be so to them, if they knew it, and enough to marr all their mirth; for now they are God's Enemies, and have no Peace. Isai. 57. 21. *There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.* Nay, the very Elect of God, before they are Converted, and actually Adoption, have not this Joy; for, tho' they are appointed to it, yet they know nothing of this designation, nor can till they are effectually Called; and in the mean while they are *Children of Wrath even as others*, Eph. 2. 3. And this very inchoate Happiness is theirs only in reversion; and that remains a secret.

3. *THE Seat of it in this Subject; and that is, the Soul of a Child of God.* And this points us to the depth or deep rooting of this Joy. In a large and physical sense the Souls of ungodly men may be said to rejoyce in their Objects, in as much as *Joy is an Affection rooted in the Soul, and exerted by the command of the Will, which is the principal Faculty in the Soul.* But in a more restrained, and Divinity sense, the Joys of ungodly men are sensual, they touch the fancy, they are raised by the report of the senses, and affect the man, meerly as he is degenerated, and become bruitish in his imaginations: And he dares not seriously employ his rational Powers in examining the grounds of it, least he should loose it. It is but a skin-deep Joy, and there is Sorrow lies wrangling at the heart mean while. Prov. 14. 13. *Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness.* Yea, the very things themselves that give activity to his Joy are sensual, all the benefit he hath by them is for his outward man, and his Soul is not really bettered by them. He was a Fool that sung that Requiem to his Soul, Luk. 12. 13, *Soul, take thine ease.* But now, the Joy before us, is that which is suited for the Soul, and throughly affects it, Luk. 1. 46, 47. *And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord. And my spirit hath rejoyced in God my Saviour.* Psal. 33. 21. It hath Comfort from that, not only because of the other, and a redundancy flowing from them, but it affords matter of Joy, when the outward man is encompassed and oppressed with matter of trouble and molestation. Hab. 3. 17, 18. *Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines: the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herds in the stalls: Yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.* It is a Joy, which the more a man employs his Soul in searching into, the more reason he sees for it, and is the more fortifyed and established in it.

4. THE *Subject Matter of this Joy*; and that is, *the Love of God, and their own Happiness*; and these two things have a proper relation each to the other, as Cause and Effect; and on these is this Joy built. They are the Object, or at least that in the Object from which this Joy derives, and so are the reason of it. Joy always respects the Good it apprehends in the Object: Spiritual Joy hath Spiritual and Divine Good; for that which is Carnal, and that which is Spiritual, are mainly denominated from their Objects. There is a double Goodness considerable in a thing, its Goodness in it self, and its Goodness for us; which latter, Joy hath a respect unto; because it can no farther advance our Happiness, then as it communicates its Goodness to us, and we are bettered by it: and so only can it attract our Love to it, and acquiescence in it. Now a thing may do us Good, either with respect to our outward, or our inward man, either meerly for the present time, or for Eternity. And here lies the difference of the carnal, and spiritual man's Joy; the former is only concerned for his Body, at the present time, and values his happiness according to it: Hence he rejoyceth in Corn, and Wine, and Oyl, and may he have enough of that, he is content: But the Spiritual man is concerned for his Soul and Eternity, that he may be happy now and for ever. And hence his *Rejoycing is in the Light of God's Countenance*, Psal. 4. 6, 7. The Believer knows that he was once miserable, and so cannot take true content in any thing, so long as he apprehends that misery to abide. He is restless after Felicity, and the enjoyment of it is his rejoycing. Luk. 10. 20. *Rejoyce, because your names are written in heaven.* And he knows that his happiness is rooted in the Love of God. If God be his Enemy, nothing can make him better then miserable: If God be his Friend and Father, he is happy in despite of all that would abridge him of it, his *Favour is better than Life it self.* Hence, the Spiritual Joy hath this Love as that from which it derives all its Consolation & Refreshment; and whatsoever contributes to it, is either as

a fruit or evidence of it. If a carnal man have theſe things, it is enough, he asks not whence they come: But the true Joy of a Child of God fixeth not on theſe things, but rejoyceth in them, only as they derive from God to him through Chriſt in the New-Covenant, and are Witneſſes of his Fatherly care for the preſent, and made ſerviceable to further his Eternal well-being. And hence, one beam of Love darted into the Soul, hath more raviſhing in it, then if he had the whole World in poſſeſſion.

5. *THAT which draws forth this Spiritual Joy into Act, is the Apprehenſion and Taſte the Soul hath of theſe things.* There is a double conſideration to be had of this Joy, with reſpect to the Believer, viz. either as he hath the root and ground of it in him, and ſo every Child of God hath it at all times, and cannot be robbed of it, for he is in a ſtate of Aſſurance of God's Love, he is reconciled and a favourite, and ſhall never be removed from it, whatſoever Anger he may meet with from God as a Father: And he is in a ſtate of Peace, though he meet with never ſo much of preſent Trouble: Or as he hath the activity of it in him, in which his happineſs by reaſon of it, is made to appear: And this is it which is under preſent conſideration: And as we obſerved, that *Joy is a Reſultancy from preſent Enjoyment*, ſo the activity of it requires a knowledge that we do enjoy the thing; for how can a man take delight in being owner of a thing, that he knows not himſelf ſo to be? Now this preſent Joy differs herein from that which is to come, in that it hath the Good in reverſion, and not full poſſeſſion, which it muſt wait for, and of which it here but ſips and foretaſtes: According to Pſal. 34. 8. *Taſte, and ſee that the Lord is good.* It is therefore called the *Joy of Hope*, Rom. 12. 12. which is very imperfect compared with that of Sight which is hereafter. And the ground of this Joy is becauſe the Life of the Children of God here is a Life of Faith, and that which is to nouriſh this Faith is laid up in the Promiſes, which it is to ſuck out of them, and thence receive its Comfort; which are therefore called *Breaſts of Conſolation*, Iſai. 66. 11. Now this *Faith gives a preſent Subſiſtence to theſe things*, Heb. 11. 1. And ſo by exerciſing Hope it draws preſent Joy from them: Becauſe, tho' this Good is future as it is hoped for, yet it is preſent in the Promiſe. And becauſe he hath thoſe firſt fruits of it, which are in themſelves delicious, and more ſo, in as much as they are the earneſts of the greater Glory which is behind, and ſecure it to them, they cannot but rejoyce in it. *The Love of God is ſhed abroad in their hearts*, Rom. 5. 5. *They have the Fatneſs of God's Houſe*, Pſal. 36. 8. *God is at preſent their Portion*, Lam. 3. 24. Their Sins are now Pardoned, and *God's anger is turned away from them*, Iſai. 12. *begin.* They are now the *Children of God*, 1 Joh. 3. 2. And can *cry Abba Father*, Rom. 8. 15. The *Kingdom is now ſecured to them*, Luk. 12. 31. Now theſe things have matter for abundant Joy: ſo far therefore as they apprehend them, and have not only the witneſs of their own Hearts, but the teſtimony of the Spirit to confirm it in them, they muſt needs rejoyce.

6. WE have *the Act of this Joy, or that wherein it exerts it ſelf*, viz. *they take preſent Satisfaction in this.* For Joy is nothing elſe, but the abundant ſatisfaction which we expreſs in the enjoyment of an Object. Thus the Pſalmiſt ſets forth his Joy in the Communion he hath with God, Pſal. 36. 8. *They ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied with the fatneſs of thy houſe: and thou ſhalt make them drink of the river of thy pleaſures.* And Pſal. 63. 5. *My ſoul ſhall be ſatisfied as with marrow and fatneſs; and my mouth ſhall praiſe thee with joyful lips.* Only we muſt obſerve the difference between the ſatisfaction which the Children of God have in this Life, and that which they ſhall have when they come to another: Their Joy is now but begun, whereas it ſhall then be perfected. And this may be conſidered in three Things,

(1.) *THEY are now ſatisfied in the fulneſs and ſufficiency of their Portion.* They ſee enough in it, they are ſet down, and look no further for an Object that may make them happy, whereas Worldly men are ſtill ſeekers, *Pſal.* 4. 6. But *they have found their reſting place*; they have all. As *Jacob* ſaid, *Gen.* 33. 11. And can ſay with the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 73. 25. —*It is good for me to draw near to God.* They are not indeed ſatisfyed in their meaſures of Enjoyments, but are *ſtill reaching forward*, Pſal. 3. 14. In this they are ſhort of the Content which the Glorified enjoy: but yet they are ſatisfyed in their Object, and reſolve that it is enough, and will go no whither elſe, becauſe they have Eternal Life in God.

(2.) *THEY are alſo ſatisfied in their Title and Intereſt.* They not only conclude, that there is enough in God to fill their moſt enlarged deſires and cravings of the Soul, but they can ſay, as Pſal. 48. *ult. For God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death.* They have a property in this God, and are able to lay claim unto all the Good which he hath made over to them in the Promiſes. They know both that the Promiſes are their Inheritance, and that they are ſure & cannot fail; and that therefore all the Happineſs that is ſettled upon the Children of God in them, is theirs, and they ſhall as certainly poſſeſs them, as if they were now in the full fruition of them. Hence, 2 Cor. 5. 1. *For we know, that if our earthly houſe of this tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

3. *HEREUPON they apply their Souls to this, and recreate & delight themſelves in it.* They count themſelves happy, they bleſs themſelves in their Portion: they make themſelves glad in it, and boaſt themſelves in it all the day long. They call upon themſelves as he, Pſal. 116. 7. *Return unto thy reſt, O my ſoul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.* This

eaſeth

eateth all the fatigues of their Pilgrimage in the evil World, and makes them after Christ to endure the Cross and despise the Shame; they can joy in the Lord when they have nothing else to rejoyce in, yea, in the midst of all the Tribulations which do encounter them in their Journey, Rom. 5. 3. *We glory in Tribulations.* Only their Joy here is assaulted with Trials, but that which is in another World, is gotten above, and triumphs over all; and this is running down into that as fast as it can. This is one of the Benefits or Priviledges belonging to God's Called in this Life, Psal. 97. 11, 12. *Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. Rejoyce in the Lord, ye righteous: and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness.* But if it be here demanded, *Whence then is it that Believers have no more of this Joy?* How is it that we see them so often mourning, doubting, sinking, and at a loss in themselves? To this, let me reply in general, *That the Sovereign God may dispense himself in what Measures he pleaseth to his People.* And his Infinite Wisdom proportions those Benefits which belong to the way, suitably to their need, and so as shall best serve to bring them to the Glory they are appointed to in the end of it. There are therefore the Reasons why they are sometimes at a loss in the exercise, or apprehension of this Joy: In sum, *This Joy is a strong Cordial, and they cannot bear too much of it.* There are other Graces to be carried on in them in conjunction with this. There is Sorrow for Sin, and this Joy is not to extinguish it, but to keep it from being deadly. They sometimes by their Sins and Follies provoke God to hide the Light of his Countenance from them, and when he so withdraws, their sight fails them, and tho' they are still the Subjects of his Love, and Owners of Happiness, yet they do not now so apprehend it, as to be able to rejoyce in it. Sometimes they grow wanton and carnal, and let out their Hearts too much upon empty delights; or are proud of their Comforts, and he taketh them down, and puts them to trouble, and they are discouraged. As he, Psal. 30. 7. *Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.* Sometimes, for their Trial he brings Affliction upon them, and their short Spirits sink under them, they make too much of them, and call his Love, and their Interest in question. And there are many such things as these, which dark the discovery of their Joy. But still they have a right to it, which they never lose, and if it be actually suspended at any time, yet that is but in order to its breaking out again more strongly. As Psal. 112. 4. *Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness.* But besides, the Joy of a Child of God is of another nature, and expresseth it self after another manner than the Worldlings Joy. It lies deep, it makes no great noise, it goes hand in hand with godly Sorrow and daily Repentance, it is sober and regular. No wonder then, if ungodly men, who know nothing of it, nor count any to be glad, but those that are mad, take no notice of it, and think them to be sad and melancholly. Whereas, could they but know what inward Satisfactions they mean while enjoy, they would envy and not despise them.

USE. I. *LET this then take off the common Prejudice of men at the Christian Religion.* All Men would lead a merry Life. Hence when they are invited to forsake their Sins, and give themselves up to the Service of Christ, they stand off, because they are made to think, they must abandon Mirth, and devote themselves to a severe and sorrowful Life. And this hath a peculiar influence on Young Ones. They see Sinners merry and jocund, but the Godly not so, as they think, and they are frighted. But be not so put off. You here see, Joy is the Godly man's Portion. It is one of the Benefits which Christ hath purchased for his. If then Worldly men do rejoyce, they are *stolen Waters*, their Mirth is without Reason. Know it then, here is Joy that you are invited to. And suppose wicked men do rejoyce, yet consider the difference, and then see what you have to do. This Joy hath a more excellent Object, as much as God is preferable to the Creature. *Psal.* 4. 6, 7. It hath a greater depth and rooting: That is but sensual, whereas this is Spiritual; that is but the hypocrisy of Mirth at best, but this is real and substantial Joy: It is Cordial, *Luk.* 1. 46. It hath a deeper fixedness and stability: That only comes and goes, and exerts it self in transient acts, and hath no certainty; but this is a settled Habit in the Soul, it is a Grace of the Spirit that is created in us. It is therefore called the *Fruit of the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 22. It is of a more lasting duration: That, tho' it makes a great noise and blaze, yet it presently goes out, having spent its substance, Eccl. 7. 6. *For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool.* And concludes *in mourning*, Prov. 14. 13. But this will endure and never end, but being here begun, shall be perfected in the Kingdom, and abide to Eternity. Isai. 35. 10. *They shall obtain joy & gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.* Be not then deceived or abused, but make Experiment, and it will not repent you.

USE. II. *LET this call upon the Children of God to be much in the Exercise of this Joy.* Remember, it is your Portion, and you should live on the Revenues of it. If any in the World have reason to rejoyce, you are they. It is a shame, to see an Heir of Damnation jocund, and a Child of God disconsolate. You hinder your selves of that Comfort which else you might enjoy in an evil World, if you do not thus rejoyce. And you do not a little dishonour God, and prejudice others against the Lord Jesus Christ, by frightning them from such a Religion as you seem to count it. Joy will be your Everlasting Employment hereafter, begin it then now, and so anticipate the Felicities of the Eternal Kingdom.

[AUGUST 1. 1699.]

SER-

SERMON *CXXXVI.*

WE are now to paſs over to the *fourth* Beneſit conſequent upon Effectual Calling, and flowing from Juſtification, &c. viz. *Increaſe of Grace.* The Three former are rooted in Juſtification and Adoption, whereas this properly refers to Sanctification. Juſtification and Adoption are Acts, and perfected at once, and ſo cannot receive Augmentation; whereas Sanctification and Glorification are Works, and are carried on by Degrees. And that the Thing under Conſideration relates to Sanctification nextly, will be evident by the Sequel. Whether, or how far it may be referred to Glorification, I ſhall not here Diſcourſe. Though doubtleſs as there is a foundation of Glory laid in Grace, ſo there are advances of it in the Believer, by the growth and thriving of Grace in him. Beſides, that if man's formal happineſs conſiſts in Eupraxy or Well-Working, then certainly, as the habits of this are ſtrengthned, Man's Bleſſedneſs is furthered. But I ſhall only endeavour to lay open the Benefit it ſelf. Here then, Two Things are to be obſerved, 1. *The Subject of this Benefit, Grace.* 2. *The Beneſit accruing to a Child of God in regard of it, viz. Increaſe.* Here then for the making of this clear, we may Enquire, 1. *What is the Grace here intended?* 2. *In what reſpect this Grace may be ſaid to be increaſed?* 3. *Wherein it appears, that increaſe of Grace, is a Benefit that all Believers partake in?*

1. *WHAT is the Grace here intended?*

A. THE Word *Grace*, as it is uſed in the Scriptures, is variouſly to be underſtood: But there are more principally two ſignifications of it to be obſerved in the Goſpel, viz.

1. *IT is often uſed to expreſs the free Favour of God, which is the Principle from whence all Good, eſpecially that which is Spiritual, doth derive to poor man.* Thus, Eph. 2. 8. *For by grace are ye ſaved, through faith, and that not of your ſelves: it is the gift of God.* This is often called the Love of God; and it is in nothing elſe but that good will of his which of his own pleaſure, without any Obligation laid on him by us, he expreſſeth to us, by beſtowing upon us all thoſe favours which we partake in: Which, as it hath its riſe from God, ſo cannot be any way purchaſed by our endeavours. But this is not the Grace we are looking upon.

2. *IT is therefore uſed for thoſe Benefits which are freely beſtowed on us by God, and are the fruit of the former; and are therefore called Grace, becauſe we are unworthy of any favour, but owe all that we have and are to God's free benignity.* And here,

1. *THIS Grace is ſometimes taken more largely, for all the Goodneſs of God that is beſtowed on ſinful man, in which both the Godly and the Wicked do participate.* Thus Miniſterial Gifts are called *Grace*, Eph. 4. 7. Thus *Lot* confeſſed his deliverance from the deſtruction of *Sodom* to be a fruit of *Grace*, *Gen.* 19. 19.

2. *IT is ſometimes taken more ſtrictly, for all the fruits of the Work of Application; or whatſoever the Spirit of God confers on the Elect in order to their Bleſſedneſs.* And theſe are either Relations, in which ſaving Benefits are conferred upon us, by putting a relative Change upon us; to which we refer Juſtification and Adoption, with all the Priviledges that are appropriated to them. *Rom.* 5. 17, 21. *Eph.* 1. 5, 6. Or elſe ſaving Principles of Sanctification, or the habits of theſe Principles, by which we are enabled to ſerve God, and live to his Glory; which are called *Grace*, *Joh.* 1. 16. Or the Aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit helping of theſe Principles in their acts and exerciſe. See, 2 *Cor.* 15. 10. Or finally, for the Eternal Bleſſedneſs, to which God brings his People at laſt, 1 *Pet.* 1. 13. As to Juſtification and Adoption, they cannot be increaſed or augmented, to be ſure not by our endeavours, as the Grace under conſideration may, with God's bleſſing. For it is a duty enjoyned us, 2 Pet. 3. 18. *Grow in Grace.* As to increaſe of Glory, it is but a conſequent upon this. The Grace then pointed at under our Conſideration, intendeth thoſe ſaving Principles which the Spirit of God, in Converſion, infuſeth into our Souls, by which he fits and furniſheth us for New Obedience; and ſo refers properly to Sanctification. Now there is a body of theſe Graces put into us in Regeneration, and ſo there are divers of theſe Graces, which make ſo many members in that Body, and are called Faith, Hope, Love, Patience, &c. And they are called Grace in the ſingular, becauſe they are one entire habit, and are inſeperable in the Soul: So that he who hath one, hath all. And yet they are called Graces in the plural, becauſe of the divers definition and operation of them. And we ſhall find them reduced to Three Heads: Intellectual, in *Knowledge*, *Col.* 3. 10. And Moral, in *Righteouſneſs* and *Holineſs*, *Eph.* 4. 24. The former whereof furniſheth us for Second Table Duties, and the latter, for ſuch as refer to the Firſt Table: And this is the Grace of which it is a Benefit that belongs to it, that it ſhall increaſe.

2. *IN what reſpect this Grace may be ſaid to be increaſed?*

A. THERE are *two ways* in which things may be ſaid to increaſe, viz.

1. *BY a numerical addition of Individuals.* Thus may all aggregate Bodies be increaſed. Thus a People are ſaid to increaſe when there numbers are more than formerly. But we are not to ſuppoſe that Grace in Believers ſo increaſeth. There is no habit of any Grace wanting in the New Creature; nor is any ſuch thing intended, in, 2 *Pet.* 1. 5. but only an addition to each Grace, and helping one with another. Every Believer in receiving of Chriſt, receives with him, a Grace anſwerable to every Grace of Sanctification that he hath. *Joh.* 1. 16.

2. *BY*

2. *By a continued Augmentation of thoſe Individuals that are.* Thus a Child increaſeth by addition gained to his Stature, and every dimenſion of his Body. And this is the increaſe here intended, *viz.* When the Grace in a Child of God gets more Life, Vigour, Strength: When a Chriſtian gaineth more ſpiritual diſcerning of Evangelical Truths, believes more ſtrongly, doth Duty with more Conſtancy and Reſolution; and conſequently, the power of remaining Corruption in him abates and loſeth: for the decreaſe of Corruption, and increaſe of Grace are inſeperable. And hence, the more able a Chriſtian is, to withſtand the motions of Sin in him, and purſue the deſigns of Holineſs, the more is his Grace increaſed. Now, though to this increaſe there is required, a diligent uſe of the means which God hath appointed, and ſanctifyed for this end, yet the increaſe it ſelf is a ſupply which the Spirit of God affords, and inſinuates into the Soul in and with thoſe means ſo uſed, and is therefore called the *Increaſe of God*, Col. 2. 19. Now that we may not be miſtaken about this Benefit, let theſe few things be obſerved about it,

1. *THAT a Believers Grace is not at all times under actual Increaſing.* There are Seaſons wherein Grace in a Child of God is ſo far from growing, that it is under remarkable decays, and loſing of its ſtrength. This may be ſufficiently exemplifyed from the Word of God, and may particularly be inſtanced in *David*: And how many paſſages do we find in *Pſal.* 51. wherein he expreſſeth his deep and diſtreſſing Apprehenſion of it? Grace is a Creature; it is in this Life nouriſhed by means, and the bleſſing of God upon them, and our careful improving of them: and there are many things by which it is expoſed, and not only may be impeded in Act, but alſo weakned in its Habit. Sometimes God withdraws his influence from it, and doth not afford that bleſſing on the means, without which they will not nouriſh it, and then it languiſheth. And thus he ſometimes doth in Soveraignty for our Trial, to let us ſee where our ſafety is; ſometimes by reaſon of our carnal Confidence in our Grace, that we may experience how dangerous a thing it is to remit our dependance on him. So it was with *Peter*, Mat. 26. Sometimes Satan tempts, and our Corruption prevails to draw us into ſome bold Tranſgreſſion, which wounds us, and breaks our bones, and now our Grace is wofully weakned, and ready to expire. So it was with *David* after his great Tranſgreſſion, as his Moans diſcover, *Pſal.* 51. And it may be he may go halting for this all his life-time afterward. Sometimes a Child of God falls into a drowſy and negligent frame, grows lukewarm, or ſome Worldly Luſts gets head in him; and he either neglects Duty, or loſeth his ſpiritual frame in it; and ſo his Grace languiſheth. Doubtleſs it was ſo with the Spouſe, in, *Cant.* 5. *begin.* So that ſuch intermiſſions are conſiſtent with this Benefit.

2. *GRACE in the Children of God doth not always Increaſe alike.* There are ſome ſeaſons wherein they thrive a great deal faſter than in others. And the occaſion of this is the ſame with the former, viz. becauſe Grace hath its mediate Supplies, and muſt have all its Nouriſhment from the Spirit in the uſe of means. Now God doth not always afford to his People like outward helps. *David* is ſometimes in the Tabernacle; at another time in the Wilderneſs, in a dry and thirſty Land. Nor doth God always give equal influence to the Means. A Believer ſometimes finds himſelf fixed and prepared; at another time he is dull and indiſpoſed, and his Heart wandering. Accordingly, at one time he finds the Word to come to him very powerfully, and it raiſeth all the Powers in him; at another time it ſcarcely moves him. Of ſuch Changes as theſe, we have the Pſalmiſt often ſpeaking. Hereby alſo God will make them to know, that all their profiting depends upon him, and that their very Appetite to the means of Grace muſt be from him, as well as the means themſelves, and the ſpiritual benefit of them, *Hoſ.* 14. 8.

3. *A Believers Grace may be under Decays, when he thinks it is on the Increaſe.* The Children of God are too often miſtaken on this hand, through the deceitfulneſs of Sin abiding in them, and the cunning of Satan, who thus ſeeks to hinder the growth of their Grace. And there are diverſe Occaſions of this miſtake. Sometimes they miſtake Gifts for Graces, and becauſe they gain more of theſe, they think Grace thrives; whereas there is a ſpecifical difference between theſe two: and though Gifts are very uſeful to help Grace, yet too often, they hinder the Growth of it by puffing up &c. Sometimes Men take ſome ſudden pangs of Zeal for growth in Grace; whereas there is a Zeal that is hypocritical, as *Jehu*'s, and a true Chriſtians Zeal is not always excited by the Spirit, nor is the acting of Grace, but of Hypocriſy, and but a cover for ſome ſin, as *David's*, 2 *Sam.* 11. 25. And to name no more, ſometimes they ſuppoſe Grace grows, when it is only their carnal Corruption that prompts them; they miſtake Sin for Grace. It is no doubt but *Peter* thought his Confidence to be ſtrong Faith, Mat. 26. 33. *Peter anſwered and ſaid unto him, though all men ſhould be offended becauſe of thee, yet will I never be offended.*

4. *A Believers Grace may be really Thriving, when he ſuſpects it to be Decaying.* He may cry out of withering, when indeed he is never more flouriſhing. And this is very often the Complaint of gracious Souls, and it flows from miſtakes on the other hand. If his Comforts be not ſuch, and ſo full as ſometimes they were, he thinks his Faith fails, and his other Graces are impaired; whereas Comfort is no part of Sanctification. It is in it ſelf redundant and at God's Pleaſure, and the Spirit of God uſually giveth more of his Aſſiſting, when he bates of his Comforting Preſence;

whereupon

whereupon he travels faſter to Heaven under Clouds, then when he is more ſerene. And though it be not ſo cheerful, yet he rids more ground. Never did the Spouſe's Graces appear in more vigour, than when her Beloved was withdrawn, *Cant.* 5. *begin.* If he feels Corruption more active and vigorous, he is apt to think it is becauſe his Grace languiſheth; whereas the reaſon of this ſenſe often is, not becauſe he hath more Corruption in him, or the ſtrivings of it are more potent, but becauſe his Grace is more lively to reſent it. He hath a more ſpiritual diſcerning of Sin in him, a deeper apprehenſion of the evil Nature of it, and Grace makes a more forceable reſiſtance, whence riſeth a more forcible ſcuffle in him. So *Paul*, *Rom.* 7. If he finds Duty harder to go through than heretofore, he preſently aſſigns this to decays; whereas the reaſon may be, and often is, becauſe he before did it more carnally, and now more ſpiritually, and that is a ſign of Increaſe; or God is pleaſed to exerciſe him with greater Temptations in the way of Duty then before, and that will add to the difficulty of it; and God will have Trials proportionable to the ſtrength he hath given us.

5. *EVERY Believer doth not grow alike in Grace.* All do not attain to the ſame meaſures. There are different Statures in thoſe that are in Chriſt. All have not the ſame Opportunities, nor do all husband them with the ſame Diligence, nor doth the Spirit of God meaſure himſelf out to all in the ſame proportion. There ſhall be thoſe that are weak in the Faith, as well as thoſe that are ſtrong. God uſeth much of his Liberty on this account. Every of *David's* Worthy's did not attain to the firſt three, and yet they did worthily in their ſtation. The *good ground brings forth ſome an hundred, &c.* Mat. 13. 23.

6. *AND the Increaſe of Grace is better diſcerned afterwards then at the preſent.* It is with a Chriſtian's Grace, as with Corn in a Field, if we ſtand by and look on it, we cannot perceive how it riſeth, but if we obſerve it now, and come a few days after to it, we ſhall plainly perceive that it is grown. So it is in reſpect of Grace in the Heart, which is therefore compared to Seed. Its increments are only diſcernable by the effects in us, in the Mortification of Sin, and Quickning of Holineſs.

3. *WHEREIN it appears that Increaſe of Grace is a Benefit that all Believers partake in?*

Anſ. THIS will be evident if we conſider and lay together the following things,

1. *GRACE in the Children of God, is but little at firſt.* In the Work of Sanctification, there are ſown but the ſeeds of Grace. The introduction of it is into an Heart that was before full of Corruption. And all the things which Grace itſelf, or the true Believer in regard of it, are compared to in the Word of God, do evidence it to be very ſmall at the beginning, as will be preſently inſtanced. *Peter hath but a little faith*, Math. 14. 32.

2. *THAT Grace itſelf is of a growing Nature.* It hath in it a natural tendency to Increaſe. And this alſo appears from the things it is likened unto, which Reſemblances are uſed by the Spirit of God, on purpoſe to ſignify the Nature of it, and the preſent ſtate of it in us. Believers in regard of it are compared to *New-born Babes*, 2 Pet. 2. 2. And Grace itſelf is likned to *a grain of Muſtard-Seed* which is ſown, *Mat.* 13. 31, 32. to a *bruiſed Reed, and ſmoaking Flax*, Mat. 12. 20. to the firſt dawning or *break of Day*, Prov. 4. 13. Now the deſign of theſe, and other like Compariſons uſed by the Spirit of God, is to ſignify to us, that Grace hath in it a natural tendency to increaſe, by the ſupply of ſuitable Means for it.

3. *THAT God put his Grace into h's People, with a deſign for Increaſe. God is the Author of all Grace*, 1 Pet. 5. 10. Now the very ſtate, in which he puts it, when he puts it into us, ſhews what he aims at in it. He could have made it perfect at firſt in Degrees, as well as in Parts; but he would have it imperfect, in order to its Perfection. A Seed that is ſown is for growth, and to be manured to that end. An Infant is deſigned by growth to come to the Stature of a Man. And this will appear evidently if we conſider, what God put his Grace into us for: it is that we may ſerve him, and be fitted to glorify him in our Generation, which without it we could not do. And the more Grace we have, the better we ſhall ſerve him. It is poor Service we do him with this weak Grace, he will therefore ſtrengthen it. And it is that we may be fit to live with him in Glory. Grace is a ſtep to Glory, and we can never e joy that in Perfection, till this be perfect. God hath therefore appointed us for this, and we are to arrive at it at laſt. Eph. 4. 12. *For the perfecting of the ſaints, for the work of the miniſtry, for the edifying of the body of Chriſt.* Now God will not loſe his End, in beſtowing of his Grace upon us.

4. *GOD hath provided the Means of Grace for this very purpoſe, that they may help forward the Increaſe of Grace in his Children.* The Goſpel is given us by God, the Ordinances of it are of his Appointment, and he appoints nothing in vain. Now there are two ſorts of men that live under and enjoy theſe Means, viz. the Unregenerate, and the Regenerate; and theſe are accommodated for both. For the Unregenerate, they are the means for their new Birth. God brings about the Converſion of Sinners in and with theſe means. Hence we read, in Jam. 1. 18. *Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth.* 1 Pet. 1. 23. *Being born again, not of corruptible ſeed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever.* And for thoſe that are New-born, they are ſuited as Nouriſhment to help forward their Growth. Hence that, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. And the Word of God in the diſpenſations of it is *very profitable for this purpoſe*, 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. Now, as it is certain,

tain, that without God's blessing on them, these Means will not advance this End; so if God had not purposed to give this Blessing with them, he would never have appointed them.

5. *HENCE God hath promised that the Grace of his Children, shall Increase by and under the Means.* He hath secured his Blessing to them by his Engagement. And there are many such Promises recorded in the Scriptures, to encourage the Children of God to attend on them, and rely on him for this Benefit by them. See for this, *Psal.* 92. 12, &c. Prov. 4. 18. *But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.* Job 17. 9. *The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.* And God will be faithful to his Word. And because he can subdue in and for them, all that would hinder their proficiency, and succeed all that is appointed for the relief of it, they shall not fail. And tho' they may have their seasons of decay, yet in the whole they shall increase, till at length they reach fulness of Perfection. This then is a Priviledge belonging to every Believer. And the Excellency of it is not known by a carnal Mind, but a Soul that knows the worth and preciousness of Grace, the vileness and odiousness of Sin, cannot but place a very high value upon it. By this means Sin decays, which is our Bitterness, and Holiness increaseth which is our Delight. By this means we are more and more fitted and strengthned to serve to the end we were made for, and unto which our new Nature aspires, which cannot but be exceeding pleasant to him, all whose *delight is in the Law of his God, and who counts it sweeter than the Honey, and the Honey Comb* By this means we grow more and more like to God, who is perfect in Holiness. By this means we give much Content to our Lord and Saviour, who is not a little delighted in the Graces of his People, and therefore speaks as if they ravished him, Cant. 4. 9. *Thou hast ravished mine heart.* By this means we come to be more and more fit for Glory, and the most intimate Communion with him in the highest Heaven, in that Place where there is nothing of sinful imperfection admitted. And the faster a Child of God thus grows, the more is he ripening for an happy remove to the Paradise of God.

USE. I. *LEARN hence what to judge of those that pretend to Perfection in this Life.* True, there is a *Perfection of Parts*, which every true Christian is owner of, and there is a *Perfection in Desire*, which every Saint is aspiring after. But a gradual Perfection of the Graces of Sanctification, is not to be found in any meer man in this Life. *Paul* could not pretend to it, Phil. 3. 13. *I press forward*—— Nor indeed, would increase of Grace be any more a Benefit to such, which we are told is so to all God's Called in this Life. And no wonder if such cast off the Word and Ordinances, as things Superfluous; whose very design is to help our *Growth in Grace.*

USE. II. *LET us prove our State of Vocation by this, Do we Increase in Grace?* If we are Called, we are Justifyed and Adopted, for these are inseperable. Now if we are Sanctifyed, we have, tho' a weak, yet a thriving Grace in us. If our Graces be of the right stamp, they are aspiring to Perfection. If we have true Grace, we desire more of it, and that Desire carries us forth in Endeavours after it, and to the use of all those Means that God hath appointed for our obtaining it. Not that we shall find it always actually growing, but we shall find that it hath grown, and that we cannot rest, but when it so doth. If we think that we have Grace enough, and accordingly sit down with the first, we have indeed none; our pretended Grace is not an Heavenly Plant, it is but a Mushrom, or like *Jonah's Gourd*; it *grew in a Night, & withered in a Night.*

USE. III. *BE we then Exhorted, if we have Grace, to be very careful about the Increase of it.* Tho' it be one of Christ's Benefits, yet there is a Duty lying on us, in order to our Furtherance in it. 2 Pet. 3. 18. *Grow in Grace.* And indeed, this is the best Way to have the Comfort of our Grace, and the Evidence of the Sincerity of it, which else we shall righteously miss of. And let us remember, that God expects more of Us then of many others, and hath planted us in a fat Soil: He hath afforded to us rich Opportunities of Gospel-Liberties, and multiplied Means of Grace. And if we do not improve them in some good Proportion, we shall affront his kindness, expose our selves to his Displeasure, and provoke him to take the Kingdom from us, and bestow it on those that will better Husband it.

[AUGUST 29. 1699.]

SERMON CXXXVII.

THE Fifth and last of these Benefits now comes under Consideration, viz. *Perseverance therein unto the End.* And this refers to, or is a Priviledge of Adoption, and it is a proper Fruit of the Sealing of the Spirit, as will be afterwards made evident.

BEFORE I proceed to describe this Benefit, it is requisite to distinguish of it, that so we may know, in what respect it is here handled. Observe then, that *Perseverance is sometimes taken in a large, and sometimes in a more restrained sense. In the larger sense it comprizeth in it both the preservation of the Life and Exercise of Grace in the Believer, and the progress he makes in Sanctification to the end of his Life.* But so we are not to prosecute it here. For our Catechism makes these two distinct Benefits, and the latter of them hath been spoken to already, under the title of Increase

of Grace. I ſhall therefore here only ſpeak to it in the former ſenſe, wherein the nature of this Benefit is ſtrictly contained. Here alſo we may obſerve, that this *Perſeverance*, may be conſidered either *as it is a Duty enjoyned upon the Children of God, or as it is a Priviledge conferred on them*; both of which reſpects are taken notice of in the Scriptures. Of the former ſee, Rev. 2. 10. *Be thou faithful unto death.* Of the latter, 1 Pet. 1. 5. *Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation.* But it is *the latter of theſe, that lies before us* at preſent, it being a Benefit of Adoption, and no ſmall part of the preſent Happineſs of the People of God in this Life. And indeed, it is that which makes all their other Priviledges happifying, in that it preſerves and confirms them to us. And were it not for this, we might loſe them all, and be the more miſerable, in that once we enjoyed them. For ſhould a Believer fall from Grace, he would loſe all, his Juſtification, Adoption, Aſſurance, and every thing. For tho' Eternal Life is ſecured unto him on Believing, yet it is in this Way; and therefore the Connexion is certain and reciprocal, and every Child of God may apply it to himſelf. Rom. 8. 13. *For if ye live after the fleſh ye ſhall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live.* But becauſe this Priviledge and Duty are conjoyn'd, and the Spirit of God, in preſerving us, helps us in our duty of Perſeverance, this alſo may have a room in our Speculation. Accordingly, we may take this Account of it; *Perſeverance is a fruit of the indwelling Spirit, in every Believer, by which he maintains the Life and exerciſe of all his Graces in him, ſo that they neither totally nor finally fail, but endure to the end of his Courſe, in deſpight of all that ſeeks to deſtroy them.* This is a popular Deſcription, and contains ſeveral things in it, which may come under Conſideration, for our better comprehending this excellent Benefit.

1. WE have the *General Nature of it*; *it is a fruit of the Indwelling Spirit, in every Believer.* And herein it agreeth with the other fore-mentioned. And here there are four things to be taken notice of,

1. THE *Author of this Benefit*, viz. *the Spirit of God.* Every ſaving Good comes from him: Nor can this Perſeverance derive to us from any other but him; as will anon be evidenced. As we were not able to put Grace into our ſelves, nor ſhould ever have had any, if he had not created it in us: In reſpect of which, ſee, Eph. 2. 10. *We are his workmanſhip created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works.* So neither can we preſerve it in us, when we have it, but he muſt ſet a ſecond hand to this. And hence we are told, Heb. 12. 2. *Jeſus the author and finiſher of our faith.* It is true, he uſeth Means with them for this, and requires of them that they do diligently uſe them in order to it, yet the Succeſs of them is from him, and doth intirely depend upon his Bleſſing and Influence. Hence he ſo argues, Rom. 14. 4. *He ſhall be holden up: for God is able to make him ſtand.* So that our uſing of the Means is not an Antecedant Condition of it, but a conſequent Fruit of it, or a Medium by which he promoves it. Hence all our dependance is upon him for it, and we muſt ſeek it of him. Pſal. 51. 12. *Reſtore unto me the joy of thy ſalvation: and uphold me with thy free ſpirit.* Pſal. 119. 116. *Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: and let me not be aſhamed of my hope.*

2. THE *Subject of it*; *the Believer.* There are no other capable of it. And the reaſon of this will appear, becauſe that in him which partakes of it is his Grace, as we ſhall preſently obſerve. Now *Perſeverance in Grace, preſuppoſeth the being of it.* For a thing muſt firſt be, before it be preſerved. Now there are none but Believers, in whom the ſaving Graces of the Spirit are produced, for in and with their Believing, they receive all the Habits of Sanctification, and hence none but ſuch are partakers in it. It is neceſſary that Men firſt paſs from Death to Life, in order to their being kept alive, and that is done in Regeneration.

3. THE *Extent of the Subject*; *every Believer.* It is not a Benefit reſtrained to theſe or thoſe of the Children of God, as if only ſome eminent ones did partake in it; but it is common to all of them. It belongs to the Children of God as ſuch. We therefore obſerved, that it is one of the Priviledges of Adoption; tho' the influence of it be into Sanctification: and becauſe whom God adopts to be his Children, he alſo gives them to have the Heart of Children in the New Birth. This is therefore one of his *Gifts* that is *without Repentance*, as *Rom.* 11. 29. And it flows from his *Immutable Love* to them, *Joh.* 13. 1. This is a Priviledge conferred with Faith, and ſo is as extenſive as Faith. God as really loves one Believer as another, and every Believer is committed to the Charge & Keeping of the Holy Ghoſt. Hence, tho' one may have more Grace then another, yet both have a perſevering Grace. Hence all compared to a *Tree*, &c. *Pſal.* 113. And *to Mount Zion*, Pſal. 125.

4. *THE way in which it derives*; *it is a fruit of his Indwelling in us.* When the Spirit of God comes to work the great Change in a Sinner, and plants his Grace in the Soul, he takes poſſeſſion of ſuch a Soul, and becomes in it a *Spirit of Adoption.* For this reaſon we are ſaid to *receive him*, Rom. 8. 15. And he is ſaid to *dwell in us*, *and we to have him*, ver. 9. And *Believers* are on this account called *his Temple*, 1 Cor. 3. 16. In what manner he dwells is matter of diſpute. However that he doth ſo, by his conſtant, ſaving, and gracious Influence, is acknowledged by all the Orthodox. And we are aſſured that this is immutable and perpetual, Joh. 14. 16. *And I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.* Now one great fruit of his thus dwelling

dwelling in us, is *Perſeverance.* It is to preſerve us in the Faith, and keep us from loſing it; and he will certainly look after his own Dwelling to keep it, nor *will he ever ſuffer himſelf to be turned out of it again. And this is the true and proper reaſon, why any do Perſevere.*

2. WE have the *Special Nature of it*, in the reſt of the Deſcription. In which theſe things are obſervable,

1. THE *Subject of the Application of this Benefit*; viz. *All his Graces.* We obſerved, that the Believer is in general the Subject of it. But then there is that in him which is the more immediate *Subject recipient* of it and that is *all his Graces.* For it is by the Perſeverance of theſe, that the Believer perſeveres, by the holding out of theſe he abides in the Covenant. Theſe are his *bow*, and while it *abides in its ſtrength*, he is ſafe.

And here are two Things,

(1.) *THEY are the Believers Graces which are thus Priviledged.* What we are to underſtand by this Grace, we obſerved under the former Benefit. In ſum, it is the New-Creature, or thoſe Principles of Holineſs and Righteouſneſs that are infuſed into the People of God in Converſion: Which are therefore called Grace, becauſe they are the free Gift of God, and beſtowed on us, beſides our deſerving. Nor do we here underſtand all the Gifts which God confers upon Men by his Spirit, for there are ſome common to Believers and Unbelievers, others proper to Believers, and no other have them: and theſe are here intended: ſuch as difference the Children of God from all others. And hence we have the difference to be obſerved between Gifts and Graces; for though every Grace be a Gift, yet all Gifts are not Sanctifying Graces, nor under the bleſſing of Perſeverance.

(2.) *THIS Priviledge is ſecured to all his Graces.* As there are many Members in the Body Natural, ſo the New Man in a Believer hath many Graces. We have the chief of them enumerated, Gal. 5. 22,23. *The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, goodneſs, faith, meekneſs, temperance.* Now all theſe go into the *Perfection of Parts*, or the Integrality of the New Man, ſo that if any of them ſhould be wanting or loſt, it would be a maimed thing, and *not furniſhed for every good Work.* Now the Believer is not only kept in Grace, but he is kept perfect and entire. This therefore he prayed for in their behalf, Col. 4. 12. *Epaphras, who is one of you, a ſervant of Chriſt, ſaluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may ſtand perfect, and compleat in all the will of God.* Every Grace is equally a Fruit of the Spirit. Every Grace hath its Service in the Life of a Chriſtian, and every Grace is equally in need of this Preſervation. He therefore who hath undertaken for one, hath ſo for all.

2. WE have *the Benefit itſelf*; *theſe Graces are maintained or upheld.* This is the Spirits Work in performance of this Benefit. When the Spirit of God hath put his Grace into us in our Renovation, there needs a ſecond Hand to be afforded to them, for their Preſervation. As, when God had created the World by his Power, it needed his Suſtentation of it by the ſame Power, and without that Manutenency of his, it would have fallen back into its abyſs of Nothing. The Enemies of the Doctrine of Perſeverance miſtake, if they think we aſcribe it to the inward Nature of Grace itſelf. We aſſert the contrary, and ſay,

(1.) THAT *Grace is a Creature, and in it ſelf mutable.* Mutability is ſown in the Nature of ſecond-beings. Abſolute Unchangeableneſs, is a Divine Incommunicable Prerogative. The Angels and Adam were created with a *fulneſs of Sanctifying Grace*, and yet how did they loſe it all? Whatſoever Ornaments of Grace we have, yet they are not inſeperable from us in their own Nature.

(2.) THAT *the Believers Grace is but weak in this Life.* There are indeed different degrees of Strength in the Children of God; all are not arrived at the ſame Stature, but ſome are ſtrong compared with others; but ſtill, all labour of much infirmity. Grace in the beſt is far ſhort of that power that it had in our firſt Parents in their Integrity. It is ſo weak that it cannot ſtand alone. If *Hezekiah* be left to himſelf he falls, 2 *Chron.* 32. 31.

(3.) *THE remaining Corruption in him is very ſtrong, and it withſtands his Grace.* There are theſe two Parties in him; and they are ever in Oppoſition. Gal. 5. 17. *For the fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the fleſh, and theſe are contrary the one to the other: ſo that ye cannot do the things that ye would.* Original Sin in him is always endeavouring to expel Grace out of him, and uſeth its utmoſt force in it. And as for its Power and Efficacy, the Apoſtle tells us ſomething of it, on his Experience, Rom. 7. 23. *But I ſee another law in my members, warring againſt the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of ſin, which is in my members.* His Grace is but a Spark in a Flood, and it is a wonder that it lives in it, and is not every Hour extinguiſhed.

(4.) THAT *he hath many potent Enemies from abroad who both deſign and attempt to rob him of his Grace.* We have a comprehenſive account of them, Eph. 6. 12. *For we wreſtle not againſt fleſh & blood, but againſt principalities, againſt powers, againſt the rulers of the darkneſs of this world, againſt ſpiritual wickedneſs in high places.* And they are formidable; they are indefatigable in watching Occaſions to do this miſchief. 1 Pet. 5. 8. *Your adverſary the devil, is as a roaring lion walking about ſeeking whom he may devour.* And there are Multitudes of them. And the Hazard of them is livelily expreſſed by our Saviour, in *Mat.* 24. 12.

5. HENCE *the Preſervation of them is owing to the Spirit of God.* It is his *powerful Hand* that doth it, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. Were it not for this, every aſſault would give them a fall, and

every fall would be ruinous, and they would never get up again. But it is certain, that he can preſerve them. His Hand is ſtrong enough to ſuſtain them: and they have the Security of that; and this is their Safety. So that *tho' they do fall, yet they ſhall riſe again*, Pſal. 37. 23,24. And *this is the Priviledge of all God's Iſrael*, Deut. 33. 27.

3. WE have *the Things, in which this Benefit is exerted*; or the reſpects wherein it maintains theſe Graces: Which are two,

(1.) *IT maintains the Life of them.* Believers by the Infuſion of theſe Graces into them, are ſaid to be *quickned*, Eph. 2. 1. And Sanctifying Grace is often called Life in the Word of God, becauſe it is a Principle of Gracious Operations. Hence that, Gal. 5. 25. *If we live in the Spirit, let us alſo walk in the Spirit.* Now this Principle is implanted in the Man in Converſion, and is accordingly called a *Seed*, which reſpecteth the Habits of it. Now this is called *Incorruptible*, 1 Pet. 1. 23. And it is ſaid to *remain in them*, 1 Joh. 3. 9. So that whatſoever faintings it may meet with, yet it ſhall not be extinguiſhed. If Grace ſhould at any time be reduced to the Habit, yet that ſhall never be loſt. This is the Water that Chriſt gives to Believers, of which he ſaith, Joh. 4. 14. *Whoſoever drinketh of the water that I ſhall give him, ſhall never thirſt.* Now this is becauſe of the *Anointing of the Spirit*, which *abides in them and preſerves them*, 1 Joh. 2 27.

(2.) *IT alſo maintains the Exerciſe of them.* Grace is given us for uſe. Our Spiritual Life is given us that we may live to God. And this alſo belongs to Perſeverance, and is a Benefit, which all that are Effectually Called, do partake in. Job 17. 9. *The righteous alſo ſhall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands ſhall be ſtronger and ſtronger.* Not but that a Child of God may, and frequently doth meet with interruption in his way, and the exerciſe of his Graces is many ways obſtructed in theſe and thoſe Occaſions for the acting of it. He doth not find himſelf like the ſame Man at one time, and at another, in reſpect of any of theſe Graces which are in him. He is a Wreſtler, and is ſometimes above, ſometimes under. His Faith ſometimes holdeth up its head above all the billows that aſſail it, at another time it is under Water, and begins to doubt, and anon it riſeth again. His Obedience ſometimes ſtems the tide of Corruption, and bears it before him, anon he lets go, and is born down in the ſtream of it. The *Law in his Members* is ſometimes too hard, &c. *Rom.* 7. 23. But for all this, take the whole tract of a Believer, and there will be found Perſeverance in it. A Child of God in the exerciſe of his Grace, is by reaſon of the two contrary Principles luſting in him, like two Combitants, whom if we look on during their ſcuffle, ſometimes the one, ſometimes the other ſeems to prevail, but in the iſſue of the battel, one gets the Conqueſt, and this ever falls on the ſide of Grace. We may frequently obſerve it in the Pſalmiſts, particularly in *Pſal.* 73. The Believer is like the Traveller in a miery way, when he comes at a deep Ford, or a dirty Swamp, he is at a ſtand, goes up and down to ſeek the beſt Paſſage, and looks as if he were diſcouraged; but wait a while, and you ſhall ſee him venturing through and going on: for he is bound for Heaven, and will not reſt till he get thither.

4. WE have *the Effect or Product of this Benefit*; *He ſhall neither totally nor finally fail in his Graces.* How far Grace in a Believer may fail, and that not only in the Exerciſe, but in the Habits of it, is hard to determine. We have many awful Inſtances for this in the Word of God, and theſe of ſuch who were Worthy's in their Generation. A Child of God may, if God leave him to himſelf, and he grow negligent of his Duty, catch grievous Falls, bruiſe himſelf fearfully, break his Bones, much weaken and impair the Life and Strength of his Grace, and lay it in a Swoon. The ſtirrings of it may be ſo indiſcernable, that he can ſcarce diſcern whether there be any Life left in it. Was it not ſo with *David*, when he *begs for a new Creation* to paſs upon him, *Pſal.* 51. 10. Was it not ſo with *Solomon*, when that record was made of him? 1 Kin. 11. 9. *His heart was turned from God.* Yea, it is ſometimes ſo, that Men of corrupt Principles have from thence undertaken to defend the pernicious Doctrine of the Apoſtacy of Saints. But it is certain, that thoſe that are once in Chriſt by Faith, ſhall never fall out of him again, becauſe he will not ſuffer it to be ſo. Nor can it be conſiſtent with his Covenant Faithfulneſs. If we look to the Covenant of Redemption we find what he is oblig'd in to his Father, and what he expects of him, Joh. 6. 39. *This is the Father's will which hath ſent me, that of all which he hath given me I ſhould loſe nothing.* And if we look to the Covenant of Grace we find as firm an Engagement to Believing, Joh. 3. 16. *For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son: that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* So that it is evident, that their Grace cannot finally fail, becauſe then the Promiſe of Eternal Life made to them upon Believing would be vacated, which it cannot. 2 Cor. 1. 20. *For all the promiſes of God in him are yea, and in him, Amen.* So that if it ſhould all be loſt, it muſt be repaired again according to Covenant, for without Grace, there can be no Glory: But neither can it totally fail. Whether all the Acts may be ſuſpended, I diſpute not; as to the Apprehenſion they may, but the Principle never ſhall. One would think that *Peter* had done as much as well could be, when he ſo fearfully and repeatedly denyed his Lord, and yet we muſt grant, that either Chriſt loſt his Prayer, or that *Peter* did not loſe his Faith, *Luk.* 21. 31,32. Beſides, Effectual Calling is a Fruit of God's purpoſe of Good, *Jer.* 31. 3: *Rom.* 8. 28. And is therefore the Earneſt of Eternal Life.

5. WE have *the Continuance of this Perſeverance*;

rance; *his Grace shall endure to the End of his Life.* This doth not intend that they shall abide no longer, but to signify, that the Spirit of God will not fail of his constant Assistance of them, so long as they are in any hazard. The Christians Life here is a continued Warfare, it begins at his Conversion, and lasts till his Dissolution, and it is his Grace which his Adversaries seek to deprive him of. If therefore it lasts till Death, it holds out till the Warfare be done, and the Triumph be granted him, after which he shall never meet with any thing, either from within or without, that shall offer to undermine it. And that it shall hold out till then is certain, because the safe Conduct of the Spirit, to which he is committed, shall abide till he be put out of harms way. Psal. 73. 24. *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.* And the Believer, having betrusted himself with him may confide in it, and say as he, 2 Tim. 1. 12. *I know whom I have believed*—. He hath made it our duty to *be faithful to Death*, Rev. 2. 10. And hath undertaken for us, that we shall be so, that *having begun, he will perfect his good Work in us, till the day of Jesus Christ*, Phil. 1. 6.

6. WE have *the powerful Efficacy of this Perseverance*; *it shall hold out in despite of all that seeks to destroy them.* It shall be a vanquishing Perseverance: And therein the Admirableness of it doth appear. If it had nothing to withstand it, it would be no wonder, that it continueth. Grace is no sooner born in the Soul, but the Life of it is sought; and there is the rage of Sin, and Hell, and World combined against it, but yet God giveth it to Persevere. When they have done their worst, he enableth it to stand in the evil day, and *after all to stand*, Eph. 6. 13. It bears up against the force of natural Corruption. The Flesh lusts, and oppresseth, and he cries & groans, but *God gives him Deliverance*, Rom. 7. 24, 25. Sin may stir and be too hard for him, & lead him Captive, but it shall never drive out his Grace. It holds out against the flatteries and frowns of the present World. Prosperity fawns upon him, the World puts on its Harlots dress and paint, and cries out, *turn in unto me*; but *Grace shall overcome it*, 1 Joh. 5. 4. The World threatens him with Affliction, Poverty, Persecution, and would fright him into a Compliance with it; but Grace despiseth these menaces, and helpeth him to look to Christ's Victory, and in it to vanquish them, as *Joh.* 16. *ult.* It maintains its own against the united Fury of the Powers of Darkness. Though Hell be up in Arms against the Believer, and Satan, like a roaring Lion, hunts for his Prey among Christ's Flock, and sometimes draws them into his Snare through inadvertency, yet the Snare is broken, and they escape: Though a Troop overcome them, they overcome at last, and the *Gates of Hell cannot be too hard for them*, Mat. 16. 18. Tho' their Grace be weak, and they fear it will not hold out, yet his *Assisting Grace is their Sufficiency.* 2 Cor. 11. 9. And this affords a supply of Life to their habitual Grace continually. Let Satan's Instruments use never so many Impostures to deceive them, and tho' Thousands fall at their right hand, &c. yet God preserves them. Nor shall the Apostacy of temporary Believers, who after an eminent Profession turn from the Truth, discourage them in their way, but make them the more cautious. 2 *Tim.* 2. 17, 18, 19. In a word, nothing shall separate them from the Love of God in Christ, and while that abides inviolable, their Perseverance shall be invincible.

USE. LET me from the Premises, offer a Threefold Advice to the Children of God.

1. *TAKE heed of abusing this Truth, by indulging Carelessness in you.* Ungodly Men calumniate this Doctrine with this Tendency. Let not your Example be produced to justify the Calumny. God expects that you Persevere: And the Truth in hand is to encourage you in it. And if you pretend to confide in this Security, and take no heed to your selves, he may let you fall so far as shall cost you sorrow, though he do not leave you utterly to perish. How many experienced it to their Bitterness?

2. *BE not discouraged at any thing that threatens your Grace.* Let it awake your Courage and Resolution, but not dishearten you. What though your Grace be little and weak, and there appears a World of Corruption in you; and tho' the Adversaries of your Souls, which cruelly hate you, appear to be many and potent, and you seem to be but grashoppers to them, and to your selves. Remember now, that you are not your own Keepers, but under the strong Garrison of Omnipotency. See that there are more for you then against you. You are put into an Hand, out of which none can pluck you. Believe this, and wait for God's Salvation.

3. *LET this Comfort you, in all the Conflicts of your Spiritual Warfare.* Let not your Hearts be troubled, but rejoyce in the midst of all your Combats. Let this be your Satisfaction, that tho' foiled, you shall not be vanquished; tho' distressed, yet not forsaken. The Promise cannot fail; Divine Omnipotency cannot be overpowred. The Foundation of Eternal Life is laid in you, and the same Hand will not draw back, till it hath laid the Topstone. Trust then in this, and be not afraid.

[SEPTEMBER 26. 1699.]

QUEST.

SERMON *CXXXVIII.*

QUESTION XXXVII.

WHAT Benefits do Believers receive from Chriſt at Death ?

ANSWER.

THE Souls of Believers are at their Death made perfect in Holineſs, and do Immediately paſs into Glory, and their Bodies being ſtill United to Chriſt, do reſt in their Graves till the Reſurrection.

WE have conſidered the Inchoate Bleſſedneſs, or thoſe beginnings of Glory, which God's Called are made to ſhare in, during their abode in this Life. And if they enjoy ſo much here, where they are Strangers and Travellers, and hated, what ſhall we conceive is reſerved for them, when they ſhall come to the Kingdom, and be entertained in thoſe Manſions, which Chriſt the Forerunner is gone before to make ready ? If *Paul* could ſay of the former, as, 1 Cor. 2. 9. *Eye hath not ſeen nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* Well might *John* draw that Vail over the latter, 1 Joh. 3. 2. *Beloved, now are we the ſons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be : but we know, that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him : for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* We muſt then expect, but an obſcure and clouded Deſcription of the things which follow ; and yet enough to ſet a Child of God on longing to go and ſee that better, that Heavenly Country. The Happineſs of Believers is Progreſſive, and as it hath its Augmentations here in this Life, ſo it hath a remarkable Æra at Death, in which it arrives at a more perfect ſtate of Bleſſedneſs, tho' not compleatly conſummate till the Reſurrection. And this is that which we are to make a ſober Inquiry into : In which we muſt take the Word of God for our direction, and by it ſet bounds to our Curioſity. And here we ſhall be led to diſcover a vaſt difference between the future State of the Godly and the Wicked, however little it be taken notice of in this World, and that with undue Prejudice.

IN the Anſwer, there are Two Things to be conſidered of, 1. *The Death of Believers is taken for granted.* 2. *Their Happineſs at Death is aſſerted and deſcribed.* Something may firſt be ſpoken to the former of theſe, to make way to the latter.

1. *THE Death of Believers is here taken for granted.* By which we are only to underſtand a bodily Death, in which regard, the Condition of Good and Bad is alike : Which that it is ſo, needs no proof beſides our daily Obſervation. We may rationally ſuppoſe, that there are ſome Godly in the World, in all Ages, although we cannot certainly tell who they be, but this we ſee, that all Dye, *One Generation goes* off the Stage, and makes way *for* the Succeſſion of *another* ; and if there be any Good Men among them, they go as well as the other. Hence that, Pſal. 49. 10. *Wiſe men die, likewiſe the fool.* And God's People certainly expect it, Job 16. 22. *When a few years are come, then I ſhall go the way whence I ſhall not return.* And Job 30. 23. *For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the houſe appointed for all the living.* Hence they are expoſed unto like Caſualties with other Men, Sickneſſes and Violent Death, befall them as well as the worſt : ſo that immunity from a temporal Death, is none of the Benefits which is ſecured to them in the Promiſe. But tho' the thing it ſelf be notorious, yet the reaſon of it is not ſo clear, and hath occaſioned many thoughts of heart among the Children of God. For, tho' there is no difficulty about the natural reaſon of it, and every one that hath any knowledge in the nature of things, can give a ſatisfactory account of Man's Mortality, whoſe Body is made up of jarring Principles, and maintained by periſhing Supports, breaths in ſo contageous an Air, and is expoſed to ſo many Accidents, that it is rather a wonder, how it lives ſo long, than that it dies ſo certainly. Yet the Theological Reaſon is not ſo eaſily come at : eſpecially when we conſider it as a penalty of Sin, from which Chriſt came to ranſom his Redeemed. It may not then be amiſs, to introduce the following Diſcourſe, about the Happineſs of Believers at their Death ; by removing all Prejudices at Death it ſelf out of the Way, which may be, by giving a Reſolution to this Inquiry, *viz.*

Queſt. *WHY muſt Believers Dye as well as other Men ?*

Anſ. THAT all Doubts about this matter may be Anticipated, and the Caſe rightly ſtated, I ſhall begin with the needful Conceſſions about it, and ſo proceed to the Grounds of it ; in which it will appear, that the Death of Believers is ſo far from being a real miſery to them, that it is accommodated in the Wiſdom of God, to be an inlet to their more perfect Bleſſedneſs. Here then let me offer the following Concluſions,

1. THAT *Man was at firſt made in a ſtate of Immortality.* The *Pelagians* of old held, that Death belonged to Man at firſt by his natural Conſtitution : And if that be true, the caſe is ſoon reſolved : for if *Adam* muſt have dyed tho' he had kept his Integrity, no wonder if ſinful Men, ſuch as are the beſt in this Life, do die. The *Papiſts* ſay with the *Pelagians*, that man was by nature Mortal ; but that he had Immortality granted him by a ſupernatural Priviledge, which having forfeited,

feited, it is God's Prerogative whither he will reſtore it again: But *Proteſtants* look upon Immortality to be a con-natural Priviledge of man in Innocency, conſidered as he was made for ſuch an end, which he could not have attained without it. We acknowledge, that *abſolute Immortality, is a Divine Prerogative, and Angels themſelves are not Priviledged with it, nor can be.* 1 Tim. 6. 16. *Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath ſeen, nor can ſee: to whom be honour and power everlaſting, Amen.* God who gave every Creature its being, is able to take it away either by Annihilation, or Diſſolution, if he ſees meet. Nay their beings are continued by his Suſtentation, *Heb.* 1. 3. And ſhould that Manutenency of his be withdrawn, they would return to their Abyſs of Nothing. But then there was a *Conditional Immortality*, which God beſtowed on Man in the firſt Covenant, i.e. *that if he did never ſin, he ſhould never die.* He had it therefore by Promiſe from that God who was able to preſerve him, and will ſo preſerve the Saints in Glory forever. But this will farther appear in the next. Hence,

2. *A bodily Death befell Mankind according to the threatning of the firſt Covenant upon Adam's Tranſgreſſion.* That this was the Moral Cauſe of it, the Scriptures abundantly teſtify. If we conſider the commination of the firſt Covenant, *Gen.* 2. 17. as we muſt acknowledge a bodily Death to be one part, tho' not the whole of the Death there threatned, ſo there is a good Argument from thence, that if Man had not tranſgreſſed the Law, he had not dyed, for how ſhould that be threatned as a Penalty, which was a Condition of Nature? So we are aſſured that the Threatning did not only concern Adam *perſonally*, but it involved his whole Progeny. Hence we are told, 1 Cor. 15. 22. *In Adam all die*—. And if we would know how they dyed in him, we are acquainted that it was, as they were ſharers in his Sin, which was it that opened the door to let Death into the World, *Rom.* 6. 12. We are further acquainted, Rom. 6. 23. *The wages of ſin is death.* And if it be the Wages of Sin, how is it the Condition of Nature? Or how can we conceive that God inflicted a Penalty on Man for Sin, before he had incurred it by his Default?

3. THAT hence *Bodily Death was a part of the Curſe, which Sin brought upon Man.* That this Death is an evil in it ſelf, is a truth beyond Queſtion. Nature reſents it as ſuch, and for that reaſon reluctS againſt it. It is a privation of a natural Good, which is Life, and therefore muſt be Evil. The Godly themſelves would willingly avoid it if they could any other way come at perfect bleſſedneſs, 2 Cor. 5. 4. *For we that are in this tabernacle do grone, being burdened: not for that we would be uncloathed, but cloathed upon, that mortality might be ſwallowed up of life.* The Curſe is nothing elſe but that which is involved in Guilt, or that which by it the Sinner is bound to ſuffer, for Guilt is an Obligation lying upon a Creature to ſuffer Puniſhment. Now as Good is contained in the Promiſe, and nothing but Good, ſo nothing but Evil is in the Threatning: As therefore Life was promiſed to Man in caſe of Obedience, and was therefore part of the Bleſſing, ſo Death was threatned in caſe of Diſobedience, and ſo was part of the Curſe; and therefore Chriſt by Suffering of Death in our room, is ſaid to be *made a Curſe for us*, in Gal. 3. 13.

4. THAT *Jeſus Chriſt hath born the Curſe of the firſt Covenant for Believers.* He became a Surety for them to the Juſtice of God, and put himſelf under the Law for that end. The Penalties that he underwent, were not for himſelf, but thoſe whom he repreſented, and they were all ſuch, as were in time made Believers. Hence that, Gal. 2. 20. *Who loved me, and gave himſelf for me.* The Apoſtle therefore gives this account of all the Sorrows which he bare. *Iſai.* 53. 4,5,6. He interpoſed himſelf between the Wrath of God and his Elect, and took it all upon himſelf for their ſakes: And for this reaſon is he ſaid to be *made ſin for us*, 2 Cor. 5. 21.

5. THAT *Chriſt, in bearing the Curſe upon himſelf, hath born it away from his People.* We are therefore told for what reaſon *he was made a curſe*, Gal. 3. 13. *Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us.* And why he was *made ſin*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. *For he hath made him to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* So that now Juſtice cannot execute the Curſe upon Believers, becauſe it hath taken its Satisfaction upon Chriſt as their Surety: and a double Satisfaction for the ſame Offence is inconſiſtent with Equity. Nor indeed would Chriſt's End in taking our Penalty upon him be otherwiſe anſwered, which was to *redeem us from the Law, and the Curſe of it*, Gal. 4. 5. We are therefore told in Iſai. 53. 5. *He died that we might live.*

6. HENCE it follows, that *Death is no longer a Curſe to Believers, but turned into a Bleſſing.* All that was of Curſe in it is gone, for Chriſt hath born that, that we might be delivered from it; and if he could not have made a ſeparation between Death it ſelf, and the Curſe annexed to it, he would have taken that away too; but he both can and hath done it. *We muſt diſtinguiſh between Death, and the Sting of it*; and we are told what that is, and aſſured it is ſo taken from it, with reſpect to Believers, that they can challenge it, and triumph over it, 1 *Cor.* 15. 55,56. And now that is taken out of it, it becomes harmleſs to them. Nay it is put into the Inventory of the People of God, in, 1 Cor. 3. 22. —*Death is yours.*

7. THAT *God hath ſeen meet to make Death an introduction of the Believer to a more compleat Happineſs.* Here two Things are obſervable,

(1.) THAT *the neceſſity of the Believer's Dying is from Divine Ordination.* It is the Sovereign Pleaſure of God that it ſhould be ſo,

and

and we must ultimately refer it to that, as is evident on a double Consideration,

[1.] THAT *God could as easily have taken away Death it self as the Sting of it.* It is certain that Death is no more a Curse to a Child of God. Now it is a greater thing to remove that, than to restore Man to Immortality, altho' both are Divine Works, and require the Power of God to do them, and are equally easy to him, yet the thing it self is less, because when the Curse is taken out, the Man is an heir of *Immortality*: This *they seek for, and this at length they shall enjoy*, Rom. 2. 7.

[2.] THAT *if it had pleased him, he could have brought them to Heaven's Glory in another Way.* It is true, our perfect Blessedness is not to be enjoyed upon Earth, but is reserved for Heaven, and we must go thither for it; but God is not necessitated to bring us thither through the *Red Sea of Death*; there is a nearer way if God had judged it the best. *Enoch* and *Elias* were Translated, that they should not see Death. And so might we, but God saw it meet that it should be in this way. And hence he hath made a *Statute* for it, Heb. 9. 27. *It is appointed unto men once to die.*

(2.) THAT yet *God hath holy Designs, which he will advance in this way.* When we ascribe Sovereignty unto God, we do not separate it from the consideration of his infinite *Wisdom*, which we are assured *displays itself in all his Works*, Psal. 104. 28. God is an Intelligent Agent, and hath holy Ends in all his Works of Efficiency. He aims at his Glory in all, and he also consults the best Good of his Chosen. And hence, in our Conception, all his Dispensations to them are contrived for the best, for the advancing of these Designs. And tho' it be our Duty to acquiesce in the Divine Wisdom, and not over curiously to inquire into the Reasons of God's Doings, but to resolve, that it must be right and good, because he doth it, who is *holy in all his ways, and just in all his doings*; yet there is a sober and satisfying Account that may be given of this matter according to Scripture Light. For which let these things be observed,

1. THAT *God hath seen it meet for holy Ends, that Sin should abide in Believers in this Life.* They are here *renewed but in part.* They must carry a Body of Death about with them as long as they live. This he doth not for want of Power, but in Wisdom. He could as easily take away all Sin, and make them perfect in Holiness at once, as do it by degrees, but it hath not pleased him so to do; and this is not for nothing. He will make use of that remaining Sin in them for his own Glory, and their Good. He will have his saved ones to know the evil and bitterness of Sin, that so they may see what rich Grace it is that saveth them. This they cannot know before Conversion, for it is only Grace that can discern the vileness of Sin; but by the Presence and Molestation of it, they are made to cry out, as Rom. 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death.* He will have them to know that this Grace of his carrieth on the whole business of their Salvation, from the beginning to the end: that it not only puts them into a *state of Salvation*, but that it *preserves them in it*, 1 Pet. 1. 5. And this is witnessed in them by their Experience of the Sin that accompanies the best they do. He will have their Graces exercised in a Spiritual Warfare, for the proving and strengthning of them, and for that reason they shall have *another Law in their Members*, &c. Rom. 7. 23. And all this that they may have a Triumph after a Victory; when they have by his help proved their Fidelity to him. For these and such like Reasons God hath pleased to leave the Canaanites in the Land, Sin and Corruption, in the best of his Children.

2. THAT *imperfect Holiness is inconsistent with perfect Blessedness.* It is the mixture of Sin that makes the Holiness of God's Children imperfect. As long therefore as any of that abides, they are so far short. Now Sin is the Creatures misery; it must be utterly abolished, before he can be perfectly happy. It is the Felicity of the reasonable Creature, intirely to serve to the end it was made for, which it cannot do, so long as there is any Sin to alloy its Service. The Blessedness of Man is in Communion with God in Christ, the nearer to God the Fountain of all Good, the more happy, and every distance from him, is so far a misery; but so much as there is of Sin in him, so much there is of distance between God and him. Isai. 59. 2. *Your iniquities have separated between you and your God.*

3. THAT *God will have his Children conformable to their Head Christ.* As therefore he past through Death to his Glory, so shall they. True, there is another reason of the Death of Christ, and that of Believers. He died to satisfy for Sin, and therefore bare the Curse and Penalty of it, which they do not, because he hath already done it for them: Yet he sees meet, that in the way to Glory, they should follow him through Death. We must follow Christ if we would *be with him*, and for that we *must be dissolved*, Phil. 1. 23.

4. THAT *God hath reserved the manifestation of his Sons to another day, and will therefore that they have the common Lot with others here.* There is a time to come which is so called, and the *Creation* is said *to grone under vanity* till then, *Rom.* 8. 19, *&c.* As God's Children are Strangers here, so he will have them to go in a disguise, as to that which Men value things upon; and for that end, there shall be a promiscuous dispensation of outward Providence to Good and Evil, both in Life & Death, *Eccl.* 9. 2. God's Children are on this account called his *hidden ones*, Psal. 83. 3. And we are told, 1 Joh. 3. 2. *It doth not yet appear what we shall be.* The World count Believers miserable, and they are prejudiced at Godliness, because there is so much of Death in the Condition of them that do most profess it, and God suffers it to be so, because he hath Ordained a Day wherein he will gloriously discover the Mysteries of Providence to the whole World; and for this also it is convenient that Believers should dye.

5. THAT

5. THAT *God will bring his Redeemed to perfect Happineſs by Steps & Degrees.* Glorification is one of thoſe Benefits of which we obſerved, that they are not begun and perfected at once; but gradually. Now as Death gives them a wonderful lift towards this; ſo he will have another Change before it be every way compleat. How far the Happineſs of Believers is perfect at Death, will be conſidered in the opening of this Anſwer: But as Believers conſiſt of two eſſential parts, Soul and Body, ſo God gives the Soul firſt to paſs to the Glory provided, and reſerves a farther Tranſaction, in which he will confer this on the Body with the Soul, till when the Body is to dye, and be reſolved into it's duſt. Hence we have that in, Eccl. 12. 7. *Then ſhall the duſt return to the earth as it was: and the ſpirit ſhall return to God who gave it.*

6. THAT *God, to ſhew his Wiſdom & Power, hath made Death many ways ſerviceable to his People.* Tho' Death hath it's firſt proper Relation to the Covenant of Works, from which Relation Chriſt hath delivered Believers, yet he hath ſeen meet to bring it under the Service of the Covenant of Grace. The New-Covenant did not make Death, but found it fallen upon the ſinful Creature, and Chriſt hath made it to be, of an Enemy, a Servant: And herein both his Wiſdom & Power are diſplayed, and there is a manifold Service that he puts it ſo; and that more eſpecially in theſe reſpects,

(1.) *TO keep them humble and mortify'd to this World.* The Conſideration of our Mortality, is an abaſing thought, and therefore Men are often put in mind of it to keep them low. Hence that, *Pſal.* 146. 2, 3. *Gen.* 18. 27. and elſewhere. And *David* prays that God would ſavingly apply this thought to him, Pſal. 39. 4. *Lord, make me to know mine end, and the meaſure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am.* And it is very uſeful to the Children of God for the killing of their over eager Affections to the things here below. And this may ſafely be looked upon as a part of the meaning of that, Col. 3. 2, 3. *Set your affection on things above, and not on things on the earth, For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Chriſt in God.* This improvement good Old *Barzillai* made of the apprehenſion he had of his natural decays, and haſtning diſſolution, 2 *Sam.* 19. 34, &c.

(2.) *TO put them upon the more Diligence to prepare for another Life.* God makes the Lectures of Mortality, and Conſideration of the Death that awaits them, to be a continual Monitor to his People, to be laying up their Treaſures in another World, and redeeming their few hours of abode on Earth, for this end. This made thoſe ancient Patriarchs to be *ſeeking a better Country*, Heb. 11. 16. becauſe they *confeſſed that they were ſtrangers and pilgrims on the earth*, ver. 13. And a Child of God is never more diligent at his Work, than when he is moſt deeply engaged in the Contemplation of his ſhort abode here, and *haſtning Diſſolution*, 2 Pet. 1. 13, 14.

(3.) *TO give ſome of his Servants a peculiar Advantage to glorify him in their Death.* The Glorifying of Chriſt, is the Happineſs of his Children. Now he is glorifyed by their paſſive as well as by their active Obedience; and the higheſt pitch of this is, when they Die for his Teſtimony: which they would not be capable of, if they were exempted from Dying. We therefore have ſuch an expreſſion, Joh. 21. 19. *This ſpake he, ſignifying by what death he ſhould glorify God.* Hence we have *Paul's* exultation, Phil. 2. 17. *Yea, and if I be offered upon the ſacrifice & ſervice of your faith, I joy, and rejoyce with you all.* And it is the commendation of the Martyrs, Rev. 12. 11. *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their teſtimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death.*

(4.) *TO put an end to Sin in them.* And if it be their wretchedneſs to be peſtered with the reliques of Sin in them, then it muſt needs be their gain to be delivered from them; which is one reaſon of that Aſſertion, Phil. 1. 21. *For me—to dye is gain.* Now it is certain, that when the Body dies, all Sin in a Believer is put to an end. So ſome apply that, Rom. 6. 7. *For he that is dead, is freed from ſin.* And we are told, Rom. 8. 10. *And if Chriſt be in you, the body is dead becauſe of ſin: but the Spirit is life, becauſe of righteouſneſs.* i.e. becauſe Sin remains in it, and ſo it cauſeth when they dye.

(5.) *TO give them reſt from the Evils of this Life.* As long as they live they muſt encounter them. Job 14. 1. *Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble.* But now they are no more. And tho' the Bodies of the Wicked ſhare in this as well as the Godly, as it is meerly bodily, (*Job* 3. 17, 18.) yet with this difference, viz. it paſſeth over the Wicked to future Miſeries, and ends all Comforts of Soul and Body with them: whereas it puts an end to all Trouble both of Soul and Body with the Godly, and while their Bodies are at reſt, their Souls are in bliſs. Rev. 14. 13. *And I heard a voice from heaven, ſaying unto me, Write, Bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their labours, and their works do follow them.*

(6.) *TO reſerve their Bodies for a glorious Change in the laſt Day.* The Bodies of Believers in this Life are the Subjects of all the Infirmities that Sin brought upon them, and hence they Dye and ſee Corruption, and are the Subjects of that diſhonour that attends ſuch a State; but this is but a Seeds-Time, for a new Springing of them up again, that when they are reſtored they may appear in glorious luſtre; according to that, 1 *Cor.* 15. 42, 43, 44. So that there is no harm but good every way accruing to God's Children by Dying. But of the Happineſs it ſelf, we are nextly to treat.

USE. *LET this then ſerve to reconcile the Hearts of Believers to Death.* It is indeed terrible to Nature, and that cannot but ſtartle at the Apprehenſion of it: But do you labour

to make ſure of your Vocation; and then remember, that as God hath determined, that you muſt paſs through this *dark Entry*, and hence there is no avoiding it, ſo Chriſt hath turned it from being a Miſchief into a Benefit, and hath taken it out the Curſe, and put it into your Inventory. And becauſe you muſt Dye, make it your great Buſineſs to Dye well, and then you need not be afraid of it, but be able to look on it with this reflection, This alſo ſhall turn to my Account.

[OCTOBER 24. 1699.]

SERMON CXXXIX.

II. WE proceed *to conſider the Happineſs of Believers at their Death*, which is here aſſerted and deſcribed. That theſe muſt Dye as well as other Men hath been Diſcourſed, and the Reaſons of it Exhibited. That which is now to be made appear, is their certain Happineſs when they Dye. And here two Things may be cleared, viz. 1. *That all Believers, and none but ſuch ſhall be happy at their Death.* 2. *The things wherein this Happineſs of theirs doth conſiſt.*

1. *THAT all Believers, and none but ſuch, ſhall be happy at their Death.* Death is the common Lot of all Men, *Pſal.* 49. 10. & 89. 48. Every Godly Man expects it, and will ſay as he, Job 30. 23. *For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the houſe appointed for all living.* But to be happy when they come to Dye, is a Prerogative of thoſe that are entitled to Chriſt by Faith in him. According to Rev. 14. 13. *Bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord.* Death indeed was brought in as a Penalty, being the execution of the threatning, *Gen.* 2. 17. It was therefore Sin that introduced it, *Rom.* 5. 12. and ſo it is part of the Curſe: and all the poiſon of it lies in *Sin*, which is *its ſting*, 1 Cor. 15. 56. But this Curſe is removed from the Children of God, and they may make that triumphant Challenge, ver. 55. *O Death, where is thy Sting?* It can therefore no longer obſtruct their Felicity. But that is not all, it ſhall alſo contribute to their well Being, for which reaſon it is put into their Inventory, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22. There is an Inchoate Bleſſedneſs, which God's People partake in in this Life, which they would not exchange for all the delights of this World, which the moſt flouriſhing Minion of it doth enjoy; but Death paſſeth them over to a yet more glorious State, and makes an inexpreſſible advance of their Happineſs. Every Believer hath this ſecured to him, for the Promiſe of Eternal Life is ſettled on all ſuch without exception, *Joh.* 3. 16. It is therefore indefinitely aſſerted, in Pſal. 116. 15. *Precious in the ſight of the Lord is the death of his ſaints.* But the Wicked are not ſo: And tho' Death eaſeth them of ſome preſent Calamities of this Life, according to *Job.* 3. 17, 18. yet in the whole, it adds to their Miſery, in that it puts an end to all their Hopes, ſhuts up their Day of Grace, poſts their Souls to Eternal Torments, and lays by their Bodies in Corruption, to be reſerved for an amazing Reſurrection, and more aſtoniſhing Eternity. The Foundation of this felicity of the Sons of God, is laid in the Covenant of Grace, whoſe Promiſes engroſs this. For we are told, 1 Tim. 4. 8. *Godlineſs is profitable unto all things, having promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.* But this will be made to appear by conſidering the thing it ſelf; we paſs on then to conſider,

2. *THE Things wherein this Happineſs of theirs doth conſiſt?*

Anſ. IN ſum, *There are the precious Benefits which Chriſt hath reſerved for, and will confer upon them at that time, and theſe refer to the whole Man, in both the conſtituent Parts of it.* Man conſiſts of two eſſential Parts, Soul and Body; the Union of theſe two denominates the Man entire; and ſo the ſeperation of them divides the Man from himſelf; the Soul, being made for the Body, is but a part of the Man, when divided from it, becauſe it wants ſomething that is of the eſſence of Humanity: And the Body when left by the Soul, is a Carcaſs. But for all this, tho' God hath appointed them to ſuch a ſeperate ſtate, during his good Pleaſure, there are thoſe Priviledges beſtowed on each of them, for which we may truly call them happy. We have an account of theſe ſeverally, and may accordingly take them up.

1. *LET us take a proſpect of the Happineſs of the Soul, or the Benefits it enters upon at Death.* The Soul is the principal part of the Man. It is by this that he is a reaſonable Creature, and enjoys a more noble Being than any other piece of the viſible Creation, and is but *a little lower than the Angels.* As therefore, by the loſs of this, the Man is undone, (*Mat.* 16. 26.) ſo, if it be well with this, he is certainly made for ever. Now the Believers Soul doth, upon its quitting the Body, enter upon Bleſſedneſs, in ſome reſpect perfect. *Happineſs may be ſaid to be perfect, either Eſſentially, or Complementally.* Now it is a Complement of the perfect Felicity of the Soul, to enjoy the Body in Conjunction with it, participating in its delights, and con-glorify'd together with it, in which reſpect, it is not yet perfectly bleſſed, becauſe it waits for that happy re-union, of which it hath a natural deſire. Hence that, Rom. 8. 23. —*Waiting for the adoption*, to wit, *the redemption of our body.* There is alſo the gathering together of all the Elect, and the making up of all Chriſt's Redeemed in the Church Triumphant, which will contribute to the Complemental Happineſs of Believers, for which he muſt wait till the Conſummation of all things. But as to that which is the Eſſential Happineſs of the Soul, conſidered, as it is a Spiritual Subſtance, it enters upon that at Death. And this is it we are now to Contemplate. But what low ſhallow Conceptions are we capable of entertaining at preſent,

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about thisMyſtery ? It is but a little that we know about the nature & preſent ſtate of our Souls, how much leſs then of that which is future ? Nay, the Word of God it ſelf tells us, that *it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be*, 1 Joh. 3.2. i.e. in that Clarity which we ſhall ſee theſe things in hereafter. But, if thePhiloſopher could ſay, that a little, tho' confuſed knowledge of Heavenly things, is to be preferred to a great deal, how diſtinct ſoever, of Earthly ; may not the Chriſtian much more? Let us then ſoberly inquire into this matter, by the Light which the Word of God affords us for our help, by laying open the Deſcription which our Catechiſm gives us of it. Here then, two Things are to be taken notice of, viz. 1. *The Immediateneſs of the Souls Happineſs at Death.* 2. *The Things wherein it is then made Happy.* Of which ſeverally.

1. *THE Souls of Believers do at Death Immediately enter upon their Happineſs.* And this differenceth the ſtate of the Soul, from that of the Body, from the time of our Diſſolution, till the Reſurrection ; the Body is reſerved for its Glory, but the Soul is preſently inveſted with it. There is a drowſy Opinion of ſome, who ſuppoſe the Soul to fall aſleep in the Body, and continue ſo till awakned by the Sound of the laſt Trumpet, and ſo make the Happineſs of that alſo, to be only in reverſion ; and they produce ſome miſinterpreted Scriptures in defence of it. A very diſcouraging Opinion, and enough to terrify a Child of God at the thoughts of Dying : For, *tho' it be after but a poor and imperfect manner that he glorifieth God here, yet it is better than not to do it at all.* It can be no comfortable thing to loſe part of that Happineſs by dying, the Perfection whereof we were groaning after. Had it been ſo, *Paul* needed not to have been *in a ſtrait*, Phil. 1. 23. The Queſtion would ſoon have been reſolved : it is better to ſerve God in infirmity, than not at all, better to have obſcure ſights of God, than loſe all, and be in no better Condition at preſent neither for Soul nor Body, than the Beaſts that periſh. But it is nothing ſo, but quite otherwiſe : The man's actual Happineſs is wonderfully increaſed by Dying : The Soul in its very paſſage out of the Body paſſeth into a wonderful Felicity, the Change is made in a moment. And this may be confirmed,

(1.) FROM *Scripture Teſtimony :* Which gives us abundant Light for the eſtabliſhing of this Concluſion. *Paul* tells us, Phil. 1. 21. *To dye is Gain.* But what Gain, if neither Soul nor Body be immediately bettered. And he adds to aſſure us, *ver.* 23. that if he dye, he ſhall *be with Chriſt, and that is far better* than to live. Surely then it contributes to his well being. What ſaid Chriſt to the dying Thief, Luk. 23. 43. *To day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe.* This muſt both intend his Soul, and point to a ſtate of Bleſſedneſs. Dying *Stephen* commends his departing Soul to Chriſt, asking his entertainment of it, *Act.* 7. 52. The Beggars Soul is preſently wafted into *Abraham's* Boſom, *Luk.* 16. 22. This is given for the Encouragement of the Martyrs, who were called to loſe their Lives in Chriſt's Cauſe, *Rev.* 14. 13. And for this reaſon the Scripture ſo often ſpeaks of Godly Men's being *gathered to their People*, as of *Jacob*, Gen. 49. 33.

(2.) FROM the *Nature of the Soul*, conſidered with the ſtate the Believer is in by the New Covenant. This may be opened in a few Particulars,

1. *THE Reaſonable Soul is capable of performing its Operations in a ſeparate State independent on the Body.* The Body indeed was an Organ fitted for its Uſe, but the Soul is a Spiritual Subſtance, and hath its Faculties proper to it, and inſeperable from it, which are powers of Operation ; it doth many things by itſelf, without the help of the Body, while in it, which prove it able to act without the aid of this Inſtrument. It hath an Underſtanding, Will, and Affections, like the Angels, and can therefore contemplate, chuſe, refuſe, rejoyce, &c. The Soul is a Spirit, and Spirits have their Operations, elſe Angels would be uſeleſs.

2. *THE ſeparate Soul, cannot be, and be out of Action.* It is a ſtrain beyond Hyperbole, of them that ſay, Angels and the Souls of Men are *pure Acts*, which is to aſcribe an abſolute Deity to them ; but yet, the Souls Activity is inceſſant, and is ſo twiſted in its nature, that it muſt ceaſe to be a Soul in loſing of it. The Soul in the Body never ſleeps, is never tired, is always buſy, tho' the Body be aſleep. It is contrary to the nature of a Soul to lie ſtill, and nothing but Annihilation can put it out of Action, which it doth not undergo at Death.

3. *IT muſt needs be happy or miſerable in that Activity.* And it is certain, that the Souls of Believers muſt be happy. For the Covenant-Promiſe hath ſecured their Bleſſedneſs at the end of their Race. Now their working time is over, and *their Works* are to *follow them*, Rev. 14. 13. i.e. the Glorious Rewards of them. The departing Soul goes to receive its Recompence, and conſequently muſt either enter into a ſtate of Felicity or Infelicity ; nor can the active Soul be conceived to be in neither : either it acts with Delight, and that is its Happineſs, or with Sorrow, which is its Miſery.

4. *THE ſeparate Soul paſſeth immediately unto a Judgment.* Death and Judgment are connected, as things whereof, one treads on the heels of the other, Heb. 9. 27. *It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.* So that beſides the Great and General Judgment of the Laſt Day, where both Soul and Body will be openly proceeded with ; the Soul paſſeth a particular one, on its Departure, for the diſpoſing of it till that other comes. And what need of this, but that it may preſently enter upon its Joy ? There would be no Occaſion for it, if the Soul ſlept till the Laſt Day.

5. *WICKED Men's Souls do immediately paſs*

into Torments. Their Miſery is not delayed, nor do they ſleep. For tho' this Truth be put into a Parable, yet the main ſcope of the Parable, is to give us an account of the vaſt Change that Death makes upon men. And we read of the *rich man*, Luk. 16. 23. *In Hell he lift up his eyes being in Torments*— And by parity of reaſon we may argue, to the preſent Felicity of the Souls of the Godly; and doubtleſs, *Abraham's Boſom, where Lazarus's Soul was carried by a Convoy of Angels*, ver. 22. intends that which is contrary to Hell, and ſo muſt point us to Heaven's Glories, in a ſtate of Bleſſedneſs. And how comfortable a tho't is this for the Children of God to think upon, when they have a proſpect of their Diſſolution, and feel in them the tokens of the haſtning of it; to look forward and ſay, this dark Entry opens into a glorious Light; a few moments, and this Soul will take its flight from a mortal Body, and the firſt look it ſhall make, will ſatisfy it, when it findeth itſelf compaſſed with the badges of Eternal Glory: When its Doubts are all fully ſatisfy'd, and it ſhall paſs into thoſe Hands which ſhall guard it to the Eternal Kingdom. Let us believe this firmly, and let our perſwaſion of it, make us cheerfully ready to depart at the firſt Call.

2. *PASS we now over to the Things wherein the Soul is then made Happy*: Theſe are two, 1. *It is made perfect in Holineſs.* 2. *It paſſeth into Glory.* And what a World of Felicity do theſe graſp in them? Here then,

1. *THE Soul is then made perfect in Holineſs.* I ſhall here wave inſiſting on the Enlagement which the Soul now receives from the Inconveniences it ſuffered in and with the Body: either as to its Operation in the Body, which through the defects & infirmities of it much impeded its work; or in regard of its Sympathy with the Body, in all thoſe ſorrows and troubles that attended it, which were many and grievous, from all which it is ſet at liberty, Rev. 14. 13. *They reſt from their Labours.* Here is that which will ſwallow up all: The Work of Sanctification is now conſummated. We are made holy in Regeneration, the *Image of God is renewed in us in Holineſs*, Eph. 4. 14. And when this was done for the Man, he began to live. Bnt this was but in part. How happy then will he be, when this is arrived at the top of Perfection? And here let us take a brief account of this matter, in which the Nature of this Benefit will be opened, and the Souls Felicity by it made to appear, in a few Glances.

1. *MAN is made happy, only by reaching the End of his Being.* It is a Maxim undoubted, that the End, and the Good of a thing are one. Now the Good that Man was made capable of, was Happineſs; and there was a way laid out for him to obtain it in and by, and in the miſſing whereof, he muſt needs be miſerable. For man to loſe his End, is his Miſery. If the Reaſonable Creature do finally fall under Vanity, he is undone, which he muſt do, if he miſs his end, for that is the very Nature of Vanity.

2. *THE Glory of God was Man's laſt End.* That which is the higheſt Object of Man's Service, that muſt be his laſt End; which can be no other but God and his Glory. There is a Service and a Reward, but the latter muſt pay an entire ſubordination to the former. God hath made ſuch a Connexion between our Glorifying him, and Enjoying of Eternal Life, that Man's Happineſs or Miſery turns upon it, 1 Sam. 2. 30. *Them that honour me, I will honour, and they that deſpiſe me ſhall be lightly eſteemed.*

3. *IT was neceſſary for Man's being able thus to glorify God and be happy, that he ſhould have a Principle of Holineſs concreated with him.* There was a Rule given to Man, in compliance with which, he was to ſerve to his End, and becauſe that Rule was holy, it was neceſſary that he ſhould have an habitual Holineſs conformable to it, elſe he would have certainly come ſhort of it, which could not agree with Infinite Wiſdom in making him for ſuch an End. We are therefore told, Eccl. 7. 29. *Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have ſought out many inventions.*

4. *WHEN Man loſt this Holineſs, he utterly diſabled himſelf from ſerving to his great End.* He did not fall out from ſpecial Government: God could ſtill glorify himſelf upon him: but he could not now actually glorify God. Joſh. 24. 19. *And Joſhua ſaid unto the people, Ye cannot ſerve the Lord; for he is an holy God: he is a jealous God, he will not forgive your tranſgreſſions nor your ſins.* Rom 3. 12, 23. *They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doth good, no not one. For all have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God.* He thus became *without ſtrength*, Rom. 5. 6.

5. *HE is again reſtored to this Power by the renewal of the Principle of Holineſs in Converſion.* In this he is made a *New Creature*, 2 Cor. 5. 17. Hereby, *he who* before *was dead, is quickned*, Eph. 2. 1. And by being made alive, he begins to be able to put forth Life-Actions, tho' at firſt very infirm; for according to the ſtrength of the principle influencing, ſuch will be the Action done by it.

6. *IT is the Believers preſent Infelicity, that this Grace of his, is in this Life imperfect.* i. e. His Happineſs cannot be perfect ſo long as it is thus with him, becauſe there is ſo much of his former Miſery abiding on him. And there is nothing equally afflictive to a Child of God, when himſelf, with this: all other Troubles of this Life are ſmall, compared with it. *Paul* can triumph over other Trials, and ſay, as Rom. 8. 18. *For I reckon that the ſufferings of this preſent time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed in us.* But of this he cries out as one under terrible diſtreſs, *Rom.* 7. 24.

7. *THIS Work of Sanctification in a Believer is Progreſſive, from the hour of his Converſion.* This Foundation is laid with a deſign to be perfected, *Phil* 1. 6. In order whereto, as God affords his Word and Ordinances to be help-

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ful to this End, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. So he affords ſuitable Influences of his Spirit to carry it on, and give Efficacy to all the Means, in purſuance of the New Covenant Promiſes for this, *Pſal.* 92. 12. *Prov.* 14. 18. Job 17. 9. *But he righteous ſhall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands ſhall be ſtronger & ſtronger.*

8. *THERE is yet much of this Work to do, when a Saint comes to dye.* When their Death comes, it finds not the Work done, but their Bleſſedneſs is that they are ſtill doing it, Mat. 24. 46. *Bleſſed is that ſervant, whom his Lord when he cometh ſhall find ſo doing.* A Child of God groans under the ſenſe of his ſinful Imperfection to his laſt Breath, and ſometimes is ſo Oppreſſed with it, as he ſeems to ſet in a Cloud.

9. *IN the inſtant of Death, all that remains to be done, is compleated.* No ſinful imperfection is to accompany any of God's Children beyond this Life. When that ends, their Souls have that denomination, Heb. 12. 23. *To the general aſſembly and church of the firſtborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the ſpirits of juſt men, made perfect.* Their Sanctification is now compleated in all its degrees. And here,

(1.) *THERE is a total Ceſſation of Sin.* The defilements of it are wholly waſhed off. All habits of, and inclinations to Sin ceaſe: Nor could the Soul without this be fit either for the Place or Company it is going unto. *Heaven admits no defilement*, Rev. 21. 27. Full Communion with an holy God cannot be had, where any dregs of pollution abide. Chriſt preſents them to himſelf *without ſpot or wrinkle.* And a ſinleſs Soul, muſt be an happy Soul.

(2.) *THEIR Grace now arrives to an entire Perfection.* 1 Cor. 13. 10. *But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part is done away.* Some Graces are reckoned Militant, and others Triumphant: The former are for our Warfare, in withſtanding & vanquiſhing Temptation, and doing Duty; theſe will be perfected, in that they will enjoy a full Triumph over all that reſiſted them. But the other, which are principally Love & Joy, will be filled and run over, in the Exerciſes whereof the Soul ſhall ſolace itſelf forever. And being perfectly holy, it ſhall take compleat and unwearied Delight in all the Beatitudes, which it ſhall there poſſeſs.

Use. *HOW happy then muſt the Soul needs be, in the poſſeſſion of this Benefit?* When it is thus prepared to be filled with all the Glories of Heaven, all of which are full of Holineſs, and can happify us no farther than we are holy? Then alſo ſhall we be enabled to Glorify God for ever, to the utmoſt Capacity of our Nature, moſt extenſively and unwearyedly. Where the loud Sound, of Hallelujah's, Eternally, ſhall not tire our Spirits, or make us weary. Let this then ſweeten the thot's of Death to Believers. If a little Holineſs in exerciſe be now ſo ſweet to you, how precious will the Compleatneſs of it be? Let then, the aſſured Expectation of this, make you reckon the Day of your Death, far better than that wherein you were born. And let ſuch thoughts as theſe, *I am haſtning to the Time and State wherein I ſhall ſin no more, never be troubled with one Temptation more, when I ſhall be compleat in Chriſt, and filled with his Fulneſs, and enabled, to love, admire, praiſe and delight in him for ever, without Interruption or Wearineſs*, make you cheerfully look out for the approach of that Change which will introduce you into this ſo longed for Felicity.

[December 19. 1699.]

SERMON CXL.

2. THE Soul being thus *perfected in Holineſs, paſſeth into Glory.* It is neceſſary that Holineſs in them be thus compleated in order to that paſſage. And that whether we conſider the Glory which they paſs over into, do refer to a State, Place, Entertainment, or Employment; all of which are included in it: and in neither whereof can we be intirely happy, till we are indefectively holy. The very Nature of the Bleſſedneſs which God confers on his Children infers this. Our wretchedneſs therefore ſo long abides as there abides any thing of the body of Death with us. But now the Soul, being immaculate, enters upon its Glory. Which, what it is, who can tell, but one that hath been in the poſſeſſion of it? Or who could entertain it, while clogged with the remains of Sin? *Paul* once had an admirable proſpect of it, but he could not tell how, nor could he declare what it was, though it made admirable impreſſions on his heart, 2 *Cor.* 12. *begin.* However the reports that are made of it in the Word of God are ſurprizing. And that may be peculiarly applied to this, Pſal. 87. 3. *Glorious things are ſpoken of thee, O city of God. Selah.* Let us then make a few Remarks upon it, under the Four forecited Heads, in which we may have a reliſhing taſte of the future Happineſs of the Souls of Believers, when they are paſt out of the Body.

1. *THE Soul enters into a Glorious State.* Glory is often taken for a ſtate tranſcendently excellent: Such is the Condition the Soul now arrives at. And in this two Things are conſiderable, viz.

1. *IT is ſet at liberty from thoſe evil things which incommoded it in this Life.* There were ſuch things here which clogged it, & alloyed its felicity, which are now removed from it, or rather it from them. And theſe of Four ſorts,

(1.) *ALL that impeded it in its Operations, when in the Body now ceaſeth.* The Body was made to be the Souls Organ in performing its Operations, for which reaſon it was much tied up to the quality of its Inſtrument. The Body was at the firſt excellently ſuited for this

this Service, but the Apostacy hath put it out of tune, and every string of it now jarrs. The Body is so indisposed for the Souls performing its imperate acts by it, that it can do nothing that it should or would. And, tho' it be Sanctified in part, yet it hath much of Death abiding on it, which makes the Soul drive heavily in all spiritual Service. An heavy, drowsy, lumpish Body, moves slowly: And the very constitution of the Body, & disposition of the Organs of it, and Spirits in it, blind the Understanding, indispose the Will, distemper the Affections: And the many Accidents it is liable to, unfit it for Service; and while it is so, what poor work must it make? But now all these Fetters are knock'd off, and it enjoys full freedom for its own Operations: And because Sin had turned its House into a Prison, it is part of its present happiness to be inlarged.

(2.) *ALL that it suffered by sympathy with the Body is now at an end.* The Body was its own, and it had a tenderness for it. If a finger did but ake, it was affected with it. All the miseries of this Life touched it: The cares and sollicitudes for Life and Bodily support, the labour and travail he was put to; the hunger, thirst, nakedness, and distress, he encountred; the infirmities he laboured of; were not a light burthen and vexation to the Soul. This also now it is discharged from; these Tears are all wiped away. It hath commended its Body to Christ's care and keeping, and is no more careful for it.

(3.) *IT hath now done with Sinning.* This belongs to its perfection in Holiness; where we observed it. But we are to observe that this very thing belongs to its state of Glory. Hither we may refer that, Rom. 6. 7. *For he that is dead, is freed from sin.* A sinless state is a Glorified estate. It was its greatest misery here, and therefore this must be an happifying Priviledge then. And that which enhanceth this is, that not only shall all inclinations to Sin cease, but it shall be out of the reach of all temptations to it. None shall be offered to it from without, nor will there be any more danger of being overcome by them, if they were offered.

(4.) *IT shall no more forever be molested with Evil Men, and Sorrowful Things that it met with in this Life.* *David* complains, Psal. 120. 5,6. *Wo is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar. My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace.* And hence wisheth, Psal. 55. 6,7. *And I said, O that I had wings like a dove; for then would I fly away, and be at rest. Lo, then would I wander afar off, and remain in the wilderness. Selah.* No more shall he be persecured with the Tongues and Hands of them that hate him; false Friends, and open Enemies shall molest him no more: his righteous Soul shall be vexed no more with the evil Conversation of the Ungodly; nor shall it any more cry out by reason of Murderers. Nor shall it any longer be grieved at the doleful Changes that imbitter it in this World; mourning for the publick Calamities that here troubled it, shall be at an end. *Jeremiah* hath done with that Eligiack strain, *Jer.* 4. 19. The wicked Lives, and tragical Deaths of dearest Friends, and Relations, shall no more affect it: All these Labours it shall perfectly rest from. It was therefore one part of the blessedness promised to Godly *Josiah* consequent upon his being gathered to his Fathers in peace, 2 Chron. 34. 28. *Behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and upon the inhabitants of the same.*

2. *IT is filled with all those Glories which abundantly satisfy it.* Its Happiness is not only Negative, but Positive too. Its Condition shall give it the most inlarged Content. This in summ comprehends two Things in it.

(1.) *IT shall be advanced to the possession of all the Good that was secured to it in the Promise; and that is Glory Incomprehensible.* The Promises are great and precious, and the performance of them shall exceed the report it had of them here. It shall pass from faith to sight, from hope to enjoyment; from sips and tastes, and earnests, to the whole Inheritance. And if the Apostle could say of the beginnings enjoyed here, 1 Cor. 2. 9. *But it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* What then shall it be, when it comes to that, Psal. 16. 11 *Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.*

(2.) *IT shall be forever delighted in that Possession.* Its desires shall be filled, all its hopes shall be answered, it shall be made suitable to all those Beatitudes, that are prepared for its Entertainment. Could *David* say of the Sanctuary Priviledges, Psal. 63. 5. *My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow & fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips.* What will these be? But the Positive Felicity of this state, will be further Illustrated in the Things that follow.

2. *THE Soul shall enter into a Glorious Place, to dwell in for ever.* And there is unexpressible Glory contained in its passing over to this Place, and entrance into it. Here two things,

(1.) *THE Soul shall have a Glorious Convoy, to transport it to the place of its endless abode.* It shall be honourably and safely Guarded thither by the Holy Angels. We read in Luk. 16. 22. *And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the Angels into Abraham's bosom.* Which, tho' it be a Parable, yet the proper scope and design of it, is to give us to understand the different state of the Souls of Men in another Life. As it is the happiness of Believers to have the Ministry of the blessed Angels in this Life, they shall be herein also happy, in having their Souls conducted by these to their Everlasting Habitations. There is a vast distance between this Earth, where the Soul was lately conversing in its Body,

and

and that Heaven to which it is to remove: It is called the highest Heaven. It is far above the Starry Region. The Soul must pass thro' this medium to its place of Abode. This passage lies in a great part through the Air, which is called the Devils Kingdom; and the Soul never went that way before. How happy an advantage then is it, to have this Royal Convoy granted it? God hereby puts a great honour on his Children, who were despised in this World, by affording them such noble Attendants, and witnesseth his great love, care, and respect which he hath for them. There is compleat safety in it; they can neither miss the way, nor suffer danger in it by affronts from their deadly Enemies. And it cannot but be inexpressibly delightful, to go home in such precious Company; and what pleasant & ravishing Communion they shall have in the way, we can but guess.

2. *THE Heaven, to which it now goes, is a Glorious Place.* There have been great Disputes about the Place to which the Souls of God's Children go when they die. But the Word of God may satisfy us, that they remove from the Body to the Third Heaven. Nothing else can be intended by the *Paradise*, Luk. 23. 43. 2 *Cor.* 12. 8. And by *Abraham's Bosom*, Luk. 16. 22. Hence plainly opposed to Hell, *ver.* 23. The Soul goes to be with Christ, *Phil.* 1. 23. and that is, to Heaven. Compare, *Act.* 3. 21. As for those who interpret these, and like Scriptures, of a State, and not of a Place, they mistake the nature of Souls: And the scruples about the Souls of such as died before Christ's Ascension, are nice and needless; for, as they were saved by the vertue of his Merits, accepted in the Everlasting Covenant, so their Souls went to Heaven on the same account. And how unspeakably will this contribute to the Souls Felicity, since it is a Place so Glorious in it self, and was made on purpose for the most satisfying Entertainment of those that shall be made the Inhabitants of it. All the commendations that are given of that Place in the Word of God, are evidences, that they must needs be transcendently happy who shall come to dwell there. It is a Place of Delights in it self, it was prepared for them from the foundation of the World, on purpose to discover what good-will God had for his Chosen in Christ. Hither then they shall be brought, and here they shall be lodged. Here they had no continuing City, but they looked for one, and now they are arrived at it. And it must needs be Glorious from the commendations given of it, 2 Cor. 5. 1. *For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* Heb. 11. 10. *For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*

3. *THE Souls Entertainment in this Place shall be very Glorious.* As the Place it self is exceedingly Accommodated for the Souls Eternal Felicity, so every thing that it meets with there, shall be excellently suited to the happifying of it. *Paul*, who had been there in a rapture, could not utter these things, 2*Cor.* 12. 4. How little then can we tell of it, who have had but some remote reports about it? But certainly, their Entertainment there will be compleatly happifying. And there are Four Things wherein this more especially consists,

1. *THE Reception which they shall have in Heaven on their first Arrival, which will be very Glorious.* How happy will the Soul then find it self to be, when those Noble Angels shall bring it into the Presence Chamber, into the Holy Court, and present it to the Lord Jesus Christ, its Redeemer. When he shall with widened Arms receive it, and with the most tender Embraces, lodge it in his Bosom, and thereby give it the feeling Assurances of His Everlasting Love. When Heaven, which before rejoyced at his Conversion, shall be made to ring with Acclamations of Joy, upon his Entrance into it; and give signal Testimonies how glad they are that their Company is increased, and a new Guest is removed from the Church Militant to the Church Triumphant. When the Lord Jesus Christ shall bring him to that stately Mansion which he had prepared for him, and make all the Glories of that blessed Place to rest upon him.

2. *THE Communion they shall be entertained with, will also be very Glorious.* Man is made a sociable Creature. The Communion therefore which he shall have in Heaven, will abundantly contribute to his Felicity: In two respects,

(1.) *THE Company it self which they shall forever enjoy, is Glorious.* He therefore who is made one of that blessed Society, & enjoys freedom and commerce with them, must need be happy in it. We have an account of this, Heb. 12. 22, 23, 24. *But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly & church of the first born which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. And to Jesus the mediator of the new Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.* And every one of these is Glorious. There is God, in whose Favour is Life, one Smile of whose Countenance is enough to fill the Soul with extasy. There is Jesus Christ the Mediator, He who purchased it with his Blood. And if a sight of him by Faith be so Transporting, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. What will it be to dwell in his Presence, and sit down on his Throne with him for ever? And there are all the Blessed Angels, that innumerable Company, whose Love to God's Chosen is very great, and whose Society will be honourable and suitable to the Spiritual Nature of the Soul. And there are all the blessed Souls that went before it, who will delight in its access to them. And being purged from all the dregs of sinful imperfection that here attended them;

them, which often obstructed their Communion on Earth; and made perfect in Holiness, shall lay aside all their jealousies and animosities, and with one heart love one another intirely, and joyn with the most entire unity in the Heavenly Consort. Here is all Good Company, and such as the Soul now perfected in Holiness is only suited for, and in whom it shall take the greatest delight; such as he longed for when on Earth, and was best pleased when he could get a little imperfect Communion with in this World.

(2.) *THE manner of the Souls Communion there shall be greatly Happifying.* There was a Communion which they had with these in this Life, which they took much content in, but it was more remote, and at a distance, and much alloyed: But now it will be close and intimate. It was much interrupted by many sinful imperfections, and unhappy diversions, but now it will be incessant, nor shall any thing obscure it. It was more mediate, and through dark glasses; but now it will be immediate, and face to face. It was in lowest degrees, but now it will be in the highest degree the Soul is capable of. It is now entertained by Christ as his Spouse, the Marriage compleated; it is with him at his own home, in his Palace, and filled with his Company. God the Father receives it, with the most inlarged expressions of his Divine Love to it. Angels and glorified Souls are its most intimate Companions, and they live and converse together in Glory for ever.

3. *THE Discoveries which shall then be made unto the Soul, will be Glorious and Happifying.* Man's Soul is of an intellectual Nature, and its Happiness is suited to a rational Being. The Beatifical Vision is therefore much used in the Word of God to set forth its future Blessedness, 1 Joh. 3.2. *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is.* 1 Cor.13.12. *For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part, but then shall I know even as I am known.* As the sight of the mind was here but dim, so the medium was comparatively obscure; so that the Vision was Ænigmatical: And yet there are some Souls that can tell us, what glorious Raptures they have been transported into by these sights, when Christ took them into his Chambers, and spread over them his banner of Love; when his left Hand was under their Head, and his right Hand imbraced them. What will it be then, when their sight shall be clear and perfect, & they shall see him as he is? These Visions of Glory cannot be cloathed with humane language, or made intelligible to us while we dwell in houses of Clay. To see God in the full displays of all his communicable Glory, to see Christ sitting on his exalted Throne, invested with his Mediatorial Honour and Dignity; to dwell in God's Light, and in it to be irradiated with all the radiant beams of desireable knowledge; to discern the wonderful Love of God to us from Eternity, to read the Mysteries of Providence, and all the passages of Infinite Wisdom, in that wonderful way in which he conducted us, and contemplate all the Excellencies of the Heavenly Kingdom, will certainly satisfy the Soul, and fill it with over-running Glory.

4. *THE Fruitions also which it shall then be made to enjoy, are Glorious.* Here he lived upon Promises, and would not have exchanged that Life with all the World. That which he before believed, and by Faith had the substance of, he now is actually invested with, and he hath the things themselves. The Will was made for Goodness; and when it comes to have an intire closure with that which is every way compleat, it is then consummated in its Blessedness. The Soul now goes to enter upon its Inheritance, and enjoy it all; it receives all that Christ purchased for it, and lives upon the Eternal Incomes of it. Jesus Christ sets it down upon the Throne made ready for it, puts the Crown upon it; and now it lives at the Fountain: God in Christ is its everlasting Portion. It is filled with the fulness of Joy which is in his Presence, and the Everlasting Pleasures that are at his Right Hand. Its desires, and longings are compleatly answered. And what is this less than perfect Happiness?

4. *THE Souls Employments also here are most Happifying.* As there is an objective, so a formal happiness of the reasonable Creature, and that consists in Eupraxy, or such an Employment as is suitable to it. Actual Happiness therefore consists in the closure of the Faculty with its Object. Man's Soul cannot rest without being employed in such actions as are happyfying. All the business of the State and Place is Glorious, and the perfect freedom of the Soul in it must needs render it blessed: And besides what the Body will be concerned in another Day, there are some purely Spiritual, which belong hither: More especially Three,

1. *IT shall be filled with Divine Contemplations.* By these shall the glorifyed Understanding be employed. It shall unweariedly gaze upon such delightful Objects as shall fill it with Raptures; viz. the Glorious Perfections of God, as his own Portion, which will supply him with Eternal matter of fresh Speculation, which will make them ever new. The great Mysteries of the Trinity, the Hypostatical Union of the Two Natures in the Person of the Son of God, the Mystical Union of Believers to Christ; all the Series of Providence, the curious Contrivances in bringing about the Divine Purposes, and defeating the Policies of Hell; all the new manifestations of himself which God shall make to them, will be surprizing, and make them to say, *it is good being here.* Thus will they be ever *Drinking of the Rivers of Pleasures.*

2. *IT shall always exercise perfectest Love, and Joy.* The Soul it self is not without such

Powers

Powers in it. These are therefore ascribed to the Angels; because they have something Analogous to them. Desire and Hope shall now be satisfyed, and Fruition shall put an end to the exercise of them. True, there are some things about which these shall be employed, as the Resurrection of the Body, and the Happiness of it; but the things enjoyed are perfect, and being enjoyed, are no longer expected. Love will be Eternally imbracing God in Christ, and sollacing it self in its blessed Fruitions. And these shall make it to rejoyce with Joy unspeakable; and this shall continue for ever. Isai. 35. ult. *And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads, they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.*

3. IT *shall forever Celebrate the Glory of God in Christ.* Though it hath no Tongue at present to employ in Praising him, yet, as the Angels are presented crying, *Holy*, &c. *Isai.* 6. 3. so there is a way in which Glorified Souls can express themselves in highest Devotions to God & Christ, who loved, and redeemed them. They have nothing now to Pray for, but the Resurrection and Last Judgment, in respect to themselves: And so they are occupied in Praises; in which they unweariedly make New Songs, to set forth the Glory of God, and their own Happiness in the enjoyment of him. And when the Soul is totally engaged in this, it now perfectly attains its last end, and in so doing cannot but be intirely happy. But alas, how small a portion of these things do we know?

USE. *LET the Children of God then Comfort themselves in their Priviledge with these Thoughts.* You at present labour under many Discouragements: Bodily Infirmities clogg you, a Body of Death pesters you; the dark Days of God's hiding of his Face disquiet you: the weight that oppress your Souls, make you to cry out; the molestation of wicked Men, and the unhandsome carriages of the Godly, not a little molest you. Now refresh your selves with this. This imprisoned Soul, will ere long get its Liberty; then I shall know Sin no more, then all Sorrows will be at an end, then the Wicked will cease from troubling me, and the Godly will no more be angry at me: Then I shall see and enjoy God, and never lose sight of him more; then I shall Consort with perfect Saints and Angels. Let this solace you in all your toil and trouble, to think I am making haste to leave a wretched World, and enjoy the end of my Faith, the Salvation of my Soul.

[JANUARY 16. 1699.]

SERMON *CXLI.*

WE have followed the Departing Soul of the Believer, from its Earthly Tabernacle to its Heavenly Habitation, and left it lodged in Everlasting Arms, and Solacing it self in the full possession of endless and inexpressible Glories. It remains that we look after the Body which it hath left behind, and see how it fares with that mean while: or what Benefit it remains owner of, which may bring it under the comprehension of Happiness, at least in reversion. That the Bodies of Believers in their separate state, are not actually happy, in the strict notion of Felicity, much less perfectly so, as the Soul is, is beyond Dispute. Happiness can be predicated of none but intellectual and rational beings. Things meerly sensitive, much more senseless and lifeless things cannot bare that denomination. Actual Happiness consists in a compleat and rational Satisfaction taken in the fruition of the Object; and that cannot be done by the dead Body, which hath neither life, sense, nor reason abiding in it. The wise man tells us, Eccl. 9. 5. *For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing.* If we consider a bodily Death in the proper or physical nature and notion of it, it is certain, that the Bodies of Believers do undergo the same Changes by Death, with the Bodies of other Men. As there is no difference in the Death it self, in all there is a seperation of the Soul, by which the Body is lett a lifeless and senseless Carcass, and every way unserviceable for the functions which it was made for; so there is nothing that can befall the Bodies of the Wicked, which those of the Godly are not liable to, both that which is natural, and that which is violent. It is a Subject of putrefaction, and ready to be fed on by the Worms, Job 17. 13, 14. *If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness. I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister.* It becomes noisom and noxious to the living. *Sarah* was a precious Saint, yet when dead, *Abraham* must bury her out of his sight, *Gen.* 23 4. Its beauty is lost, and it becomes ghastly and frightful. And it may have all the indignities offered to it, which the rage & malice of men can vent. A decent Burial may be denyed it, it may be dug out of the Grave, hung up on a Gibbet, and ludibriously exposed to all manner of Contempt, Rev. 11.8, 9. *And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom & Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds, and tongues, & nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, & shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put into graves.* Which may be litterally as well as metaphorically understood. And what indignities have been offered to the dead Bodies of Christ's Martyrs, Ecclesiastical History furnisheth us with plentiful instances of. So that there is no Judgment to be made by men in this regard; nor do the Bodies of the Saints bear any Character upon them, by which men may distinguish them from the Bodies of other men. This notwithstanding, there is an Hap-

pineſs in reſerve for theſe very Bodies, and they alſo are reſerved for that, and ſhall in due ſeaſon be brought to enjoy it in conjunction with their re-united Souls. This ſtate of the Saints Bodies at preſent may in a more large ſenſe be called their Happineſs, in as much as it is a ſafe reſerve of them for it, and makes a vaſt difference between the Bodies of the Godly and the Wicked, though it be ſecret and not diſcerned by ſenſible Obſervation.

THIS then is that Benefit which now cometh under our Deliberation. The Sum of it is, the Body is kept ſafe for Glory, and ſhall not miſs of it in due time: And this is for the preſent a Complement of the Happineſs of the Soul it ſelf now in Heaven; viz. the ſatisfying aſſurance that it hath of this. *David* hath ſuch a conſideration on this Subject, Pſal. 16. 9. *Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoyceth; my fleſh alſo ſhall reſt in hope.* Which hope cannot properly be aſcribed to the dead Body, for it cannot exerciſe any faculty or power of a rational being: but it is the Soul which hath this hope, and it rejoyceth in it. God's Children are ſolicitous for their Bodies, being eſſential parts of themſelves; nor can the Soul enjoy a compleat humanity without its Body. The tho'tfulneſs about it now is anxious & perplexing; but there it will be with quietneſs and ſatisfaction. It knows that it ſhall have it reſtored to it with all deſireable Advantages, and can contentedly tarry God's time for the Accompliſhment of it. But there are more particulary two things, by which this Benefit is ſet forth in our Catechiſm, viz. 1. *That the Union between Chriſt and their Bodies doth abide.* 2. *That the Body ſhall reſt in the Grave till the Reſurrection.* And we may take a ſhort Survey of theſe two, and ſee how great a Priviledge Believers have in regard of their Dead Bodies above other Men,

1. *THE Union between Chriſt & their Bodies doth abide.* I ſhall not here meddle with nice and curious Enquiries about this Union, which have no footing in the Word of God, and no way ſerve to Edification, but be content to Diſcourſe of it Soberly and Scripturally. Here then obſerve,

(1.) THAT *there is a near Union made between Chriſt and all Believers.* This is made in Converſion, and the ratification of the New-Covenant between them. That there is ſuch an Union, and what is the Nature of it, we have already taken an account, under the Head of *Effectual Calling.* And we are here to call to mind, that *this Union is not Carnal, but Spiritual and Myſtical.* It is *Relative*, or conſiſts in the Relation that is made between Chriſt and his People, and accordingly reſembled by a *Marriage Union*, *Hoſ.* 2. 19. And yet it is ſuch an Union as derives influences from Chriſt to thoſe that partake in it. Hence compared to *Head and Members*, 1 *Cor.* 12. 12. And ſo cloſe is it, that they are ſaid mutually to have their inbeing, one in another. He is ſaid *to be in them*, Rom. 8. 10. And they *to abide in him, and he in them*, Joh. 15. 5. And this flows from the Covenant that is between them.

(2.) *THAT this Union, comprehends not the Souls only, but alſo the Bodies of the Children of God.* And this is evident from the Word of God. Not only are we ſaid *perſonally to be one with Chriſt*; and yet the Perſon contains both the eſſential parts of Man, viz. Soul and Body: tho' that might admit of a Synechdochical Interpretation, intending the Perſon by the Soul: but the Body it ſelf is expreſly declared to participate in in. Their Bodies are thereupon ſaid to be *Members of Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 6. 15. Chriſt Myſtical is compared to a *Natural Body, conſiſting of Head & Members.* Now the Members of the Body, being parts of it, are united to it, firmly knit, and cannot be ſeparated from it without mutilation. The relation which is made between Chriſt and his Redeemed upon their Believing in him, graſps in it their Bodies. And therefore both Soul and Body are ſaid to be Chriſt's, 1 Cor. 6. 20. *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your ſpirit, which are God's.*

(3.) *THE Death of the Body doth not break this Union, or make a Separation between Chriſt and it.* Death indeed ſeparates Soul and Body, and they are divided each from the other, and can be no longer ſerviceable one to another; but it ſeparates neither of them from Chriſt. *That* was a *Natural Union*, and it is broke aſunder by the diſſolution of the frame of Nature in the Man; but *this* is a *Spiritual Union*, and it remains indiſſoluble for ever. *Death* it ſelf is one of thoſe things of which it is ſaid, that they *ſhall not be able to ſeparate us from the Love of God in Chriſt*, Rom. 8. 38, 39. When the Soul goes one way, and the Body another, Chriſt ſtill abides firmly knit to them both. For this reaſon Dying Believers are ſaid *to ſleep in Jeſus*, 1 Theſ. 4. 14. And it is the Body that only can properly be ſaid to ſleep; that the Soul doth not, we have already obſerved. Jeſus Chriſt looks upon that dead Body, that Duſt, to be ſtill a part of himſelf, under a myſtical Conſideration; it is therefore precious Duſt in his eſteem. There is a piece of Chriſt that goeth into the Grave, every time that the Body of a Saint is carried thither, and he goes along with it into that ſhady Vale.

(4.) *IT is a wonderful Priviledge that belongs to the Bodies of Believers, that this Union of their's to Chriſt abides after Death.* The Body indeed cannot at preſent reſent it, but yet it is really and admirably priviledged by vertue of it. The difference which this puts between the dead Body of a Saint, and that of a Sinner is aſtoniſhing, however, to an eye of ſenſe they may ſeem to be alike. Chriſt hath an endeared Love to that Body, he delights in thoſe Relicts, and accordingly, it is his great Care, and therefore he will do well for and by it. But this Priviledge may be more diſtinctly Illuſtrated in the next particular. Hence,

2. *THE*

2. *THE Body of the believer shall Rest in the Grave till the Resurrection.* The expression here used of *Resting* in the Grave, is to be taken in a large, and not a limited sense. If we speak of the Grave properly, for a Repository provided to lay by the Body in, by an answerable Burial of it; this is a Priviledge which belongs to Civility, and is afforded to Good and Bad. And yet the holy ones of God, have not always this respect shewn them: Sometimes casually in the Providence of God they are drowned in the Sea, or torn with wild Beasts, and have no Funeral given them: Sometimes the cruelty and spite of their Adversaries will not admit of it. We read, in Psal. 79. 2, 3. *The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth. Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem: and there was none to bury them.* By the Grave therefore we are here to understand the State of Death, or the Duration of the Separation of the Soul from the Body, in which the Carcass can take no care of, nor look after it self. And by *Resting* we are not to understand meerly *a Sleep, a cessation from Motion, or a continuance of the Body in that posture it died in, and in that Place where it was Buried.* For the Body passeth a further Dissolution, than a meer Separation from the Soul; it is resolved into its Principles, *it turns into dust*, Eccl. 12.7. And that very Dust is many times thrown out of its Grave, scattered in the Air, and mixed with common Dust: But there is something more peculiar, and beneficial intended in it; and it consists, *in that singular Preservation and Safety that Jesus Christ will afford to it, by vertue whereof it shall be forth coming in the appointed time.* But we may take a more particular Account of what is contained in this Assertion, in the following Conclusions,

1. *THAT there is a Glorious Resurrection, which the dead Bodies of the Saints are appointed to.* The Doctrine of the Resurrection, will come to be treated of under the next Question. Only it is here mentioned as that, which is the ground of all that Care which Christ now takes of the dead Body. For if it were never to arise, this would be superfluous. This therefore the Saints of old had a prospect and belief of: and with this they comforted themselves under the sorrows of Life, and apprehensions of Death. So did *Job*, Chap. 19.26,27. *And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for my self, and mine eyes shall behold, and not anothers: though my reins be consumed within me.* So did *David*, *Psal.* 49. 15. So did the *Prophet*, *Isai.* 26. 19. And the *Apostle* hath that remark, 1 Cor. 15.19. *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.* And he tells us, that *all the Children of God groan for it*, Rom. 8. 23.

2. *THAT there is a Time appointed, when this Resurrection shall be.* It is not a thing uncertain to God, tho' it be so to us. The Resurrection is to be the Preparitory to the last Judgment, and is to introduce it; for *All are to rise to it*, Joh. 5. 28, 29. And we are told, that *God hath appointed the very Day* for that, *Acts* 17. 31. There are a great many things to be done in order to it, for each of which God hath allotted the Season, & when they are brought to pass, then he will finish all with that.

3. *THAT the Body must abide in the state of Death till then.* It must tarry till the Great Day, when all shall be raised, and that is, after the Affairs of this present World are accomplished. *The dead in Christ are to rise first*, but it is to be, *when Christ shall descend, &c.* 1 Thes. 4. 16. Mean while, they are to *rest in the Grave, as in a Bed*, Isai. 57. 2. When the Apostle in Vision had a prospect of the Souls under the Altar, crying to God for Vengeance, they had that Answer given them, Rev. 6. 11. *They shall rest for a little season, until their fellow-servants also, and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.* Christ will do this at once, & there are a great many yet to be born both naturally and spiritually; they must therefore wait.

4. *WHEN that Time comes, the same Body must be raised.* I list not to dispute, in what respects it is the same. This is certain, that it shall not be another, but that which died. *Job* is confident of this, *Job.* 19.27. Nor will all the Cavils of men against the rational possibility of this, undermine God's Omnipotency, or dispute the veracity of his Word. The Apostle tells us, that the same Body that was *sown, shall be raised*, 1 Cor. 15.42,43. Not indeed, could it bear the Title of a *Resurrection*, if it were not the same; but would be more properly a *New Creation*, if another Body were bestowed on the Soul, than that which it once dwelt in.

5. *THERE are certain Priviledges, which the Body enjoys in the mean while; by vertue of its Union unto Christ.* Several of them indeed, are materially no other than what befalls the Bodies of the wicked; but yet, because they derive from Christ, and are of their Communion with him, consequent on their being United to him; they are not real Priviledges to those, tho' they are so to these. viz.

(1.) *THE Body rests from all the Labours of this Life.* This is enumerated to their blessedness, Rev. 14. 13. —*They rest from their Labours*— By which is intended, not only a ceasing of the toil, and travail, of the Employments of this Life, but the putting an end to all the bodily Troubles of this World, which the Soul felt only by concomitancy. This indeed belongs to the state of Humanity, and the ungodly Sinner hath this Rest as well as the Saint. The Grave is thus a *Place of Quiet* to all sorts, *Job* 3. 17, 18, 19. But, it is a poor Rest, which is only a dark Interval, and a Prologue to more dismal Troubles, and so it is with the Ungodly; whereas it hath this accompanying it, relating to the Children of God, that now they put off all Troubles, never to take them

up again. The Wicked's Trouble ends, to begin againſt at the laſt Day, but the Godly's ends for ever: *All Tears are wiped away*, Rev. 21. 4.

(2.) *IT is no longer an Inſtrument of Concupiſcence in the committing of Sin.* It was indeed an Inſtrument of the New Nature to perform its holy Actions, and ſo a Servant of Righteouſneſs. However, the bodily Senſes and Members were unhappily employed too often, by the Law in the Members, in fulfilling the Luſts of it, and by this means the man was brought into Captivity, which made him cry out, as, Rom. 7 24. *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death!* This ſhall now be no more, nor will an heavy indiſpoſed Body hinder him, or be longer thus miſerably miſemployed, *Rom.* 6. 7.

(3.) *IT ſhall be put out of the reach of any Harm, by any thing in this World.* As the Body is now made inſenſible of any injuries or affronts that are offered to it, ſo there can no hurt be done to it by them. Wicked Men may ſhew their ſpite, and make it appear what they would be at, if it were within their power; but it is out of the reach of real injury; though they ſhould mangle it into Atoms, hang its Quarters on Gibbets, expoſe it to all imaginable Scorn: as it feels none of this, ſo neither will it render it ever the more unpleaſing to God, nor hinder it of a Glorious Reſurrection. It is all this while *aſleep in Jeſus.* 1 Theſ. 4. 14.

4. *THERE ſhall be no Curſe in its Death.* It is a Priviledge of the New Jeruſalem, whereof every true Believer is a Member, Rev. 22. 3. —*There ſhall be no more Curſe.* It was one part of the Curſe that fell upon Man for Sin, that he ſhould dye a Bodily Death, which elſe had never befallen him. But tho' the Thing abides, yet the Curſe is taken out of it. Chriſt having born the Curſe, by being *made one*, Gal. 3: 13. their Death is become a Bleſſing, and they are *bleſſed in it*, Rev. 14. 13. And this very Death of theirs is a *precious* thing *in the ſight of God*, Pſal. 116. 15.

5. *THIS Duſt ſhall be look'd after, and none of it loſt, but be all forth coming in the laſt Day.* This is a great Myſtery, and the fleſhly mind entertains grievous Cavillings againſt it. But there is no doubt to be made of the poſſibility of it, by one that hath right conceptions of the Al-knowledge and Infinite Power of God. If this Affair were left to the management of Angels, it would fail; their Alchymy would never attain to ſeparate the remains of the Children of God from the other Elementary Parts with which it is mingled, or recollect it from the four Winds into which it is ſcattered. But God, who hath promiſed it is *Almighty*, and *therefore can*; *Faithful*, and *therefore will* perform it for them. When God ask'd the Prophet that Queſtion, we have his reply, Ezek. 37. 3. *And he ſaid unto me, Son of man, can theſe bones live? and I anſwered, O Lord God, thou knoweſt.* And if God had not known how to accompliſh it, he would never have given the Security of a Promiſe for it. True, the Duſt of the Wicked, is kept by the powerful Providence of God for a Reſurrection, but that is to Contempt: But the Care he hath of that of his People, is his peculiar reſpect he hath for them. And therefore it is a proper fruit of their being and continuing united to him. And there are divers reaſons *why, this Union abiding, Chriſt ſhould do this for the Bodies of Saints, for the confirming of our Faith in the belief of it*, viz.

(1.) BECAUSE *God the Father hath choſen this Body, and given the Charge of it to Chriſt.* Chriſt cannot but be careful of, and faithful to the Truſt repoſed on him, in the Everlaſting Covenant. He therefore ſaith, that *he muſt give Eternal Life to all that his Father hath given him*, Joh. 17. 2. And God hath given all his Choſen to him for this end. And he hath not only beſtowed their Souls on him, but their whole man. Whenever mention is made of this, they are named perſonally.

(2.) BECAUSE *He himſelf loveth it.* Not only his Faithfulneſs to his Truſt, but his Love to this Body engageth him. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt took a compleat Humane Nature upon him, and a Body as well as a Soul, *Heb.* 10. 5. And that was, that he might be *like his Brethren in all things excepting Sin.* As therefore he took care of his own Body, and we have him comforting himſelf about the ſafety and redelivery of it, Pſal. 16. 10. *For thou wilt not leave my ſoul in hell; neither wilt thou ſuffer thine holy One to ſee corruption.* So he will proportionably do for the Bodies of his, becauſe his Love to them made him to aſſume a Body like theirs.

(3.) BECAUSE *He hath Redeemed it.* Certainly Chriſt cannot forget or neglect that which he laid down his Life for the Purchaſe of. The Redemption made by Chriſt, coſt him too much for him to loſe any thing of it for want of looking after. It coſt him his Blood, and he would not ſhed any of that in vain. Now this Redemption was for the whole Man. The whole was forfeited by Man's Apoſtacy; and that which was loſt is purchaſed. This is the Argument for our Glorifying God with our Body, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19, 20. If Chriſt hath bought the Body from Wrath, he will keep it for the purchaſed Good, and at laſt ranſom it from the Grave.

(4.) BECAUSE *it is the Souls own Body.* The Soul at preſent enjoys all that Happineſs that it is capable of in a ſeparate Eſtate, but it is not it ſelf perfect as to Humanity, but wants a Body to compleat it, which therefore it muſt have reſtored to it, elſe it will not have the entire ſpecifical Nature. And it had one once, and was ſo related to it, that it longs for that, and ſhall be fully ſatisfyed in the Fruition of it, *Job* 19. 26.

(5.) BECAUSE *this Body was an Inſtrument of the Service of God in this Life.* It was *Temple of the Holy Ghoſt*, in which he had his abode, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19. And he managed it for the Glory of God. This Tongue praiſed him, theſe

theſe Hands wrought for Chriſt, theſe Feet carried him to the Service of the Kingdom. Yea, all his Powers were conſecrated for this deſign. This Service God accepted, and Chriſt took delight in, and it ſhall have its Reward. And ſhall therefore be kept to it.

USE. *LET the Children of God improve the Conſideration of theſe things, to fortify their Minds againſt the frights of Death.* Nature ſtarts and reluctſ at the Thoughts of it. Let then Grace be exerciſed to compoſe your Spirits againſt the Diſtractions of ſuch a reluctancy. You love your Bodies, and it may be are too fond of the preſent Life of them. But you cannot ſecure againſt a Diſſolution, nor do you know how ſoon it ſhall be. Your times are in God's Hand. Take care then to ſecure your Inbeing in Chriſt, and that happy Union which is the Foundation of your Felicity: And then improve the Thoughts of it, to make the Death of your Body very comfortable, whenſoever it comes. That when your Diſſolution approacheth, and the Thread of Life is ready to be ſnapt aſunder, you may not only be able to commend your Spirit to Chriſt, and believe that he will receive it, but may alſo be able to commit your Body to the Grave, as a Bed ſanctified by Chriſt for your comfortable Reſt; knowing that if he will watch over it, and look after it, through all that Night, and keep it ſafe till the Morning of the Reſurrection, and that no Changes that ſhall paſs over it ſhall fruſtrate your Expectation of that happy Reſurrection; count your Death to be no other but a Reſt, a ſweet Sleep, ſecured from all Storms and Tempeſts. And when you cloſe your Eyes, comfort your ſelves with this Thought, that you ſhall awake again, and when that is, that you *ſhall be ſatisfyed with his Image*, Pſal. 17. *ult.* Think then, in the inſtant of your Departure, that you hear your Redeemer ſaying to you, as once he beſpake good *Jacob*, Gen. 46. 3, 4. *Fear not to go down to Ægypt.*

[FEBRUARY 13. 1699.]

SERMON CXLII.

QUESTION XXXVIII.

WHAT Benefits do Believers receive from Chriſt at the Reſurrection?

ANSWER.

AT the Reſurrection Believers being raiſed up in Glory, ſhall be openly acknowledged and acquitted at the Day of Judgment, and made perfectly bleſſed in the full Enjoyment of God to all Eternity.

THE farther we follow the Child of God in tracing of his Happineſs, the more ſurprizing it appears to be. We have traced it through its Inchoations in this Life, and the great Advance that it made towards its Perfection at his Death, but the greateſt Glory of it ſtill remains: *As Sanctification ſo Glorification is progreſſive*; it is not perfected at once, but by ſteps and degrees: yet there is Perfection which it ſhall in due ſeaſon arrive at, whether we are now to follow it. The thing then, which now lies before us for our Contemplation, is the conſummate Glory which Chriſt will at laſt bring his Redeemed unto, and put them into poſſeſſion of; the Meditation whereof muſt needs be ſweet to all ſuch, as have here forſaken all for Chriſt, and have not confined their Hope in Chriſt to this Life and Time, but expect and wait for it in another Life, and through Eternity. The Time when this Affair ſhall be tranſacted and their Glory conſummated, we are told, is at the Reſurrection. But here alſo there is a gradation or ſeveral ſteps to be taken in the compleating of it: And our Catechiſm ſums them up in Three remarkable paſſages, 1. *The Quality in which they ſhall riſe; they ſhall be raiſed up in Glory.* 2. *The Entertainment that ſhall be given them in the Great and Laſt Judgment, they ſhall be openly acknowledged and acquitted at the Day of Judgment.* 3. *The manner how they ſhall ſpend their Eternity; they ſhall be perfectly bleſſed in the full Enjoyment of God to all Eternity.* We may take a diſtinct account of theſe things.

I. *THE Quality in which they ſhall riſe; they ſhall be raiſed up in Glory.* There are Two Things here proper to be taken under Conſideration, viz. *That there ſhall be a Reſurrection?* 2. *That in that Reſurrection, Believers ſhall be raiſed in Glory.*

1. *THAT there ſhall be a Reſurrection.* And here it is proper to handle the general Doctrine of it, though our Catechiſm only mentions it with reſpect to Believers. The Article of the Reſurrection is purely of Revelation, and the whole Confirmation of it muſt be fetch'd from Divine Teſtimony. The light of Nature is not only dim, but quite dark as to any diſcovery made by it of this great and precious Truth. Hence there is ſo deep a ſilence about it among the Great and Celebrated Philoſophers of the Pagan World. For, tho' we have ſome of them diſputing ſtrongly and rationally for the Immortality of the Soul, and a future ſtate of Rewards or Puniſhments, which it is to be the Subject of, yet as to the reſtoring of the Body, and the Souls return to it again, they rather ridicule it than aſſert it: And if there be any rare and obſcure hints of it to be found in any of them, we may ſuppoſe, they had it not from the light of Nature, but from their Converſe with the People of God. There are two Topicks, to which

which the Consideration of this Doctrine may be referred; viz. *the Possibility & the Futurity of it*: And there is a great difference between these two. *As to the Possibility of it*, it must be argued, either *from the Nature of the Thing, or from the Unlimited Power of Him who is the God of Nature.* This latter, the natural man hath little acquaintance with or belief of, and therefore is wont to confine his Credit of things to the former, and to believe no more about it than he can discover to flow from the Nature of the Thing. Now carnal reason pleads it impossible, from the Nature both of the dissolved Body, and separate Soul. Man's blinded reason is non-plust here, and thinks the Faith of it Infatuation. The Philosopher looks upon the Soul to be incarcerated in the Body, and wofully manacled by it, and that in Death it receives a Jail-Delivery; and therefore to have no more Inclination to return to it, than an enlarged Prisoner hath to go back to his Dungeon; and that the dissolved Body passeth through so many Changes, that it can never become the same any more. Hence when *Paul* preached the Doctrine of the Resurrection at *Athens*, they turned it into a flout, Act. 17. 32. *And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter.* And tho' some have argued the possibility & facility of this from the equivocal Generation of Insects, the reviving and flourishing of Plants in the Spring; and some curious Experiments in Alchymy; yet all these are rather Illustrations than Demonstrations: And it is certain these are accommodated to Nature; whereas this Resurrection is supernatural, and requires no less than a Creating Power. And hence *Job* argues contrary from the same head, Job 14. 7, 10, 12. *For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? Man lieth down, and riseth not till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.* As to *the Futurity of it*; that is a farther step, and doth not necessarily follow from the former. It is no demonstration that a thing shall be, because it may be. God doth not work in his Efficiency to the utmost of his Divine Power, but hath bounded his Works by his Will; and there is the residue of the Spirit with him. For, tho' an Argument from the Divine Power be of use to confirm our Faith of any revealed Truth, and therefore the Apostle argueth thus about the Resurrection, Phil. 3. 21. *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working, whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.* And tho' there are moral Reasons that may be given for a Resurrection; yet the force of them depends upon the good Pleasure of God, and therefore do not of themselves inforce a necessity, tho' they infer a great probability of it. But the Word of God, which is the rule of our Faith; giveth us a firm assurance of it, in as much as it directly declares it, and gives us instances of it, which are the first fruits & earnests of it. Of these we had a sufficient Account under the last Discourse. But for a more distinct opening of the Nature of this Article, I shall offer a few Particulars to Consideration.

1. *THAT the Resurrection is properly a restoring and reviving of the dead Body, and reuniting of it to its own Soul.* We have a prophetical Type of it expresst in *Ezek. 37. begin.* The Resurrection most peculiarly belongs to the Body; and so it is recorded in our Creed. It is that which fell, that is raised again; it is that which was dissolved, which is restored, and that is the Body. Hence that in Isai. 26. 19. *Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise: awake & sing ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her dead.* Death had dissipated all the parts of it, reduced them to their Elements, brought them into Dust, and taken from it all sense and life and motion; it is gathered together again in the Resurrection, and Life put into it. And this is done by the return of the Soul again; and it is the same Soul which returns and takes up its abode in that individual Body from which it was separated; as hath formerly been made evident. And in this respect in a more large sense, *Resurrection is attributed to the whole Man*, because, as Death made the Seperation, so the Resurrection procures the re-union of them, one to another. Hence that Prayer, 1 Kin. 17. 21. *And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee let this childs soul come into him again.*

2. *THAT this Resurrection is produced by the Almighty Power of God.* This is the proper Head to which it must be referred. To argue it from the Nature of the Subject is vain; for there is no natural return from such a privation to the Habit again. All that can be said on that account, is, that it is a Subject capable for Omnipotency to work upon; but that nothing else can do it to effect is very certain: He who denies that God can do it, may as well deny the Creation. What can be too hard for him, who could call something out of nothing? The Resurrection of Christ is therefore assigned to this power of God, Eph. 1, 19, 20. *And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power: Which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.* And because the Power exerted herein is supernatural, there are no Instruments that are used to be instrumental into or causual of it, but it is an immediate work of Divine Power. The Voice of the Arch-Angel, and Sound of the last Trump, may be preparitory to it, and signal of it, but the Efficacious Will and Word of God, shall bring it to pass. Hence that, Joh. 5. 28, 29. *Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the*

the which all that are in the graves ſhall hear his voice, And ſhall come forth, they that have done good, unto the reſurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the reſurrection of damnation.

3. *THAT there ſhall be a Reſurrection both of the Juſt, & the Unjuſt.* We have this diſtribution aſſerted in the forecited Text, *Joh.* 5. 29. This alſo was a piece of *Paul's* Creed, Act. 24. 15. *And have hope towards God, which they themſelves alſo allow, that there ſhall be a reſurrection of the dead, both of the juſt and unjuſt.* Not only ſhall the Redeemed of Chriſt, and thoſe that have believed in him, have a Reſurrection, as if all others ſhould remain unraiſed; which is the Opinion of ſome; but in direct contradiction to the Word of God: But Wicked Men muſt riſe too. So that the meer belief of a Reſurrection doth not afford matter of Conſolation to ſinful men againſt the fears of Death, in as much as this is not a ſingular Priviledge of ſome, but a common Lot of both Good and Bad; and muſt therefore carry as much Terror in it to the one, as Comfort to the other.

4. *THAT all the Individuals that ever Died, ſhall Riſe again.* Here we have both the extenſion and the limitation of the Subject. If the Inquiry be, *Who ſhall Riſe again?* It may be anſwered, Negatively, *Not ſuch as never Died*; and conſequently, *not ſuch as never Lived.* There have been ſome, who did not taſte Death, as *Enoch* and *Elias*, theſe will not riſe again, being Glorified already in Soul and Body; tho' it is to be thought that they will come to the Judgment with Chriſt. There were ſome who were raiſed at Chriſt's Reſurrection, *Mat.* 27. 52, 53. And theſe were to be a ſort of the firſt-fruits of the power of his Reſurrection. And it is not to be thought that theſe died again, but that they went with him to his Kingdom, and ſo their Reſurrection is already paſt. There will be ſome found alive in the World, when Chriſt cometh to Judgment. Of theſe, 1 Theſ. 4. 17. *Then we which are alive, & remain, ſhall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and ſo ſhall we be ever with the Lord.* Now theſe ſhall not dye, but *be changed*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 51, 52. What this Change ſhall be is diſputed, and I may ſpeak ſomething of it hereafter; only it will not be Death, and ſo they will need no Reſurrection. But then it muſt be ſaid Affirmatively, *all that ever Dyed, and are then found Dead without Exception.* It will be of as large extent as Death was: Thoſe very Abortions which dyed in the Womb, and never ſaw the Light, if yet there Bodies were formed, and their reaſonable Souls infuſed, ſhall ſtand up again; for theſe had an intire Humanity, and theſe Souls were Immortal. And that all of all Sexes, Ages, Degrees, ſhall thus riſe, we are aſſured, becauſe they ſhall all appear in the Judgment, to which this is an Introduction. See, Rev. 20. 12, 13. *And I ſaw the dead ſmall and great, ſtand before God: and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of thoſe things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the ſea gave up the dead which were in it: and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to his works.*

5. *THE Time of this general Reſurrection ſhall be at the End of the World, and immediately before, and preparatory to the Day of General Judgment.* There were ſome raiſed in the days of Chriſt's being upon Earth, and the times of the Apoſtles, who died again; there remains a ſecond Reſurrection for theſe. I liſt not here to diſpute about the *firſt Reſurrection*, mentioned, *Rev.* 20. 5. but ſhall leave thoſe who apply it to a bodily Reſurrection, antecedaneous to the Thouſand happy Years expected, to abound in their own ſenſe, craving liberty to diſſent from them, as in a Point extra-fundamental: But that the Reſurrection and the laſt Judgment ſhall be together, and the one ſhall make way for and introduce the other, I firmly believe according to Scripture. Chriſt therefore tells us, that they ſhall riſe to the Judgment, *Joh.* 5. 29. And they are declared to commence at once, *Rev.* 20. 12, 13. How near the approach of this is, it is not for Men to determine, it belongs to the times and ſeaſons which it is not for us to know, the Father having put them in his own Power, *Act.* 1. 7. Only this I believe, that there is a Glorious State of the Church Militant to intervene between this and that.

6. *THE great End or Deſign of the Reſurrection is, that God may be Everlaſtingly Glorified in Man, in his whole ſpecifical Nature.* A Soul and a Body are both eſſential to Humanity, nor can a Being be truly called Man, that doth not conſiſt of both. Now Man being placed under God's ſpecial Government, was to be led by it to an Everlaſting State; for which end he was placed under a Law requiring the Obedience of his whole Man, and engaging either Rewards or Puniſhments to the whole according to his deporting himſelf; for which there is a Day of Judgment appointed: And that he may be there tried, and accordingly diſpoſed of, he muſt riſe again. And in this reſpect we may ſay, that *Juſtice it ſelf requires it not Abſolutely, but Relatively*, according as the Rules of God's Governing the reaſonable Creature are fixed in the Covenant Tranſactions between him and them. And in this ſenſe the Apoſtle refers us to the *Righteouſneſs of God*, 2 Theſ. 1. 7, 8.

7. *THOUGH all riſe, yet there is a vaſt difference between the Reſurrection of the Godly and of the Wicked.* This appears in a double reſpect, viz. *both the Grounds & Cauſes of their Riſing*, and *the Quality in which they ſhall Riſe.* The latter of theſe will be diſtinctly conſidered afterwards. Touching the former let us obſerve,

1. *THERE is indeed the Power of God, equally appearing in the one, as in the other.* Their Death, under a Phyſical Conſideration, puts their Bodies into alike Condition, and there-

fore

fore there must the same Omnipotency be exerted in the raising of a Godly, and a Wicked Man: It is equally a Divine Work, and therefore universally appropriated to God. 2 Cor. 1. 9. *But we had the sentence of death in our selves, that we should not trust in our selves, but in God who raised the dead.*

2. *CHRIST is to be equally the Judge of both.* The Resurrection is a preparitory to the Judgment, which Christ is to be the Dispenser of, and all are to appear before Him, and receive their Sentence from Him. 2 Cor. 5. 10. *For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* He is therefore said to be Constituted *the Judge of both quick and dead*, Act. 10. 42. which comprehends both the Godly and the Wicked.

3. *BOTH rise, so as not to die a natural Death any more.* When their Souls & Bodies are thus re-united, they shall never be separated any more. In this respect they shall alike partake in Immortality. There is an unchangible Everlastingness that will attend upon the Change that will be made on them by the Resurrection. And hence there are Eternal Receptacles provided for their perpetual Abode, Mat. 25. ult. *And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous unto life eternal.*

4. THERE *are yet divers respects in which there is a manifest opposition in the Grounds or Reasons of the Resurrection of these and those.* Particularly,

(1.) *THE Godly rise to perfect their Happiness, but the Wicked to compleat their Misery.* This appears, in that the great design of their Rising is to be judged; in which Judgment they are to be disposed of according to what they have been in this Life, and therefore they are to receive the Sentence accordingly, Mat. 25. 34, 41. *Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand; Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Then shall he say also to them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.* Accordingly we have that distribution, Dan. 12. 2. *And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*

(2.) *THE Godly rise in pursuance of God's Promise, but the Wicked according to his Threatning.* There is indeed, God's Faithfulness to his Word in both, but one is from a *Word of Promise*, the other a *fearful Threatning*. God hath engaged Eternal Life to his Children, and they rise to go to possess it: and he hath threatned Eternal Destruction to his Enemies, and this disposeth them for it. The Godly rise to enjoy endless Glory with Christ in Heaven; the Wicked rise to suffer enduring Torments with the Devils in Hell.

(3.) *THE Resurrection of the one flows from God's Love; whereas the other's is from his just Severity.* As the Resurrection is to the Wicked a Penalty, so it is to the Godly a Benefit. Now all the Benefits which he bestows upon his own, derive from the Fountain of his Everlasting Love: and therefore he will thus make these the Everlasting Monuments of it: Whereas, because he will shew his Wrath and make his Power known in the other, he will thus fit them for it.

(4.) *THE Just rise to stand for ever, but the Unjust rise to have the more fearful fall.* Both these are intimated in, Psal. 1. 5. *Therfore the ungodly shall not stand the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.* God raiseth his own, that he may bring them to the Eternal Kingdom, and exalt them to a Glorious Throne, there to abide unmoved for ever: whereas the Wicked are raised, but it is in order to their being thrown down into the Lake of Fire, and falling into the bottomless Pit. Then will that Triumph have its glorious Accomplishment, Psal. 20. 8. *They are brought down and fallen, but we are risen and stand upright.*

(5.) *THE Resurrection of these is an effect of Christ's Merit, whereas that of those flows from his Sovereign Justice.* The Resurrection of Believers must needs be precious, because Christ hath purchased it for them. The great end of his Dying, was *that we might live through him*, 1 Joh. 4. 9. Now the Resurrection is one part of this Life. Christ on this account calls himself *the Resurrection*, Joh. 11. 25. which intends, not only *the Efficient*, but also the *Meritorious Cause* of it: And for that reason Christ tells us, that he is *to raise up his whom his Father hath given him*, Joh. 6. 39. Whereas, the Resurrection of the Ungodly, was not merited for them by Christ, but appointed in God's Counsel to them, and was only secured to Christ as Judge, which is one of the glorious Rewards of his Mediatorial Service, *Act.* 17. 31.

(6.) *THE Resurrection of Christ, hath a particular and peculiar influence into the Resurrection of his Redeemed.* As he died to purchase it for them, so he rose again to confirm it to them. The Apostle, in 1 *Cor.* 15. grounds the Believers Faith of the Resurrection of the Just, upon the Resurrection of Christ, and makes so close a Connection between them, that he lets us understand, that all our Gospel-Faith stands or falls with our belief of Christ's Resurrection, ver. 14. *And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.* &c. Now there is a manifold Confirmation of God's Children in this Article, from the raising of Christ. His Resurrection assures us, that the purchase of ours is made. Hence that, Rom. 4. ult. *Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.* It witnesseth that he hath made a perfect Conquest over Death, and it cannot hold us, when he requires us. It is to be an earnest for the Confirmation of our Faith, because he rose as the *first-fruits*; and his are to be *the Harvest*, ver. 20. He rose as their Head,

and

and therefore all his Members muſt follow after him. Now this is only the Conſolation of Believers, and others have no Intereſt in it. Chriſt therefore gives this as the Reaſon of our aſſurance on this account, Joh. 14. 19. *Becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo.*

THERE are divers Enquiries made about the Reſurrection, which becauſe they have more of Nicity and Curioſity in them, than matter of Edification, I ſhall paſs over, only leaving this general Remark, viz. That whatſoever will be requiſite for the perfect Glorification of the Bodies of Believers, or for the making of the Bodies of the Wicked fit to be *Veſſels of Wrath* Eternally, will then be done to them, by the ſame Almighty Power, which will raiſe them up.

USE. *BE we all then adviſed, to lay in that we may enjoy the Felicity of this Reſurrection.* *Paul* tells us how ſollicitous he was, *Phil.* 3. 11. Not meerly that he might riſe again, for he knew that was unavoidable, but that he might be happy in it. If all muſt riſe again, ſurely they have poorly laid in, who never took care for any thing beyond the preſent time. How wretched muſt they needs be, who have laid out their utmoſt Care for this Life only, and never thought of, or provided, for the Life that is to come? Is there a Reſurrection to Honour and to Contempt? it infinitely concerns every one of us, to uſe utmoſt care to obtain the one, and eſcape the other. And will it be an Unchangeable State that the Reſurrection will put us into, and that according as Death finds us, when it makes a Seizure on us? They then are the only wiſe Perſons, who make it the great Buſineſs of the preſent Life and Time, to make Proviſion, that being by Faith intitled to this Death & Reſurrection of Chriſt, they may lie down and ſleep in Jeſus; and that when that Morning comes, they may ariſe cloathed with his Image. See that you be riſen with Chriſt now, in a thorough and true Converſion, then ſhall that Union which abode during your ſtate of Death, continue in your Reſtauration; and if you can make ſure to die in the grounded Faith of this, Death is unſtinged, the terror of it taken away. And while the Fore-tho't of a Reſurrection affords matter of Horror to others, it will yield you abundant Conſolation, to think, that in your *Fleſh* you *ſhall ſee God.*

[MARCH 12. 1700.]

SERMON *CXLIII.*

2. THAT *in that Reſurrection, Believers ſhall be raiſed in Glory.* The Reſurrection it ſelf is common to Good and Bad: All ſhall Riſe, but on different Grounds, and on a diverſe Deſign, as hath already been obſerved. We are therefore now to proceed to a particular Conſideration of the *Benefit that Believers receive from Chriſt by and in this Reſurrection*, which ſhall be very wonderful & ſurprizing.

And that we may take a proper account of this Affair, let us obſerve in general, That *the Nature of the Reſurrection conſiſts, in the reſtoring of the diſſolved Body, and re-uniting of it with the Soul, which Death hath ſeparated from it.* Now this Glorious State which the Man ſhall be put into, hath a proper reference to his Body. We have before obſerved that the Soul is perfected at Death, and enters into a wonderful Felicity before-hand, whiles the Body is made a Carcaſs, and returns to its Duſt, but was reſerved for a better Condition in the appointed Seaſon; and now it comes. The Body ſhall now have a wonderful Beauty and Glory put upon it; and this ſhall be at the Reſurrection. The Apoſtle therefore tells us, that we look for ſuch a thing, in which he gives us a comprehenſive deſcription of this, Phil. 3. 20. *For our converſation is in heaven, from whence alſo we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* And he illuſtrateth it by oppoſing the Qualities that Death puts it into, to ſuch as the Reſurrection confers upon it, 1 *Cor.* 15. 42, 43, 44. That therefore which now lies before us, is to take an account of the State in which the Bodies of Believers ſhall riſe; by which we ſhall plainly diſcover the Glory in which they ſhall be raiſed, and what an Happineſs ſhall be conferred upon them in and by it. The word *Glory*, is uſed in various Senſes among Men: As alſo are the *Hebrew* and *Greek* Words by which it is expreſſed in the Scriptures. I ſhall here only point at Three; all of which may be ſuppoſed to refer to the thing under Conſideration. Sometimes Glory & Happineſs are put Synonymically; ſo in Pſal. 73. 24. *Thou ſhalt guide me with thy counſel, and after receive me to glory;* i.e. into a ſtate of perfect Bleſſedneſs. And it is certain that the Reſurrection of Believers belongs to their Glorification. It is one Article of the Felicity which God hath promiſed to make them to partake in at the laſt Day. As Chriſt's riſing from the Dead was one ſtep of his Exaltation, ſo ſhall that of his Redeemed be of theirs. Sometimes it intends a peculiar and tranſcendant acknowledgment that is paid to a Perſon, for ſome ſingular & extraordinary vertues which we conceive to be in him. Praiſe, Honour, and Glory, ſeem to be ſo many degrees of deference given to another. Praiſe being a verbal Commendation, Honour a ſignal reſpect added to make it appear indeed that we have an high eſteem of him, and Glory a ſuperlative Praiſe and Honour that we confer upon him; by raiſing Trophies, erecting Monuments for his Memory, recording his worthy Actions, and renowned Endowments. Thus are we commanded to give Glory to God, Pſal. 29. 1, 2. *Give unto the Lord (O ye mighty) give unto the Lord glory and ſtrength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name.* And without doubt, the luſtre in which the Bodies of the Saints ſhall then appear, will gain them glorious eſteem. But the main thing, and that which is nextly here intended, is, Glory is put for the worth, or excel-

excellency which is in the Subject, which renders it worthy of having that Glory paid to it. When the worth of it is surpassing, it is said to be Glorious. Hence it is said of God, Exod. 15. 11. *Who is like unto thee, O Lord, amongst the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders.* And 1 Chron. 29. 11. *Thine, O Lord is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty, for all that is in the heaven and in the earth, is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all.* So that by the Glory in which the Body shall be raised, we are to understand all those admirable Ornaments that shall be conferred upon it, by which it shall be made fit for the happy State which it is raised to possess, in which it shall be con-glorifyed with its restored Soul. And that we may take a right account of this, we must confine our selves to those notices that are given us about it in the Word of God; from whence alone we have the assurance that there shall be a Resurrection, and what manner of one it shall be. We may therefore essay the laying out the grounds and nature of this in the following Conclusions.

1. *THAT the great end of the raising of the Saints Body, is, that it may accompany the Soul, and share with it in Eternal Blessedness.* The Resurrection is in order to the Consummation of our Glorification, and is made a necessary step to it. God having chosen the Man to Eternal Life, and the Man consisting of Soul and Body, he cannot be compleatly happy but in both, in conjunction: And because Death had made a seperation between them, they must be brought together again, else the Man doth not enjoy an intire Humanity; nor can the Body be capable of any sense of well-being till it be animated again with its Soul; and this is the very thing that it is come to by this Change: For which reason it is called *the Resurrection of life*, Joh. 5. 29.

2. *TO the fitting of the Body thus to share in Happiness.* It must be a suitable Organ for the Soul to perform its blessed Operations in. The Glory of the Body consists in its being compleatly suited for its end. Now it was made for the Soul, to be its Instrument; and must therefore serve it to its ends. Should the Soul, which is the most noble part in Man, be prejudiced or obstructed in its Felicity, by being re-united to the Body, it would be a Penalty and not a Benefit bestowed upon it. It must therefore be such a Body, as in it the Soul may enjoy it self, and not be clogged or impeded, in its seeing, enjoying, and glorifying of God for ever, in which its Eternal Blessedness doth consist. Nor can the Body it self be perfect in Glory, unless it be qualify'd; because otherwise it would lose its end and usefulness: and that would be its real misery. It must therefore be wholly freed from any either natural or occasional Indispositions, in order to its enjoying of a conjunct Glory with the Soul.

3. *THE Body of Man had such a Glory as this put upon it at first, which it lost by the Apostacy.* Whether we consider it in its natural Frame and Composure, or in its con-natural Sanctity, Infinite Wisdom suited it to its great end of Glorifying God. If we consider the composure of the Body and disposing of it to be fit for its Sanctions, it was a wondrous Fabrick, Psal. 139. 14. *I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well.* But when we consider, the Body as adorned with the Image of God, and every Member and Power of it Sanctify'd, what a Glory was this? Well might the Psalmist say, Psal. 8. 5. *For thou hast made him a little lower then the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.* But Man by Sin, hath laid all this Glory in the Dust, and divested it of the Image of God, indisposed it to all that is honourable, and debased it to a Slavery that renders it ignominious, and consequently exposeth it to Contempt. For which reason it hath gotten that Epithet of *Vile*, attributed to it, *Phil.* 3. 21.

4. *THERE shall therefore be a wonderful Change made in the Body, by the Resurrection, from what it was in this Life.* Whether if Man had kept his Integrity, there would not have past some Alteration on his Body, to fit him for a glorify'd State, is matter of meer Speculation. But it is certain, that all the Damages which it hath sustained by the Fall, which have put it out of Repair, must be renewed, all its Defects be supplied; its Vileness must be taken away, and that by a wonderful Change. Of which, Phil. 3. 21. *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious body, according to the working, whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.* Where we have the Author of it, Christ himself; the Change it self, is from Vileness to Glory; the Pattern of it, his own most Glorious Body; the Vertue by which it shall be done, the Working of his mighty Power. When therefore we have taken a view of this Change, we shall have a Prospect of the Glory under Consideration. Here then we may consider this Change,

1. *Negatively*, in two Things,

1. *THIS Change will not be in the Substance, Frame, or humane Shape of the Body.* It will be an humane Body still. For substance it must be the same Body that we had before. That Body that went into the Grave, shall be raised out of the Dust. This hath been before made evident; only let me add to the Confirmation of it, that we are told that the Resurrection of our Body shall be analogous to that of Christ, *Phil.* 3. 21. And we are sure his was the same. And therefore he said to his Disciples, Luk. 24. 39. *Behold my hands & my feet, that it is I my self; handle me, and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.* Christ will take the same Materials, & give them a new Make, and build them into a stately Fabrick. Our Bodies are said to be of the Dust; i. e. they are Elementary; and it is this Dust that shall awake, *Isai.* 26. 19. It shall

shall not be an Etherial Body surrogated in the room of the other, as some have without reason, and contrary to Scripture imagined. And it shall return to an humane Shape, for so also did Christ's, and in that Form or Figure did he appear to his Disciples, after he was risen. And indeed, infinite Wisdom contrived this Shape as that which was most covenient for such a Creature, both for Beauty, & Glory, and Fitness for being an Instrument of the Soul, in its Operations; and therefore it shall be such when raised. It shall therefore have all the bodily Members which it had before, for they were every one placed in the Body for the perfection of Humanity, and fitting it for its End. And it is presumptuously pleaded that some shall then be useless, for how do we know what honour God will have by them? And it is certain, that Christ, who is the Pattern of our Resurrection rose in the same Body, with all its Members, for his Body never saw Corruption.

2. HENCE it follows, that *the Man shall not be changed into any other Species, or kind of Being.* Some mistaking that expression (in 1 Cor. 15. 44. *It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.*) have supposed that it shall be changed into a Spirit, or an Angelical Substance: But how then will it be a Body? For Bodies and Spirits, are of two divers Species; so that it must thus lose its Humanity. It shall have nothing put upon it in this Change, which is inconsistent with, or destructive to an Humane Body, for so had not Christ's Body. When therefore Christ saith, that it shall be equal to the Angels, Luk. 20. 36. *Neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.* He doth not intend that they shall be turned into Angels, but only that they shall be equally priviledged with them in that Glorious State. Much less then shall their Bodies be adorned with Divine Perfections, such as Ubiquity, Omnipotence, &c. for neither is Christ so in his Humanity, whatsoever some have vainly dreamed.

2. *Positively*: Observe in general, that *this great Change will be in their bodily Quality; and in this will consist their conformity to Christ's Glorious Body.* And this Change will be so great and wonderful, as will advance them into a Glorious State. And the more astonishing it must needs be, in that it will be done, not only on a Body made of Earth, or of an Elementary Original, but also on a Body which Sin had defaced, and made so vile. And this also may be summarily comprized under two Heads,

1. ALL *the evil Qualities which the Body was debased with by Sin, shall be removed, and all the contrary Qualities requisite to make it Glorious, shall be restored or bestowed upon it.* I put these two together, because they do mutually ply, one the other; and there is in it as it were, a return from the Privation to the Habit. We observed, that Man's Body was made Glorious at first, that it lost this Glory and became vile by Sin. All this shall now be recovered, and the raised Body shall have none of those Mischiefs upon it, but leave them behind; nor shall it want any of those Primitive Excellencies, which were put upon it in its Creation. In particular,

(1.) *THE Body shall lay aside all its Deformity, and be made most beautiful.* It shall have a Comelineſs put upon it, and nothing will be unlovely in it: All the Deformities on Men's Bodies, are Penalties of Sin: whether it be a symetry of Parts, redundancy or deficiency of Members, or the like. Whatever of these the Body had before, it shall not rise with them. Christ is altogether lovely, and so shall the Believer be. Among Christ's Redeemed at the Resurrection, there shall be no Dwarfs, no little Children, none with any Member wanting or superfluous; none Crooked or Deformed; but all shall be Comely, Beautiful, Amiable. And this is included in that, 1 Cor. 15. 43. *It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power.*

(2.) IT *shall put off its Mortality, and be made Immortal.* It was Sin that brought Death into the World, *Rom.* 5. 12. Man in his state of Integrity, was so made Immortal, that if he had not sinned, he had never dyed. The Resurrection shall put an end to this Death. They shall die no more, but live Eternally. We shall therefore after that *be ever with the Lord* in our Bodies, 1 *Thes.* 4. 17. And this is intended, in 1 Cor. 15. 42. *So also is the resurrection of the dead, it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption.* Hence that of our Saviour, *Luk.* 20. 36. Immortality is a new Suit which the Body shall put on when it riseth, ver. 53. *For this corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.* Nor shall it any more have the least disposition or tendency to a Dissolution.

3. IT *shall be perfectly freed from all Diseases, and Infirmities.* It was here full of Maladies, an Hospital for all manner of Distempers to lodge in, liable to the infections of the Air, and every ill Accident, exposed to acute and chronical Maladies, which wofully impeded both its Service and Comfort. But all these were buried with it, and shall be left behind and rise no more; it shall enjoy perfect Health and Vigour, without the least Pain or Grief. Then shall that prophecy be compleated, Isai. 33. 24. *And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.*

(4.) IT *shall no more stand in need of Cloathing.* Man in innocency had no occasion for it, much less shall there be any in the Resurrection. That which first made it necessary, was the shame that Sin had brought upon it; and the need was increased by the Miseries of the Seasons, that we were hereupon exposed unto. And tho' Pride hath made Man count it their Glory, yet every Garment that

we put on is a Badge of our Ignominy, a mark of Disgrace upon us. This will then be removed. The Body will be so glorious, that no shame will abide on it, and it will remove to a Climate where it will never be exposed to any Injuries. In a Word,

(5.) *THERE shall be nothing on the Body, to clog the Soul's free, and uninterrupted actual Felicity; but all that is requisite to a Body that should make it serviceable will be given to it.* There shall be neither Weakness nor Weariness to attend it. It shall spend an Eternity in the Celebrating the Praises of God, in Singing endless Hallelujahs. It shall be ever Contemplating of the Glory of God, and acting Love upon him, and never be tired; it shall be quick and active. And in this respect it may be said to be *sown in weakness*, &c. And a *natural body*, &c. 1 Cor. 15. 43,44. Had Man kept his Integrity, he had never known what it was to be tired in his Work, to be faint, and forced to give out. Nor shall the raised Body be any more a clog to the Soul, or the Believer have any occasion to say, the Spirit indeed is willing, but the Flesh is weak. And when it hath been employed in that Happifying Business of Heaven Millions of Ages, it shall remain still as fresh, and active, and ready to pursue it as ever. So that there was nothing lost in *Adam*, but what shall be restored in *Christ*, when that Day comes, in regard of the Body.

2. *THE Body shall have something superadded unto it, above what it had in its first Creation, which shall further augment the Glory in which it shall be raised.* What might have been if he had never fell, I dispute not, but this is certain, that the state of the Body in Creation, was in some things short of what, that of the Saints shall be in the Resurrection. And that will appear in the things that are appropriated to the Cælestial State, to the Possession whereof, the Resurrection is a designed Medium. And they are chiefly,

(1.) *THEY shall live without Food.* The first *Adam*, and Mankind in him, had a subordinate Dependance on the Creature for the Nutriment of his Body, and maintaining that Life which was put into it. God therefore provided other Creatures for his Sustentation, and bestowed them upon him for Food. Gen. 2. 16. *And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat.* But the State of Heaven to which he is raised is another thing. They are corruptible things which were to sustain our Life, but there is no such thing there, where we are to be entertained after we rise. And therefore our Bodies shall have no occasion for them, else the want would be our Misery. Thus also it is a Spiritual Body. God will hold it up in his own Hand, as he doth the Angels, and therefore *Hungring & Thirsting shall then cease*, Rev. 7. 16.

(2.) *IT shall live without Sleep.* And in this it shall also be like the Angels. Sleep is thought to arise from Fumes engendred by the Nourishment taken, and the exhaustion of the Spirits by Labour. *Adam* in Innocency could not do without Sleep, because he was to live upon Nutriment, and on that account there was a Night for Rest, as well as a Day for Work. But now nothing of this will be, nor the Body need it. And hence there *shall be no Night*, Rev. 21. 25.

(3.) *IT shall live without Marriage.* The reason of that was because God would have all Mankind to derive from one Original, that so he might treat with them in a Covenant in one Head; and accordingly this Ordinance was instituted in Man's State of Innocency. But now all Generations shall be at an end, and such Relations will cease and be useless. This therefore is the main thing in which our Saviour tells us that they shall be *like the Angels*, Mat. 22. 30.

(4.) *THE Body shall no more be employed in such Callings as were appointed for Man's providing for his bodily Relief.* For when the Occasion for it shall cease, the Vocations which were purposely designed for it, will cease too. *Adam* was put into the Garden *to dress it*, Gen. 2. 15. But now the Body is discharged from all such Business, to be intirely at Liberty for those Glorious and Celæstial Employments in which it shall rest from all these Labours, and Celebrate an Eternal uninterrupted Sabbath, in which its actual Felicity will consist. Thus will the Body be raised in Glory.

USE. I. *LET the Thoughts of these things help the Children of God cheerfully to undergo all the bodily inconveniencies of this Life.* A great part of our Trouble in this World ariseth from the Body, and I know no better relief than to contemplate this great Change that it will shortly have. When you see and feel how it is now, & begin to be discouraged, look forward, and believe what it shall be then, and set one over against the other, and let that arm you with Patience to bear the present Trial, because it will be over ere long, and a Glorious Change shall come upon you. And let that be your Comfort, Psal. 17. 15. *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.*

USE. II. *LET this also sweeten to you, the thoughts of your Dissolution.* There are many things apt to imbitter them, and we too readily pore upon them; but here is that which may put a better relish into them. What tho' this Frame must be taken in pieces? Yet remember, Sin hath put it out of order, and it is dissolved but to be a new built. Think when you are going to lie down in the Dust, how gloriously you shall rise again; and let this make the Meditation of that Day precious to you. Think often what an unspeakable Benefit it will be, to have this Body to shine like the Sun in the Firmament, to be adorned with all the stately Perfections, that shall make it fit for the most noble Employments and Enjoyments in the Eternal Kingdom: To be made immortal, impassible, spiritual. And let

this

this make you free to bear the Changes which must pass over you in the course of Providence, according to God's All-wise Counsel, in order to the making way for this happy Change. Be willing to lie down in the Dust, till he shall call you out of it, and dress you up as a Bride to meet her Bridegroom, in the Day of his greatest Solemnities. Believe, that he who hath promised is able and faithful to perform it, and therefore it shall be thus, and a great deal better than you can at present conceive. And let this Faith make you rest in Hope, and very willing to pass through, and out of, this Vale of Tears, that so, that which is imperfect may be done away, and that which is perfect may come.

[APRIL 9. 1700.]

SERMON *CXLIV.*

2. WE are now to pass over to the Consideration of the Second step of the Consummate Glorification of Believers at the Last Day; which consists in the Entertainment that shall be given them, upon their Resurrection, in the Day of Judgment, *they shall be openly* &c. And here two things will come under our Consideration. 1. That *the Resurrection shall be followed with the Great and General Judgment.* 2. That *the Happiness of Believers then will be, in that they shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted.* Something therefore may here be spoken to each of these severally.

1. THAT *the Resurrection shall be followed with the Great and General Judgment.* There are two Topicks in Divinity under which the Doctrine of the last Judgment may have a place assigned it to be treated of, viz. either *under the Exaltation of Christ, whereof this is the last step, that He shall come to judge the World at the last Day*; *or in the Glorification of Believers, one step to which is the last Judgment.* Something hath been said of this under the former heretofore, peculiarly with respect to the Glory of Christ, which will then shine forth most illustriously; for the laying open whereof, many points referring to that Day were briefly touched; I shall therefore with the more Brevity handle it here: *That Christ God-Man shall be the Judge, and of the great Majesty and Glory in which he shall then appear, we have before taken an account.* The Things therefore which may here come under our Enquiry are, 1. That *there shall be such a Day of Judgment.* 2. *Who they are that shall be Judged?* 3. That *the Resurrection will make way for, and introduce this Judgment.* 4. *On what Grounds or Rules it will proceed?*

1. THAT *there shall be such a Day of Judgment.* This is an Article of our Faith; and necessary to be believed by all those that profess Christianity. An Article of Faith, is that which commands our embracing of it, upon the Testimony that God hath given of it in his Word; according to that, Joh. 3. 33. *He that receiveth his testimony, hath set to his seal, that God is true.* Now this is plumply and plentifully witnessed to in the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament. Psal. 96. 13. *Before the Lord, for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.* And Psal. 98. 9. Eccl. 12. 14. Mat. 25. 34, &c. Act. 27. 31. *Because he hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.* Yea, it was an article before the Flood, Jude 14, 15. *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.* So that if there were no more to be said for it, yet this is enough to silence all dispute against it. How far this truth may be demonstrated by the light of Nature, may be disputed: That the Gentiles, who had not the Oracles of God committed to them, had some apprehension about it, and did many of them entertain it with Credit, is certain from their Writings; but whether they gathered it from their own Improvement of their Reason in the search of the light of Nature, or only built it upon what they received from Commerce with the Jewish Nation may be demurred. Nevertheless the Word of God furnisheth us with sufficient Arguments for the illustration of this Truth, by which we may give a reason of our Faith in it. For which we may take up these Scripture Conclusions.

1. THAT *God put Man at first under his special Government, in which he gave him a Law with Sanctions.* Touching this Government and the Nature of it, we have formerly had an Account, the Sum whereof amounts to thus much; That God having made Man a reasonable Creature, and treatable in the way of a Covenant with him, he gave him a Rule according to which he was to serve to his end; and as he carried himself towards it, was to expect either Life or Death; and to make it an Instrument fit for such a Transaction, he guarded it with Promises and Threatnings: And here was the Foundation laid for this Judgment.

2. THAT *hence there were Rewards and Punishments ratified by and in these Sanctions.* That they do contain such things in them, is evidently the very tenour of them. That they carried in them the nature of Rewards and Punishments is evident, because of the connexion they have with the Command; Life was to be the *recompence of Obedience*, Rom. 10. 5. *Death the wages of Sin*, Rom. 6. 23. And that these were herein ratified in these Hypotheses, or that the connexion was firm,

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and not arbitrary, is evident, both becauſe God aſſerts to it, Gen. 2. 17. *In the day thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die.* And becauſe this Covenant, ſo eſtabliſhed, was the fixed Rule of relative Juſtice. Hence that, Mat. 5. 18. *For verily I ſay unto you, Till heaven and earth paſs, one jot or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled.*

3. THAT *all Mankind by the Apoſtacy, fell under the Threatning of the firſt Covenant.* We are told that *all the World is guilty*, Rom. 3. 18. And Guilt is nothing elſe but the binding of the Perſon over to ſuffer the penalty of the Threatning; and the Reaſon of this is, becauſe the Puniſhment denounced was for Sin; and therefore, becauſe all by the Fall come to be Sinners, they ſo were laid under the Sentence of Death; and this way of the Derivation of it is fully aſſerted in *Rom.* 5. 12. So that every one to whom Sin may be imputed, is thereby under a Threatning to die.

4. THAT *God hath opened a new Covenant, in which he hath ſecured Life again by Chriſt, to ſuch as believe in him.* There was nothing but Death to be looked for by the old Covenant; but God, to ſhew his Mercy to ſome, hath opened a new and living way by the Goſpel. Hence that, 2 Tim. 1. 10. *But is now made manifeſt by the appearing of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who hath aboliſhed death, and hath brought life and immortality to light by the Goſpel.* *Rom.* 8. 3. There is therefore a good Hope ſet before Men. God Covenanted with his Son about it, and he hath opened a Covenant of Grace to Men concerning it: and this alſo is ſettled on Covenant Promiſes; and ſuch as are pleadable by thoſe who have gotten a title to them, by Faith in Chriſt, to which there is a firm Promiſe made of it. John 3. 16. *For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life.*

5. THAT God *in theſe things, deſigned the luſtre of the Glory of his Juſtice and Grace.* Theſe two Attributes were ſpecially concerned in the management of his Government of Men, under the firſt and ſecond Covenant. There were other of his Perfections which ſhined in them together with other ſecond Beings, in their Creation and common Government, but thoſe were to be the peculiar Monuments of theſe moral Perfections of his; and their Relations to theſe Covenants and the Terms of them, made way hereto; the Retributions of the firſt Covenant being exactly according to Juſtice, and the Rewards of the New Covenant tho' righteous, yet adapted to the manifeſtation of free Mercy to the Subjects of them. For we are told, Eph. 2. 8. *For by grace are ye ſaved, through faith, and that not of your ſelves: it is the gift of God.*

6. THAT *to the illuſtration of theſe, there muſt be a fair and open Proceſs with thoſe who are the Subjects hereof.* That the World may ſee and know, that God is ſo righteous and merciful, there muſt be a Trial of the Perſons concerned, and their Carriage with reſpect to the Rule under which they are, muſt be brought to Light and made manifeſt. There muſt be a Reward according as men have been, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. *Rom.* 2. 7, 8. And they muſt therefore be Judged that Right may be done them, and *all mouths ſtop'd.* It is therefore called the *Day of Revelation*, &c. ver. 5. And then *all ſecrets will be revealed*, Chap. 2. 16.

7. THAT *there is a promiſcuous Diſpenſation of God, in his viſible Providences to thoſe in this Life.* Not but that there are the real applications both of Juſtice and Grace here, but it is ſecret and unaccountable, and Men are at a loſs about it. Wicked Men turn Atheiſts upon it, and Godly Men are too often puzled about it, and ready to trip in their Obſervation of it, *Pſal.* 73. *begin.* We have therefore thoſe Remarks that have been made upon the outward Providences of God, *Eccl.* 9. *begin.* And *Chap.* 8. 14. *Wicked Men go on in Sin, and proſper; Godly Men fear him, and are plagued every day: And the one is made ſecure by it.* Pſal. 50. 21. And *the other almoſt ready to be diſcouraged:* And expoſtulate, as Hab. 1. 13. *Thou art of purer eyes then to behold evil, and canſt not look on iniquity: wherefore looke ſt thou upon them that deal treacherouſly, and holdeſt thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?*

8. THIS *therefore muſt be done, after the Affairs of this World and Time are finiſhed.* If it muſt be done, and is not accompliſhed before Men go out of the Congregation of the Living: if ungodly Men dye in ſeeming Peace, and Godly in Trouble; there muſt then be a Time afterwards wherein this great Concern will be attended and tranſacted. For this reaſon the wiſe Man ſtrongly argued a future Judgment, from his Obſervation how things went here, Eccl. 3. 16, 17. *And moreover, I ſaw under the ſun the place of judgment, that wickedneſs is there; and the place of righteouſneſs, that iniquity was there. I ſaid in my heart, God ſhall judge the righteous and the wicked; for there is a time there, for every purpoſe, and for every work.* God will certainly ſet all theſe things to rights, and hath in his holy Wiſdom adjourned the Doing of it throughly, till that appointed Time comes, when the laſt great Court of Aſſize ſhall be kept.

2. WHAT hath been already mentioned, will guide us in the Conſideration of the next Head, viz. *Who they are, that ſhall be Judged?* viz. *All thoſe who have come under the Cognizance of the Law of ſpecial Government.* For, if that Law was the Rule according unto which God would diſtribute Rewards and Puniſhments to the Subjects of it, according as they are found conformable to, or tranſgreſſors of it, then of neceſſity muſt every ſecond Being, which ſtands in relation to that Law, come into this Jndgment, becauſe God hath appointed this way for the adjuſting of this Affair: For if this be the Way, in which God will glorify himſelf in ſuch a Subject, and he will have his Glory by every one of his Creatures, then none of theſe ſhall eſcape this

this Appearance. Now the Subjects of this Government are of two ſorts, *Angels & Men, and both of theſe ſhall be Judged.* That the Angels ſhall be ſo, is aſſerted in the Word of God. Angels are of two ſorts, Good and Evil; Touching the Good, it is certain that they are under the Government of Chriſt, Eph. 1. 21, 22. *Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but alſo in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church.* And there are the Rewards of Obedience which they ſhall receive. As for the Evil Angels, they are fallen under Guilt, and for that reaſon we are aſſured that they are *reſerved for that Judgment*, 2 Pet. 2. 4. *Jude* 6. It is therefore put as one of the Prerogatives of the Saints, 1 Cor. 6. 3. *Know ye not that we ſhall judge angels?* As to Men, we are aſſured that every Individual that hath been or ſhall be, will then appear and receive their Trial and Sentence: High and low, rich and poor, noble and ignoble, male and female, ſmall & great. This is manifeſt from, *Rev.* 20. 12. The Apoſtle therefore extends it to all, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. And it may be aſſigned from, Eccl. 12. 14. *For God ſhall bring every work into judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good, or whether it it be evil.* The Godly expect it, and comfort themſelves from the expectation of the glorious Reward, which they then ſhall receive, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. The Wicked ſhall not eſcape, for there they are to receive their Doom, *according to their Works*, Mat. 13. 41. Accordingly, we have the Diſtribution & Separation of theſe in that Day, aſſerted by Chriſt himſelf, Mat. 25. 31, 32. *When the Son of man ſhall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then ſhall he ſit upon the throne of his glory, And before him ſhall be gathered all nations, and he ſhall ſeparate them one from another, as a ſhepherd divideth his ſheep from the goats.* None ſhall be able to eſcape the Appearance and Trial of that Day. It will be vain to ſeek to hide away from it. Rocks and Mountains will not be able to ſecure them againſt it: Willing or unwilling, they ſhall come into that Trial.

3. THAT *the Reſurrection ſhall make way for, and introduce this Judgment.* As for the Day and Hour when this ſhall be, it is a Secret which God hath put out of our Cognizance, and reſerved in his own Breaſt; but that it ſhall be made way unto by, and immediately follow upon this Univerſal Reſurrection, we are aſſured. We are therefore told, that this ſhall be preparitory for that, *Rev.* 20. 13. And if it be here enquired, *Why muſt there be a Reſurrection in order to the Judgment?* It may be anſwered, Becauſe *the whole Man, conſiſting of Soul & Body was placed under the Rule of ſpecial Government, and hence the Whole muſt ſhare in the Rewards and Puniſhments, that are then to be diſtributed.* The Man muſt be judged, but the Body belongs to the Man, and therefore muſt be reſtored to the Soul, that they may be judged together; for which there muſt be firſt a Reſurrection, in regard of thoſe Bodies, which have before undergone a Diſſolution. Thoſe therefore that are found alive at that Day, will not need to be raiſed, only there will be a Change paſs upon them, which will be alſo to prepare them for it, 1 Cor. 15. 51. *Behold, I ſhew you a myſtery: we ſhall not all ſleep, but we ſhall be changed.* They are the *Things which were done in the Body* that will paſs under the Trial & Cenſure of that Judgment, 2 *Cor* 4. 10. i. e. Whatſoever paſt them before their Soul and Body were ſeparated each from the other. The Body was made uſe of as the Soul's Organ, not only in, but alſo with which it performed its impetate Acts: for which reaſon it is to ſhare with it in its Eternal Recompences. The Bodies of Saints were employed in the Service of God, their Hearts, their Tongues, their Hands were uſed to glorify him. Their Bodies underwent many hardſhips for him. Thoſe things mentioned, *Heb.* 11. 36,37. nextly fell upon their Bodies. Chriſt will therefore make their Bodies to partake in the Rewards of Life, which he hath promiſed to ſuch. The Bodies of Ungodly Men, have been the Inſtruments of Unrighteouſneſs; with their Hearts they have deviſed Iniquity, with their Tongues they have taken God's Name in vain, and Reproached him, and with their Hands they have wrought Violence: Theſe therefore muſt feel the impreſſions of the Divine Indignation, which they cannot do while they continue in their diſſolved Duſt. And that this Judgment ſhall follow immediately upon the Reſurrection is plain. The Apoſtle connects Death & Judgment, Heb. 9. 27. *And as it is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment.* Intimating that the Reſurrection is an Appendix of the Judgment. Beſides, there is no longer any temporary Affair to be managed. Men are not to return again to a new Probation, but all that awaits them, is only to receive their Eternal Rewards; in which they are now to be fixed both in Soul & Body. There is nothing elſe to be done, but to diſpoſe Men according to their State, which is the very Buſineſs of the Judgment. The laſt Trumpet therefore, at the Sound of which the Dead ſhall riſe, is to be a Citation of all to give up their Accounts.

4. *ON what Grounds or Rules this Judgment will proceed?*

Anſ. *AS to God's Proceſs with Angels, it is meerly ſpeculative to us, nor need we to be overcurious in our Conjectures about it.* Doubtleſs they were under a Law ſuited to their Nature, and it had its Sanctions, and God will treat them accordingly. But as to Men, tho' the ſame general Rule is alſo to be acknowledged concerning them, yet there is a more diſtinct Account to be taken of it. Here then let theſe Concluſions be obſerved,

1. THAT *becauſe the moral Law was the Rule of relative Juſtice given to Man, hence that muſt*

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be the firſt Rule of the Judgment of the Great Day. That this Law was ſuch a Rule, we have before obſerved, and it follows upon it, that all Mankind muſt ſtand or fall at laſt, according as they ſtand related to it. The great Enquiry will be, how Men ſtand related to it; whether it do acquit or condemn them? If that hath nothing to lay to their Charge, they will be juſtified, but if that hath a Plea againſt them, they muſt ſuffer the Penalty of it. How elſe can that aſſertion of Chriſt ſtand, *Mat.* 5. 18.

2. THAT *ſuch as never had any other Covenant opened to them by God, will only be judged according to that Rule.* That all Mankind are Originally under that Covenant is certain, for *Adam* tranſacted in it, as he was the Head of his Poſterity. We are therefore told, 1 Cor. 15. 22. *For as in Adam all die, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.* And though Man's Sin hath left in him the full reſentment of that Law, yet this doth not diſcharge them from their Obligation to it. And this muſt needs be the meaning of that, Rom. 2. 14, 15. *For when the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, theſe having not the law, are a law unto themſelves: Which ſhew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conſcience alſo bearing witneſs, & their thoughts the mean while accuſing, or elſe excuſing one another.* However this is certain, that ſuch as never had any Revelation of the Grace of God to them, will have no other Rule to be judged by but this Law. And the reaſon is plain, becauſe God never treated with them, in the way of his ſpecial Covenant, but in this. The Apoſtle tells us, Rom. 4. 15. *Becauſe the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no tranſgreſſion.* But the Law of Faith, which is purely of Revelation, was never given them. And hence they were never under an immediate Obligation to comport with it.

3. THAT *if all Mankind muſt be judged according to that Covenant, in regard of their Perſonal Relation to it, they muſt needs be condemned.* My meaning is, that if they do ſtill abide under that Law as a Covenant, it will unavoidably find them Guilty, and proceed to Sentence them as Breakers of it, and conſequently guilty of Death. The Apoſtle is full for this, Gal. 3. 10. *For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curſe: for it is written, Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.* And the reaſon is, becauſe all Men in their natural eſtate are Sinners, and that Law will find them to have been ſo; and becauſe they are ſuch, the Sentence muſt paſs againſt them, Ezek. 18. 4. *The ſoul that ſinneth it ſhall die.* And we are aſſured, Eccl. 7. 20. *For there is not a juſt man upon earth that doth good, and ſinneth not.* The only Plea then, that can have any Validity in it, muſt be, that they are gotten from under that Law as a Covenant, and thereupon, whatſoever they have been, it hath no hold of them. So therefore the Apoſtle argues, Rom. 6. 14. *For ſin ſhall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.* And for this cauſe he was afraid of being *found in his own Righteouſneſs*, Phil. 3. 9.

4. THAT *there are ſome, that ſhall be juſtified and glorifyed upon that Trial, who were in the ſame Condemnation.* That all Mankind were equally involved in Guilt and Curſe, in their natural ſtate, we are aſſured, Eph. 2. 3. *And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.* That all ſhall not be ſo found in the Great Day is equally aſſerted in the Word of God; but that ſome ſhall be acquitted, God will ſee no iniquity in them, he will pronounce them righteous, and adjudge them to a Kingdom. So we are told that it ſhall be, *Mat.* 25. 34. And this ſhall be done in the Judgment; and conſequently upon a Trial, and according to Juſtice; for we may be ſure that the Judge of all the Earth will do right. There muſt therefore be ſome Rule of Judgment, according unto which this Sentence muſt paſs, elſe it cannot conſiſt with the Righteouſneſs of the Judge ſo to determine it. There is therefore Emphaſis in that, 2 Tim. 4. 8. *The Righteous Judge*, &c.

5. THAT *the ground of this is, becauſe the Law of that Covenant is anſwered by a Surety.* That the Law ſhould ſtand out againſt them, and yet they be juſtified, is inconſiſtent. That they themſelves could not perſonally ſatisfy the Law, ſo as to take out an acquittance from it, is a great Truth, both in point of active and paſſive Obedience; as hath elſewhere been proved. There therefore remains no other Way for it, but that of Sureтiſhip; of which there was no proviſion made in the Law-Covenant, but it muſt be introduced in the way of another: And no other can be accepted for us, but one that hath in diſcharge of his Suretiſhip anſwered the Law. For the ultimate reſolution of the Caſe, will be on that Enquiry, *Is the Law ſatisfied?*

6. *HENCE the Trial of ſuch in order to their Acquittance, muſt be, whether they have a title to ſuch a Suretiſhip and Satisfaction.* There muſt be ſuch a Rule of that Court, viz. That God hath accepted of Chriſt to be a Surety, and that his Satisfaction is enough for the clearing of thoſe, whoſe it is. But then the Trial that proceeds upon it is, Whether theſe that plead it, are indeed related to it, ſo as to be under the Priviledge of it? And there will be Neceſſity of it, becauſe as all are not ſo Priviledged, ſo there are many that will pretend to it, who will be found to have deceived themſelves, and have none, Mat. 27. 22, 23. *Many will ſay to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy name? and in thy name have caſt out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profeſs unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity.* Many Claims therefore muſt be examined and adjuſted, to ſee whether they will hold good for them.

7. *FOR*

7. *FOR this therefore the Goſpel-Covenant muſt be alſo a Rule of Trial.* The Law ſpake nothing of it, but God in the Goſpel hath revealed it: in which God hath opened a Covenant of Grace with ſinful Men, and declared the Terms on which they are to come to enjoy a right to Life. This therefore muſt be the Rule of Chancery in that Court, viz. *Whether they are in Chriſt by Faith?* Whether they have embraced the offer of Salvation by him, and complied with the Terms of it. Hence that, Mar. 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not ſhall be damned.* This therefore is the Rule of our Trying our ſelves, by which we may know, how it will go then, 2 Cor. 13. 5. *Examine your ſelves, whether ye be in the faith? prove your own ſelves, know ye not your own ſelves, how that Jeſus Chriſt is in you, except ye be reprobates?*

8. THAT *becauſe this Covenant is opened in the Goſpel to many that do not comply with it, they alſo will be Tried on the ſcore of it.* God offers Chriſt and Grace to many, but all do not embrace him, Mat. 20. 16. *Many be called, but few choſen.* There is a more fearful Judgment that awaits them. Chriſt ſaith, Mat. 11. 22. *But I ſay unto you, it ſhall be more tollerable for Tyre & Sidon at the day of Judgment, then for you.* And, *Joh.* 3. 19. and *Heb.* 10. 28, 29. And great Reaſon; for God will be no loſer of Glory by any of his Works. Hence that, Luk. 12. 48. *But he that knew not and did commit things worthy of ſtripes, ſhall be beaten with few ſtripes. For unto whomſoever much is given, of him ſhall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.* And that ſolemn demand, Heb. 2. 3. *How ſhall we eſcape if we neglect ſo great ſalvation, which at the firſt began to be ſpoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.* All the Neglect & Contempt, with which Chriſt hath been entertained, will fill up the Indictment of ſuch. And therefore the Goſpel Diſcoveries & Treatment held with Men, is to be made uſe of, in the Great Judgment.

USE. *LET the Conſideration of theſe things, be a Watch-word to us all, to take heed to our ſelves, that we get in a readineſs for that Day.* Were theſe Truths believed, and well pondered, it would certainly give Check to the licentious Courſes that Sinners allow themſelves in. Hence that, Eccl. 11. 9. *Rejoyce, O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all theſe things God will bring thee into judgment.* Would Men dare to do as they do, did they expect that, Eccl. 12. 14. *For God ſhall bring every work into judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* Would careleſs Sinners that ſlight Chriſt and Salvation by him, dare to do ſo, if they knew that this would be their Condemnation? As *Joh.* 3. 19. Nay, this hath abundant Awe in it, to put us all upon it to ſee that our Matters will ſtand in that Day. And accordingly to beware of reſting in a Law eſtate, or leaning on our own Righteouſneſs. To make ſure that the Judge will be our Surety, by ſeeking with all Diligence, to ſettle an Intereſt in him by a true Faith. And becauſe we expect ſuch a Day, to endeavour to be provided with a Plea that will hold; and ſpend the Time of our Sojourning here in fear, that we may be found in him without Spot and Blameleſs: So ſhall we look out of our Graves with Comfort, and come to his great Tribunal with Joy.

[MAY 7. 1700.]

SERMON *CXLV.*

II. THAT the Happineſs of Believers then will be, *That they ſhall be Openly Acknowledged and Acquitted.* Under theſe two is comprized the whole of that Felicity which derives to them from and by the Tranſaction of that Day, during the management of it. The Acknowledgment ſhall be full, the Acquittance perfect. And all this ſhall be done Openly, in the preſence of Angels, Men and Devils, and that by Chriſt Himſelf the Great Judge. But I ſhall not treat of theſe two diſtinctly, but give a brief account of the Management of that whole Affair, as it reſpects Chriſt's Redeemed; in which their glorious Felicity will be diſcovered. And this may be reduced unto Three Heads, viz. *The Manner of their being brought into the Judgment; The Proceſs with them in the Judgment; The Honour that ſhall be put upon them during the Proceſs of the Judgment upon the Wicked.* Of theſe in order,

1. *THE Manner of their being brought into the Judgment.* There will be ſomething preparitory, in the Morning of that Day, in which their Happineſs will be made wonderfully to appear. Their very coming to their Judgment will be with ſuch Circumſtances, as will give them the greateſt Satisfaction. For,

1. *THEY ſhall not come thither in the Quality of Perſons Accuſed and Arraigned:* As ſuch who have Crimes laid to their Charge, and are for the preſent under Suſpicion, and ſo ſtand as Priſoners at the Bar, till their innocence be vindicated, and they be openly diſcharged. Among Men Perſons are not wont to be brought upon their Trial, but upon ſome Accuſation, or preſumption of great Suſpicion; who, tho' Innocent, do yet for that reaſon count it a Priviledge to clear their Names before Court and Country: And having made their Integrity to appear, do come off with Honour; 'till when there is a reproach or infamy lying upon them: And they are brought either from Priſon or Bail, ſtand forth as Criminals, are Indicted as ſuch, and put upon making their Plea. There will be no ſuch thing with regard to the Godly then; nor will there any token of diſgrace or diſreſpect be put upon them. But,

2. *THEY shall be brought to the Tribunal with all the Badges of Honour and Favour put upon them.* They shall so appear there, as to know themselves, and be known by all the World, to be the Redeemed of Christ, and Heirs of Eternal Glory. Indeed, they were under a Vail when in this Life, and Men did not know them to be such Persons; yea, and often they Doubted about themselves: But now all will be put beyond Doubt. We are therefore told, *That they shall appear with joy*, Jud. 24. And *with Confidence*, 1 Joh. 2. 28. They shall come before the Judgment Seat after a Triumphant manner. And here there are more especially these Things to be taken notice of,

(1.) *THE Glorious Change which passeth on their Bodies at the Resurrection, belongs to this Preparation.* What this is, both with respect to those who shall then be raised, and them that shall then be found alive, we have already taken notice of. These are not Prison-Garments, that are then put upon them, but Robes of Glory. The very Dress that Christ's Spouse shall then be put into, will sufficiently demonstrate the good and joyful Day they are then like to have of it. All will be Cæleстial; and that will be a witness that they are bound for Heaven.

(2.) *THE perfected Soul that is re-united to its Body in order to this Judgment, is already secure of its own Glory.* It hath had a particular Judgment already, and been in possession of perfect Happiness, ever since it left its Body. It comes from Heaven, where it hath been entertained by Christ, and filled with his Presence, and made to *drink of the Rivers of his Pleasures.* It well knows the Sentence it once received, can never be reversed, and that it comes now, only to have it openly declared: That its Appearance is only to add State to the Majesty of that Sentence, and cause all the World to understand what was before done, without their privity. And what an Happiness is this?

(3.) *ALL these shall be caught up into the Air to meet the Great Judge at his Coming.* There will be before-hand a Separation made between the Godly and the Wicked, *Mat.* 25. 32. And therein there will be a manifestation, to which Company each one belongs. And one thing attending of this Separation, is, that the Godly shall go up to meet Jesus Christ, in his Descent, and return with him in his royal Retinue, whiles the Wicked shall be left below, tremblingly expecting his coming. This we are acquainted with, 1 Thes. 4. 15, 16. *For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.* And this will be a glorious Meeting, where all of them, arrayed with Garments of Light, shall fill up the Train of Heavenly Angels, and give their Attendance upon their Saviour. Oh! the happy Interviews, that there will be, when these blessed ones shall come into his Presence on the Way, and be accosted with his Smiles and Embraces? How full of Heavenly Comfort will it make them? And then to come along with him, as his Friends, Favourites, and Attendants, will be a wonderful Consolation, and infallible Presage of their good speed. He is therefore said *to come with them*, Jud. 14.

(4.) *WHEN the Judge is seated upon his Throne, these will be placed at his right Hand.* *Mat.* 25. 33. This is another observable Separation which shall then be made between these and the Wicked, who are to stand on his left Hand. The one whereof is for a note of Honour, the other, of Disgrace; the one a signal of their good Estate, and the other a prognostick of their miserable Exit. Our Saviour useth these Expressions, after the manner of Men, to shew what Notice will be taken of these, before the Process of the Judgment be made; signifying how full of Joy and Delight they shall be, from the very Place they shall occupy, and what a comfortable Omen it will be of the most happy Conclusion.

2. *THE Process with them in the Judgment.* Herein also they shall be very happy: and a wonderful Honour will be done them in it. This is set forth by our Saviour Christ in that Sentence which will then be pronounced upon them, Mat. 25. 34. *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* Every syllable whereof is full of Glory. What shall be done in the making way to this Sentence, the Scripture doth not distinctly inform us, and therefore we can but conjecture. *Whether all the Sins of God's Children shall then be laid open, is not for us to tell?* It is indeed called a Judgment, and we are told of the *Books being opened*, &c. But these things are but *Analogical* to the like things among Men, and not to be limited by the measures of our Reason. Only it is certain, that as there will be no disgrace there put upon any of God's saved ones, so all shall be managed to the most astonishing Manifestation of the Riches of that Grace, by which they were brought to partake in this Salvation. Now in this Sentence there is both a full Acknowledgement and Acquittance of them. And there are several particulars wherein their Happiness in this appears.

1. *THE Sentence itself*; or the thing that he will adjudge them unto: *Come, inherit the Kingdom.* Here is all comprehended in this, which can go in to make the enjoyer of it as happy as his Nature is capable of. In it there is comprized, a perfect Acquittance from all Guilt, and discharge from all Misery, and an entire allotment of all Felicity in everlasting Life. The Kingdom, is that of Glory, and the Security thereof Christ declares to be the Satisfaction of his People here against Fear, *Luk.* 12. 32. And he adjudgeth them to inherit it. They had been made *Heirs of it* before, *Jam.* 2. 5. But now they are called to Possession, which must needs compleat all their Hopes, and fill all their Desires.

2. *THE*

2. *THE Author of this Sentence*; the Mouth from which it proceeds, and the Authority by which it is pronounced. It is not an Option, or, expression of good Will, but it comes from the Mouth of the Judge, it is the King that saith it; Jesus Christ, who is *vested with all Power in Heaven and Earth*; whom his Father hath constituted the Judge of that great Assize, hath given him the Keys of Heaven and Hell, and the Jurisdiction of Life and Death; it is therefore a Sentence, that will certainly take place and never fail.

3. *THE Ground of this Sentence*, or that on which it is built; *which was prepared for you before the Foundation of the World.* And this also confirms their Happiness, & shews them how surely it derives to them, in that the free Grace of God, laid it in for them. So that, whatsoever forfeiture, there was made of it by Man's Apostacy, how unworthy soever the Man hath discovered himself of it, by his own Sins and Follies, he may still be the more satisfied, in that it comes in the most secure way that can be. It is an Inheritance, and therefore he is an Heir to it. It is not the Purchase of his own doings, but that which he was born to, in the new Birth; it was intended for him from the Beginning; it was his by eternal Designation, and in time it was provided: it was forfeited by Sin, but Jesus Christ was sent by his Father on this errand, & he came into the World to procure it for them, and then left the World, & went to Heaven still to make it ready; & hath sent his Holy Spirit to apply this Title to them, by making them the Children of God through Faith in Jesus Christ. In all of which will be declared the infinite & everlasting Love of God to them. And how happy will they appear to be?

4. *THE Testimony, which with the Sentence he shall give of them*; which is exprest, Mat. 25. 35, 36. *For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye cloathed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.* Not that this will be the Matter of their Justification or Acquittance at that Day, as some by mistake judge. For the Title to the Inheritance was given them before they did any of these things, and was given to them freely. But as there is a reward of Grace promised in the new Covenant to the faithful Services of God's Children, so, not only will it be introductory to the Recompense, but no little part of it, that then the Lord Jesus Christ, will declare his Approbation of, and signify, how particularly he regarded, and recorded, every act of Love to him, which they had done; when every act of Faith, Holiness, Integrity, shall have its Remark; when the most secret Services done to him, shall be openly rewarded; when the least expression of Love to him, in the poorest of his Members, shall be rewarded, and *a Cup of cold Water, given to a Disciple under that Title, shall not be lost.* And how honourable and comfortable will it be, to have those things for which they were despised, reviled, and counted Hypocrites, by a wicked World, testified unto, by the Judge himself, to have been upright, sincere, and very acceptable to him. and that their Labour hath not been in vain.

5. *THE manner of pronouncing this Sentence, will also further confirm their Happiness:* And that is with the sweetest Compellation; *Come ye blessed of my Father.* Surely they shall feel the Happiness of this Word, in the Extasy it shall put their Souls into: When together with the stately Majesty of a Judge, the most winning Characters of Love will be written upon his Countenance, and Grace shall be poured forth on his Lips: When with most alluring Compellations he shall say, Come, Arise, and come away, you that have followed me in the Regeneration; you that have forsaken all for me, and not been ashamed of me in the midst of a sinful and adulterous Generation; Come along with me to my Kingdom, and sit down with me upon my Throne.

6. *THEIR Happiness will be enhaunted by the Time and Place when and where this Sentence shall be pronounced.* It shall be in the great and last Day, before the Supream Tribunal, when a final Issue shall be put to all the Affairs of Time, and the Sentence of the Judge shall confirm their Eternal State irreversibly. When this shall be pronounced in the Presence, and Audience of all the glorious Angels of Light, and all the Legions of Darkness, and the whole Progeny of Mankind that have ever been in the World, in that full Audience, this Proclamation shall be made concerning them. With this therefore our Saviour Christ encourageth us to serve him faithfully in this Life, Mat. 6. 4. *Thy Father which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly.* Luk. 12. 8.

7. *THEIR Happiness in this, will be yet further set off, by the contrary Sentence that shall be pronounced, on them that are on his left Hand.* Account whereof we have, in Mat. 25. 41. *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.* It will be a wonderful foil to the Felicity of Believers, to hear themselves so solemnly blessed by Christ, knowing that those *whom he blesseth, are blessed indeed*, when they shall hear the other so dreadfully cursed. And the more glorious will it appear to them, and ravishing, when the distinguishing Grace of God will shine forth in it, in making such a difference between those who were once in the same Condemnation. Thus shall the Godly stand upright in the Judgment: All the false Charges and Calumnies with which they have been aspersed, be wiped off; their Names vindicated; their Accusers silenc'd; those that hated them be confounded; and they themselves joyfully waiting, for the happy execution of this blessed Sentence upon them, in their being removed, to the Eternal Kingdom.

3. *THE Honour that shall be put upon them, during the process of the Judgment upon the Wicked.* As *the dead in Christ shall rise first, so*

their honourable Judgment ſhall firſt paſs; which the Wicked ſhall look upon, and trembligly expect their own Doom; which will next be proceeded unto. Which how terrible it will be, is to be read in the Sentence which will proceed upon it. For, or in order to which there muſt be a Proceſs, and how long this will laſt, we are not told, and may not determine; only it is certain, that till this be over, the Court will not break up, nor the Judge return to his Kingdom; till when the Righteous muſt alſo tarry; during which, there is alſo a ſpecial note of Dignity and Glory, which he will confer upon them, viz. to be *Aſſeſſors with him in judging the World.* We have ſuch a ſtrange expreſſion uſed, 1 Cor. 6. 2,3. *Do ye not know that the ſaints ſhall judge the world? Know ye not that we ſhall judge angels?* Where by Saints we are to underſtand ſuch as are ſo, not only by external Denomination, but a true inward Sanctification. Of whom it is ſaid, Pſal. 149. ult. *This honour have all his ſaints.* Which that we may rightly underſtand, let us obſerve theſe few Concluſions,

1. *THAT there muſt be nothing of the perſonal Honour belonging to Chriſt as Judge, given to the Saints.* It belongs to him alone, to Cite all to appear before him, to Arraign them at his Bar, to Examine them, and paſs the final Sentence upon them. This Power belongs *originally* to God, and is *œconomically* derived to Chriſt, by Commiſſion from his Father, Joh. 5. 22. *For the Father judgeth no man: but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.* Nor is a meer Creature fit for, or capable of it: To allow any thing of this to Saints, would derogate from the Glory of Chriſt.

2. *THERE are Thrones provided for them, on which they ſhall now be made to ſit, together with Chriſt, while he judgeth Wicked Men & Devils.* We read in Luk. 22. 29,30. *And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me: That ye may eat & drink at my table, and ſit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Iſrael.* And *Mat.* 19. 28. I ſhall not meddle with their Interpretation, who apply theſe Texts to the Millennium; and ſuppoſe they may be properly attributed to the great & general Judgment, and point us to the honourable Entertainment of the Children of God in that Day, who, during the Management of what is to be done, after their perſonal Acquittance, are advanced to the Dignity of thus ſitting with Chriſt after a magnificent manner.

3. *THE Saints ſhall be interreſſed in the Judgment of the Ungodly Men and Devils.* It would be too big a Catachreſis put upon the Word, *Judging*, if we ſhould only interpret it of their honourable Treatment during this Tranſaction. There muſt therefore be ſomething put upon them, which may, in a ſober ſenſe, bear the Notion of it in a ſubordinate way. The Judge then will make ſome Improvement of them, in his Judging the Wicked; they ſhall not be *meer Aſſeſſors and Spectators, but ſhall have a real Concern in the Judgment it ſelf.* And I ſuppoſe that there are theſe Things, which may be ſafely aſſerted on this Account. viz.

(1.) *THEY ſhall judge the World in and by Chriſt the great Judge.* Chriſt and the Saints, do make but one myſtical Body, whereof he is the Head, and they are the Members: and what the Head doth, that the whole Man is ſaid to do. And certainly, it will be a great Honour reflected upon them, that their Head and Saviour manageth this whole Affair; that the King doth it, the Queen ſitting by. But this is not all in this Matter. And therefore,

(2.) *THEY ſhall judge the World by their Lives.* The Lives which the Saints have led in this World, will convince and condemn the World. Thus we read of *Noah*, Heb. 11. 7. *By faith Noah being warned of God of things not ſeen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark for the ſaving of his houſe, by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteouſneſs which is by faith.* When Men are brought upon their Trial, and Enquiry made, what Title they have to the Kingdom, and what reaſon there is, why theſe ſhould be acquitted and glorified, while thoſe are condemned and deſtroyed; and the Lives of the one ſort, are ſet againſt the Lives of the other. The equity of the Proceeding, will thus be exemplified and manifeſted, and the Ungodly forever ſilenced. It will be made to appear, that theſe believed in Chriſt, repented from dead Works, accepted the Terms of the Goſpel, ſerved God with an upright Heart, kept themſelves from the Sins of the Times and Places they lived in, endured Scorn and Perſecution, for the Name of Chriſt; but that the other did not ſo, but deſpiſed offered Grace, trampled upon Salvation, hated to be reformed, lived and died in Impenitency, and ſcoffed at all thoſe that would not run the ſame Pace in Riot that they did. This the Judge will improve, *Mat.* 25. 35, 42.

(3.) *THEY ſhall judge them by their Approbation of the Sentence of the Judge.* They will fully aſſent to the Righteouſneſs and Equity of it; applaud the Holineſs and Impartiality of Chriſt in it. They will neither plead for them, nor be grieved at the ſevere Doom paſſed upon them, but commend and praiſe the Judge on account of it. Thus are Saints bro't in, Rev. 15. 3. *And they ſing the ſong of Moſes the ſervant of God, and the ſong of the Lamb, ſaying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God almighty, juſt and true are thy ways, thou King of ſaints.* Which, though in the Prophecy, it aims at ſomething before, yet is borrowed from the great Judgment. All therefore are called to praiſe the Lord on this account, *Pſal.* 46. 11, &c. When the Judge ſhall paſs the terrible Sentence, they ſhall ſay, *Amen, and ſhout for Joy.*

(4.) *THEY ſhall judge them by their Triumphing over them.* It is a Day wherein the Children of God ſhall have a perfect Victory over all their Enemies. As thoſe formerly inſult-

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ed over them, and were their Judges, and made their braggs how they had trodden them down; now their turn will come, and they shall *put their feet upon the necks of their proudest Adversaries, and turn all their Taunts upon them.* *Psal.* 58. 10. *Mic.* 7. 8, *&c.* And though there are some beginnings of these things, which sometimes fall out in this World, yet the great Accomplishment of them will be in that Day.

(5.) *ALL the Judgments which the Saints passed upon the World, when they were here, shall then be brought in and confirmed by the great Judgment of that Day.* There are a great many things wherein they so do. Godly Ministers, who are faithful in their Work, do often solemnly declare God's Threatnings against Sinners that would not repent. Godly Parents did frequently warn their ungodly Children of the Wrath of God, which they exposed themselves unto. Pious Neighbours would take occasions to tell their leud Neighbours, what was like to be the end of the Courses they followed. And whatsoever they do on this account, it is, *ex Officio*, as they are the World's Judges. And all this will be confirmed and ratified in the high Court, and the Lord Jesus Christ will pass the same Sentence upon them, with this remembrance. Hence that, Ezek. 22. 2. *Now thou son of man, wilt thou judge, the bloody city? yea, thou shalt shew her all her abominations.* Thus will that Promise be accomplished, in, 2 Tim. 2. 12. *If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us.* And that Prediction take Place, Psal. 49. 14. *Like sheep they are laid in the grave, death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning, and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling.*

USE. *WHAT Admirable Consolation is here presented to all Believers?* And let the Foretho'ts of these things, sweeten your Meditations of, and make you in Love with Christ's Appearing. The Consideration of the great Judgment, is very awful. 2 *Cor.* 5. 10, 11. But the Children of God have abundant Occasion to ponder on it with great Delight: To sit down, and look over the spot of Time before us, and speculate the hastning Day, when the great Trump shall Sound, and the drowsy Dust of all Men shall awake. When the holy Angels shall gather together all rational Beings: When the tremendous Judge, shall come from the highest Heavens, cloathed with awful Majesty, and take his Throne, and Proclamation shall be made to all to come and receive their Everlasting Doom. Now to think, I shall then be arrayed in Garments of Praise, ascend to meet my Judge, who is also my Saviour, return with him to the great Solemnity, be placed with Honour on his right Hand; hear him say with greatest sweetness, *Come thou blessed, Redeemed with my Blood, Sanctified by my Spirit, Loved and Chosen from Eternity by my Father*; Arise, and come away: Come and take possession of all the Glories of the Kingdom: Come and live with me, and lie in my Embraces for ever: *Well done good and faithful Servant, enter into the Joy of thy Lord.* Come sit down on a Throne with me now, and then go home to my Palace and live with me for ever. And is not this a Day to be wished for? One would think it should make you to cry out in Extasy, *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.* In the mean while, whatsoever Calumnies, hard Censures, and unjust Condemnations you meet with in and from a sinful Generation, let not your Hearts be troubled at it, but look over to this Day, and Contemplate the better Judgment you shall find upon it; and Comfort your selves with these Things.

[JUNE 4. 1700.]

SERMON CXLVI.

III. WE proceed to the third and last Article of the consummate Happiness of Believers, in which we are given to understand, how it shall fare with them, after the great Judgment is past, viz. *They shall be perfectly blessed, in full Enjoying, &c.* All the former steps of their Blessedness, though perfect in their kind, were yet leading to this: and here is the compleat and total Consummation of all. And here are two things, in the Consideration whereof, we may make some shallow Guess at their great Felicity then; viz. their happy Return with Christ to the place of Glory; and their everlasting Abode with him in that Place, in the full Fruition of the Glories of it.

1. *BELIEVERS will be wonderfully happy in their Return with Christ to the place of Glory.* This shall be as soon as the great Judgment is over, and all the Affairs of that Day, are fully determined. Christ after his Resurrection ascended to the highest Heavens, & took Possession of it, as his Royal Palace. Now the Man Christ leaves that Place for a Season, in pursuit of the great Judgment; for we are assured, that he will come down into this lower World, and erect a Tribunal here, for the management of that Business. How much Time will be taken up, in the transacting of that great Affair, is not for us to conjecture, nor is it material for us to know. But when all rational Beings are tried, and disposed of according to the Rules of that Judgment, there will be no more for him to do here, he will therefore return again to Heaven, and all his Saints & Angels shall go in Company with him. And how glorious a Process will this be? As he brought a Retinue of Angels from Heaven with him, and his Redeemed met him in the Air, and filled up his Train; so he will return in like State, and take them along with him, for they are *to be with him*, Joh. 17. 24. Heaven is the Place of Rest; that is the Fathers House, where the many Man-

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ſions are prepared for them. And there is a a ſpecial Glory which ſhall be given to them, in this very return. Which more eſpecially appears in three Particulars.

1. *THESE Redeemed of Chriſt, ſhall return with him in the ſtate of his Spouſe, going Home with him to his Kingdom.* This will be the Conſummation of the great Marriage of the Lamb; the Eſpouſals whereof, were plighted in this World. The Day of their Converſion, was the Day of their Eſpouſals, and they had tarried for him, and waited for the compleating of their Communion with him, till they came to Glory, and that both of Soul and Body; and that is not till now. And for this reaſon are they here often putting up that requeſt, Cant. 8. 14. *Make haſte, my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart upon the mountains of ſpices.* Then will it be a glorious thing to ſee the Bride, the Lambs Wife, in all her ſtately Ornaments, going Home with her Lord.

2. *BELIEVERS will have a greater Honour put upon them in this Return, than the Angels themſelves.* Tho' Man was made a little below them in his Creation, yet here will be a peculiar Dignity put upon Men, in this Solemnity. The Angels will then appear in their Glory, but they ſhall be the Friends of the Bridegroom, and Attendants on the Bride; and therefore not ſo near to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as his Redeemed ſhall be. Ye, it will be one part of their execution of their Office, as Miniſtring Spirits for theſe Heirs of Salvation, as they are ſaid to be, *Heb.* 1. 14. And they will count themſelves happy in being thus honoured by Chriſt. How wonderful then will the Believers Condition be?

3. *THEIR Felicity in this Return, will be ſet off by the unhappy Condition, which they ſhall leave condemned Sinners in.* This will be a wonderful foil to ſet that off by. Thoſe on the left Hand, are Sentenced to *depart into Everlaſting Fire.* The Place wherein they are to undergo the execution of the fearful Sentence, is probably ſuppoſed to be in this lower World. And the other are no ſooner entred on their way to the Paridiſe of Delight, the Palace of Glory, but they leave the lower World in Flames behind them, turned into an Hell for the Puniſhment of thoſe that are God's Enemies, and Sinners fallen into the Miſeries unto which they had been doomed, yelling out their bitter Lamentations forever. This they ſhall ſee. And what a luſtre will it put upon their aſtoniſhing Felicity, when they ſhall herein diſcern what a diſtinguiſhing favour is ſhown to them of meer Grace, from thoſe who had formerly been their fellow-Sinners?

2. *BELIEVERS will be inconceivably happy, in their Everlaſting Abode with Chriſt, in the full Fruition of the Glory of that Place.* And now they are come to the Top of their Felicity. This is the higheſt Pitch, that they can arrive at. And now ſhould I eſſay to give a Deſcription of the Glories of that State, I ſhould but betray mine own Ignorance. None can tell, but ſuch as have been in the Third Heavens: And could any know, he were not able to utter it. We in our preſent Condition are not capable of Conceiving or Crediting thereof. But we may take a Taſte of this, (and no more then a Taſte, we are not here to expect) in Three Particulars, viz. *The Entertainment they ſhall find there: The Employment they ſhall there follow; And the Duration of both.*

1. TOUCHING *their Entertainment* which they ſhall find there. The Apoſtle thought it enough to ſay of it, 1 Theſ. 4. 17. *Then we which are alive, and remain, ſhall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; ſo ſhall we ever be with the Lord.* And indeed, this comprehends under it all the future Bleſſedneſs of the Children of God. But there are ſome Particulars by which this is elſewhere intimated. The principal whereof are ſuch as theſe,

(1.) WE may ſuppoſe that *their Lord Redeemer will there preſent them to his Father.* And what a bleſſed Preſentation will that be? We are told of being *preſented before the preſence of his Glory*, Jude 24. Which may aim at this. And Chriſt is ſaid to *preſent his Church to himſelf, a glorious Church*, Eph. 5. 27. How this ſhall be is beyond our Capacity now to underſtand. But what an aſtoniſhing Interview will it be, when Chriſt ſhall bring them into the Preſence Chamber, and ſet them before his God and their God, and ſay, *Theſe are they whom thou gaveſt me, and I redeemed them.* When the Father ſhall give them the moſt raviſhing Teſtimonials of his infinite Love for them, and the greateſt Welcome in that City of God that they are capable of.

(2.) *HE will make them to poſſeſs the ſame Heaven with him.* They *ſhall be with him, where he is*, Joh. 17. 24. Not in the Ubiquity of his Deity, but *in the Royal City*, where his Reſidence is, and where his Glory is moſt manifeſted. Heaven is called the *Habitation of God's Holineſs, his Dwelling Place, his Throne, the City of the great King.* Theſe were regiſtred Citizens of this Place when they were Converted, and had a ſure Title to it beſtowed on them. But now they enter into it, to take Poſſeſſion of it in their own Perſons. It would be too bold a ſtroke to go about to offer at a Deſcription of this Place, to give a Draught of all the Streets of this City, and the wonderful Accommodations there are provided in it, for all thoſe who are there to inhabit. What the Scripture ſpeaks of it, muſt be allowed to be alluſive, expreſſed by Metaphors borrowed from Earthly Things, ſuited to our preſent Conceptions, and for the exciting of our Affections to it. But yet there is ſomething analogous intended in them, tho' infinitely tranſcending theſe faint Reſemblances. Our Saviour tells us of *many Manſions* there: Of his *going before to prepare* for his People againſt their coming thither, *Joh.* 14. *begin.* And it muſt needs be a very Glorious & Magnificent

nificent Place, being the Palace of the great King, in which he will entertain all his Favourites. For Amplitude it encircles the Starry Heavens with its Pavement: For Delight it is called the Paradise of God; and the *Eden* of old was but a dark shadow of it; the Floor of it is resembled by Gold; and the Gates by Pearls; and the Buildings to most precious Stones. It is a Place, upon which Infinite Wisdom employed it self, to make it fit for the blessed Abode of those who were to be the Heirs of Glory. Here Christ is, and here shall they be. And there is nothing wanting in it, to give them the most perfect Satisfaction.

(3.) *THEY shall be Partners with Christ in the same Heavenly Glory which he enjoys.* True, there will be great Disproportion in Degrees. He shall be glorified as the Head, and they as the Members. He shall be acknowledged to be the first-born and principal Heir; but they shall be *Joynt Heirs* with him, in one and the same Inheritance, *Rom.* 8. 17. They are therefore said to *reign with him*, 2 Tim. 2. 12. There is not only a Glory provided for them, but the same that the Man Christ hath, they share in with him. There is a Throne provided for them to sit upon, and it is the same that he himself sits on, Rev. 3. 21. *To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame, and am sit down with my Father in his throne.* There is a Glory, which Christ as God, is everlastingly possessed of, which is incommunicable; but there is a Glory, which Christ as Mediator, obtained by Covenant, and purchased by his Obedience, and in this he hath interessed all his Children. He bought it in their Name, and will therefore confer it upon them. There is a participation in the Glory of the Person of Christ; as the Wife is honoured by the dignity which her Husband enjoys. And all the Honour which Christ hath merited for them, shall be bestowed on them. And how great that is, let them tell, who are able to grasp the Notion of Infiniteness, and Eternity; for such *a weight* it is, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17.

(4.) *THEY shall see and enjoy him in that Glory.* To be with him, doth not only intend a being in his Company, but a participation in all the Sweetness and Desireableness of it. As he is the Object as well as the Author of our Felicity, so the Vision and Fruition of him, will be our great Blessedness. There is an Inchoation of this here, for there is a Communion between him and them in this World, 1 Joh. 1. 3. *That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, & with his Son Jesus Christ.* And this they do prize above all other things, *Psal.* 27. 4, 5. But alass, what is this to that? I shall not descend to the Particulars in which this is to be had, but only glance at the Glory of this Vision and Fruition in that Place, in three or four Particulars,

[1.] *THEY shall see and enjoy him intimately.* It is recorded concerning *Moses* in this Life, as a peculiar Priviledge, Exod. 33. 11. *And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh with his friend.* Thus it shall be there with every Believer. Christ and his saved ones, shall unbosom themselves one to another, with the most enlarged Freedom. There will be compleat Familiarity between him and them in the Kingdom. His Majesty shall not there terrify them; they shall not fear and quake, as *Moses* did here. There shall be that intimacy that there is between the most loving Husband, and the most beloved Wife, and transcendently greater. We read, in Psal. 25. 14. *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him: and he will shew them his covenant.* They shall then lie in his Bosom, enjoy his Embraces, *know him as they are known* by him, according to their Capacity. There shall never be any estrangedness between them; but he shall, having resigned the Kingdom into his Father's Hand, spend his Eternity in their Company. And how blessed will they reckon themselves, being so near to their only Beloved, who was *the Chief of ten Thousands?*

[2.] *THIS Vision and Fruition shall be inseparable.* When they were here, if they could but now and then, steal a Sight of him, or obtain a Kiss from him, it was better than Wine, their Hearts were ravished with it, and they reckoned themselves happy. But alass! these Interviews were soon over: He was withdrawn, they lost Sight of him, and knew not where to find him; then it was a drerie Day, they sat Solatary, and pin'd away with Love-Sickness. Now and then a Visit, was as much as they could enjoy of his more sensible Manifestations of himself to them: But now they shall be lodged in his Bosom, and his Light never be beclouded from them more. They will not be interrupted Caresses which they shall have from him, but they shall constantly solace themselves in him. There will be no more Coyness on their parts, nor Anger on his, but the Delights which they shall enjoy, shall be both full and uninterrupted.

[3.] *THEY shall have it immediately.* There is a vast difference between mediate and immediate Communion with Christ. The mediate, is incomparably better than all the Delights that this World can afford. There is no such ravishing Joy in this Life, as that of a Soul under the Sealings, and shedding abroad of the Love of Christ in him: But it is a very little thing when compared with that which is to be had from him there. This difference is alluded to, in 1 Cor. 13. 10. *But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.* The Glass of Ordinances is but dim; all in it is accommodated to Earthly Notions; there is but a little Portion known of him thereby, and that very obscurely. We now have but Pictures, and Draughts of him, and these very imperfect: We now enjoy him in Promises, and by Faith. But it is another manner of thing to be in his Presence, sitting at his right Hand,

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gazing on him, and receiving at his own Hand, all the Good which was laid up in the Promiſes.

[4] *THEY ſhall have it compleatly.* It is far from being ſo in this Life, and that not only by reaſon of the imperfection of the Media by which it is enjoyed, but alſo from the impotency of our Organs to entertain it: We are not capable of ſuch Viſions and Fruitions at the preſent. We are but Children in this Life, and they are childiſh Things that we are entertained withal; and yet there is abundance of Satisfaction in them. But when once we are made compleat in Chriſt, in thoſe Degrees which we now long for, then ſhall our Sight and Enjoyment of him be made compleat too. Then ſhall we *know as we are known*, ſee as we are ſeen, and be filled full herewithal. We ſhall then dwell at the Fountain of his Love, and the reciprocal ardours of Affection between him and us, ſhall break over all Banks and Bounds, and we ſhall be entirely ſatisfied, both in Soul and in Body. Then ſhall we come to our Reſt.

2. TOUCHING *the Employment which they ſhall there follow*; it becomes us to believe that it *ſhall be truly happifying, rather than over-curiouſly to conjecture particulars about it.* That glorified Saints in Heaven, will be employed there, is certain; for the formal Happineſs of a Rational Being conſiſts in Eupraxy: And as they will then be *perfected in Holineſs*, ſo all their Employment will there be holy. There will be no fleſhly Luſt gratified, no carnal Deſign driven. And as they are now in a State of Glory, all their Occupation will be glorious. And it is certain, that when damned Sinners are Everlaſtingly Roaring & Howling, under the Extremity of Infernal Plagues and Torments, theſe ſhall be Eternally Singing of Hallelujah's, Rejoycing & making Melody in the Preſence of God and the Lamb, cauſing Heaven to ring, from one end to another with Acclamations of Joy, tuned to an Heavenly Conſort, in proſpect of thoſe things which they ſee and poſſeſs; and in the Acknowledgments of the unſpeakable Grace by which they had been ſaved: Which if Hell can be acquainted withal, and might but have a peep-hole to diſcover, how would it fill them with unſpeakable Bitterneſs, Tortures, and Blaſphemies? They are made for immediate Communion with Chriſt, and that is a rational Communion, which will occupy their whole Powers in the maintaining of it. They there enjoy a perpetual Sabbath, and therefore the Buſineſs they ſhall be taken up withal, ſhall be Sabbatical. They will perpetually employ Underſtanding, Will, Affections, Heart, Hand, Tongue, in ſhouting forth the Glory of God, for which they were made. And this ſhall be without Intermiſſion; for there is no Night there. And they are adjoyned to a glorious Aſſembly of Angels and Saints, with whom they are to maintain Communion, which will alſo be full of Employment, who while they are ſolacing themſelves together, in the Memorials of the Wonders of God's Love in their Salvation, they ſhall make new Anthems, and ſing new Songs to the Praiſe of their God & Redeemer, with the moſt aſtoniſhing Raptures of Love and Joy, while their Spirits are freſh and untired, and not in the leaſt clogged with the Heavineſs which here often diſturbed, and allayed their Fellowſhip with him.

AND if any would know more about this Affair, let them labour to make ſure of this to be their Portion, and then wait patiently in Hope till they come there; and they ſhall be abundantly ſatisfied.

3. FOR *the Duration of this Glory, which they ſhall there be inveſted withal; it ſhall be forever.* And this is the Crown and Felicity of all the reſt. Might their Happineſs have an End, the very Fore-thoughts, and Expectation of it, would eat out the Marrow of their preſent Delights. There is an Eternity to which all Reaſonable Creatures are appointed by the Law of their Creation, and this muſt be ſpent, either in Happineſs or Miſery. Now as Happineſs is ſecured to all Believers, ſo the tenor of it was, for *Everlaſting*, Joh. 3. 16. And for that end, all that which will contribute to their future Happineſs in Glory, hath a ſtamp of Eternity upon it. God, who is the Supream Object of their Bleſſedneſs, is from Everlaſting to Everlaſting. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in whoſe Embraces they ſhall be ſatisfied, liveth for ever, and will endleſly Communicate himſelf to them. Heaven, where they are to reſt through their long Eternity, is a *City that hath Foundations*, and is not made of periſhable matter: Not only are the Joys thereof, but *the Pleaſures are Everlaſting*, Pſal. 16. *ult.* Here they had *no continuing City*, but now they are come to one. Here they wandred about as Pilgrims and Strangers, but now they are gotten Home, & ſhall no more be diſlodged, but *abide there for ever*, 1 Theſ. 4. 17. There is no Delight will wax old there, but run new continually, and all the Streams of it enjoy a perpetual Perenity. And as the greateſt Bitterneſs in that Cup which is given to Wicked Men to drink in another World, is, that *their Worm dieth not, and their Fire is not quenched*: And could they have any Hope of a Jail-Delivery at laſt, it would greatly mitigate their Sorrows; whereas this makes their Hearts to die of Deſpair: So this is the ſweetneſs of Heavens Felicities; that they ſhall abide for ever, and Millions of Ages ſhall not bring them one Moment nearer to a Period. They ſhall die no more, but becauſe Chriſt their Saviour liveth, they ſhall live alſo.

USE. IF this Truth were well thought of, *what abundant Conſolation would it afford to the Children of God, while in this Life, where they meet with many Sorrows, and Temptations?* It is enough to cheer up the drooping Spirits of Believers, when at any Time they are diſconſolate, under many Changes, and Diſquieting Trials they encounter. And Oh! that you would make more Uſe of this Cordial than you do. Be often reflecting on your

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Intereſt in Chriſt, and from thence entertain your ſelves with the Contemplation of the *Reſt which remains for the People of God.* And here you will find enough to counter-ballance, all that in this Life can offer it ſelf to imbitter your Spirits. When the Providence of God brings us under Loſſes, Croſſes, Bereavements, Diſgraces; we are frowned upon in the face of outward things, and are inſulted over by the Ungodly; we are aſſaulted by Satan, and diſquieted in our own minds, and we here ſee nothing elſe but Clouds & Darkneſs hanging before us. Now it is good to look forward to this happy Day. Remember, the Covenant paſt between Chriſt and you is *an Everlaſting Covenant*, the Mercies of it are ſure. He who hath paſt his Word to you, will never break it, nor will he ſuffer you ever to fall out of his Favour. And now reſolve, that if Matters be ſo, you have reaſon to look over theſe Trials, to that Joy which is laid in for you. Think in the ſevereſt of them, though it be thus now, yet ere long my Saviour will come and fetch me home to his own Place; the Joyful Marriage Day is drawing on apace; the Bridegroom is but making ready for it, ſuiting all things for ſo ſtately a Solemnity: A little while, and I ſhall ſee him come with Glory, I ſhall meet him, and go with him, and enjoy him Eternally. Then I ſhall be out of the reach of all Devils and Evils. Then Sin and Sorrow ſhall be no more. Then ſhall I be ever filled, and never glutted with his Company, be everlaſtingly ſatisfy'd with Cæleſtial Light and Love, and raviſhed with Joys that are full & endleſs. Live then always as ſuch, who firmly look for ſuch things as theſe are ere-long. And *let not your Hearts be troubled* at any thing which intervenes, but ſwallowed up with the Extatical Hope of this Glory.

[JULY 2. 1700.]

SERMON *CXLVII.*

QUESTION XXXIX.

WHAT is the Duty that GOD requires of Man?

ANSWER.

THE Duty that GOD requireth of Man, is Obedience to his revealed Will.

WE have taken a Summary Account of the firſt part of Man's Religion, as we are taught it in the Scriptures, viz. Faith, or the things which he is to believe concerning God. We are now to paſs over to the Second, *Obſervance or Obedience*, the diſcovery whereof conſiſts, in *the Duty which God requires of Man.* The Ground or Reaſon of this Diſtribution hath been handled in the Explication of the Third Queſtion; where we obſerved, that *the Scriptures are a compleat Rule of Faith and Manners*, pointing us to God as the firſt Cauſe and laſt End of all things. And becauſe not only Knowledge and Practice muſt go together, according to Joh. 13. 17. *If ye know theſe things, happy are ye if ye do them.* But it is neceſſary that we know God, in order to our right ſerving of him; hence Faith, by which we obtain that Knowledge, muſt be firſt in order of Nature.

THE Propoſition now under Conſideration, is only a general Account given of Man's Duty, which is further and more diſtinctly illuſtrated in the Sequel. We may therefore here, take only a general Account of it. Here then two Things are to be conſidered, viz. 1. That *there is a Duty which all Men ſtand obliged in unto God.* 2. That *the Things required in this Duty is Obedience to his revealed Will.*

I. THAT *there is a Duty which all Men ſtand obliged in unto God.* All Creatures both rational and irrational, are God's Property, and owe themſelves to him, being for his Glory. But they cannot properly be ſaid, to be under a Duty. For *Duty*, in the appropriate Notion of it, *is an Obligation lying on the Creature in Equity, and by the force of a Precept, to the doing of a Thing*; and this, none but a Reaſonable Creature is capable of. It is therefore called a *Reaſonable Service*, Rom. 12. 1. Intimating that there is a ſtrong and manifold Reaſon requiring it of them, and hence that it is unreaſonable for them to deny it to him; and that they muſt uſe Reaſon in doing it. Here two Things may be conſidered, 1. That *Man owed a Duty of Service to God at firſt.* 2. That *he is not diſcharged from it ſince the Fall.*

1. That *Man owed a Duty of Service to God at firſt.* This will be evident if we conſider,

1. THAT *God made all things for his own Glory.* That all Beings beſides God, had their Being from him, and that they derive from him, not naturally, but voluntarily, hath been before demonſtrated: According to, Rev. 4. 11. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou haſt created all things, and for thy pleaſure they are, and were created.* Now every wiſe and free Agent, propoſeth to himſelf, an end of his actings. And as the Conſideration of the Holineſs of God aſſures us, that he can have no other laſt end, in his Works of Efficiency, than his own declarative Glory. Iſai. 42. 8. *I am the Lord, that is my Name, & my glory will I not give to another, neither my praiſe to graven images.* So the Word of God aſſures us, that he had this deſign in all his Works. Prov. 16. 4. *The Lord hath made all things for himſelf: yea, even the*

wicked for the day of evil. And but for this, no ſecond Being had ever been called out of the Abyſs of Nothing.

2. THAT *all Creatures were made to glorify God, according to the Capacity they were endowed withal.* That the Creatures are ranked in ſeveral Orders and Kinds of Being, and theſe furniſhed with very different Capacities, is obvious to every one that hath any rational Conſideration of them. And herein God expreſſes his manifold Wiſdom, Pſal. 104. 24. *O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wiſdom haſt thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.* Now the Wiſdom of God in this variety appears, in his ſuiting them to the great End, in the way for which they were adapted in their Natures. We read, as of the whole frame of Creation, ſo of every Order of Being in it, that they were *very good*, Gen. 1. Now the Goodneſs of a Creature, is in its being uſeful to the end of its Being. For to make a thing for an end, to which it is incapable of ſerving, is folly and not wiſdom. So that by the capacity of the Creature, when it came out of God's Hand by Creation, we may diſcern, how God is to be glorified by it.

3. THAT *Man was made capable of ſerving God Actively.* There are two ways in which Creatures may be improved in the Service of God, viz *Paſſively* and *Actively*. In the former way God is glorified by all ſorts of Beings, in as much as they are Myrrours in which his glorious Perfections are diſplayed, and are uſed by him as Inſtruments in bringing to paſs, his Purpoſes in the World. Accordingly we read, Pſal. 19. 1. *The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament ſheweth his handy work.* And *Pſal.* 148. 8. In the latter reſpect, only rational Beings are fitted to ſerve him. Actual Service done to God, is voluntary and upon Choice. Now Man was furniſhed for this in his Creation; partly in reſpect of the Nature which God gave him, viz. An Underſtanding and Will by which he was fitted to know and chuſe this Service; and all the other Powers in him, ſubordinated to theſe, by which he was fitted to purſue his deliberate Choice: Partly alſo by reaſon of the Image of God, which was concreated on him, by which all his Faculties and Powers were ſet right, being *Sanctified to the Service of God. Eccl.* 7. 29.

4. THAT *God required Duty of Man, under a Promiſe and Threatning.* Of the former we are told, Rom. 10 5. *For Moſes deſcribeth the righteouſneſs which is of the law, That the man which doeth them ſhall live by them.* Of the latter, Gen. 2. 17. *But of the tree of the knowledge of good & evil, thou ſhalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eateſt thereof thou ſhalt ſurely die.* Now theſe do evidently declare, that it was not a matter of indifferency whether Men ſerved God or no. For ſuch Sanctions carry in them, the ſtrongeſt Obligations that can be. Where Life or Death are the aſſured iſſues of the Man's Carriage, it declares that it is a matter of greateſt Conſequence.

5. THAT *God had a Right & Authority over Men, thus to oblige them.* When therefore he hath ſo done, it muſt needs amount to a Duty. For what elſe conſtitutes a Duty, but the Command of a Superiour given to a Subject: And if it be nothing but what is juſt in itſelf, and ſuited to the Capacity of the Subject on whom it is laid: And ſuch is this. God's Right is founded in his Abſolute Supremacy. All ſecond Beings are his own, they have their Being from him, and are upheld by him, and owe themſelves intirely to him. All their Powers are on this account to be at his Direction, and accordingly employed for him, *Pſal.* 100. *begin.*

2. *THAT he is not diſcharged from Duty to God ſince the Fall.* As to Man's particular Obligation to the Law of Government given at firſt, that will be conſidered afterwards. But that he ſtill ſtands in Duty bound to ſerve God is here to be obſerved; and it is enough to evidence it, becauſe he is not diſcharged from it, notwithſtanding the Apoſtaſy. The truth of this Aſſertion will ſtand againſt all Cavils; becauſe either the Fall itſelf muſt give him this Diſcharge, or the new Covenant muſt do it; but neither of theſe ſo do.

1. *THE Fall itſelf hath not diſcharged him.* It hath indeed deprived him of the Power, having ſtript him naked of the Image of God, by which he was enabled to it. Fallen Man is *with ut ſtrength*, Rom. 5. 6. That is a Truth concerning every natural Man, *Joſh.* 24. 19. He hath contracted the Image of Sin, which hath filled him with Averſation from, and Enmity againſt the Law of God, *Rom.* 8 7. But the natural Tie, and moral Obligation to Duty, do ſtill abide upon him for all this. He doth not ceaſe to be a Creature, and ſo to owe himſelf to the Glory of his Creator, nor doth he ceaſe to be a reaſonable Creature, and ſo to owe to God a reaſonable Service. His revolt itſelf doth not diſoblige him, that cannot make either God's Right, or his Duty to ceaſe; he therefore abides ſtill under the Sanction, which holds him under a Sentence of Death. Nor can his impotency do it, ſince he was created with full Furniture for it, and hath loſt it by his own Default. And that God ſhould loſe his Authority, becauſe Man hath caſt off his Ability, is without Reaſon.

2. *NOR doth the new Covenant take off the Obligation, but reinforce it.* What alteration is made in the ſtate of the Duty in which they that are under the New Covenant are obliged by it, belongs to an after Conſideration. But that Man is not by it freed from Duty to God, is certain. And indeed the Obligation itſelf is founded in Nature, and therefore cannot ceaſe ſo long as the natural Order of Beings abides. God muſt ceaſe to be Man's Creator and Governour, or Man muſt ceaſe to be a Creature and a Subject; before he can be enfranchiſed from owing Duty to God. Nay, the new Covenant doth add a new force to the Engagement, in as much as

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it brings in an additional Right that God hath to the Service of Man, which is founded in that Redemption which is wrought out by Jeſus Chriſt, and applied to us by his Holy Spirit. For we are told, for what end he redeemed us; Tit. 2. 14. *That he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* And accordingly, the Apoſtle uſeth it as the moſt forcible Argument to engage us to Duty, 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. *What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy Ghoſt which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your ſpirit, which are God's.*

II. *THAT the Thing required in the Duty, is Obedience to his revealed Will.* We have here a very full and comprehenſive Deſcription of Man's Duty; in which there are two things to be obſerved, 1. *The Subject-Matter of Duty*; viz. *the revealed Will of God.* 2. *The proper Nature of Duty*; or that wherein it is to be performed by us, viz. *Obedience to that Will of his.* A few words to each.

1. *THE Subject-Matter of Duty, is God's revealed Will.* So is Duty deſcribed, 1 Pet. 4. 2. *That he ſhould no longer live the reſt of his time in the fleſh, to the luſts of men, but to the will of God.* And this is that which ſets the Bounds to our Duty. Whatſoever God wills us to do, is our Duty, and nothing elſe but what he ſo wills; and the ſupream Reaſon why it is our Duty, is becauſe he wills it, Deut. 12. 32. *What thing ſoever I command you, obſerve to do it: thou ſhalt not add thereto, nor diminiſh from it.* The Will of God in Scripture Language, cometh under a double Conſideration, ſometimes for his *Will willing*, ſometimes for his *Will willed.* In the former ſenſe it is nothing but God himſelf, as he is apprehended by us after the manner of our analogous Conception, having ſuch a moral Faculty, as is beſt repreſented by a Will in rational and moral Agents. In the latter reſpect it is aſcribed to him metonymically, as an Act or Effect flowing from his eſſential Will; and ſo we are here to underſtand it. And to this Will of God Divines do uſually apply the Diſtinction of *ſecret and revealed*; which Diſtinction is manifeſtly grounded on the Word of God. The latter of which is that whereon Man's Duty depends, according to Deut. 29. 29. *The ſecret things belong unto the Lord our God; but thoſe things which are revealed, belong unto us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.* Not as if this did conſtitute two diverſe Wills in God, much leſs oppoſite, one to another. For we are told, Job. 23. 13. *But he is in one mind, and who can turn him; and what his ſoul deſireth, even that he doth.* But this Will of his is thus diverſely repreſented to our Conſideration according to his different Manner of diſpenſing it in his Works. His ſecret Will, is his everlaſting Counſel within himſelf, concerning all Things that come to paſs in Time; and is therefore called ſecret, becauſe none was of Counſel with him, nor can dive into his Purpoſes any further than he is pleaſed to make them known. Of which ſee, Iſa. 40. 13, 14. *Who hath directed the ſpirit of the Lord, or being his counſeller hath taught him? With whom took he counſel, and who inſtructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and ſhewed to him the way of underſtanding?* *His revealed Will is nothing elſe, but the diſcovery which he makes to the Creature of his own Purpoſes, ſo far as it hath pleaſed him.* And this alſo comes under a double Conſideration, viz. either it is the Manifeſtation which he makes of the Things which he himſelf from Eternity propoſed to do, which is done either by his Word, or by his Works. By his Word, and ſo it comprehends all thoſe Predictions, which he hath given of future Things, which he did extraordinarily diſcover to his Prophets, and hath recorded in the Scriptures, many whereof have ſince been accompliſhed, and the reſt ſhall certainly be ſo in their proper Seaſon. By his Works, and ſo whatſoever comes to paſs in the Providence of God, is an infallible Revelation of what God *before the Foundation of the World*, intended *ſhould be*, *Lam.* 3. 37. *Acts* 4. 28. Or elſe thoſe Diſcoveries which he hath made to Man, of the Things which he requires of him to do; by which Diſcovery he makes it his Duty to do them: according to Mic. 6. 8. *He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* This alſo belongs to, or flows from his Eternal Purpoſe; for though he did not Purpoſe that all Men ſhould actually do theſe Things; for then they ſhould have ſo done eventually; for the Counſel of the Lord ſhall ſtand; yet he purpoſed that it ſhould be Man's Duty to do them, and he therefore violates his Obligation, if he neglect ſo to do. And this is that which Divines call his preceptive Will, becauſe he hath revealed it in the way of a Law or Command; as will afterwards be conſidered. This then is that Will of God, that preſcribes unto Man the matter of his Duty, and lays a powerful Obligation on him to comply with it. And this will be evident if we conſider theſe things.

1. *THAT God hath a ſupream Authority over the rational Creature, to command it as he ſees meet.* To diſpute this, is to make it a Queſtion whether God be God, or the reaſonable Creature be a Creature; for ſo long as that Relation between God and him abides, the reaſon of God's Authority and his Subjection continueth. He that made the Creature for his Glory, may diſpoſe of it as he ſees beſt, for that End; and therefore, where he hath put moral Powers into any ſecond Beings, he hath a right to regulate them according to his own Wiſdom. And if he command, it is with Authority.

2. HENCE *his ſo commanding, lays the Crea-*

ture under Duty. If there were no Command, there would be no Duty, and if there be, it both conſtitutes Duty, and carries the Reaſon of it. God's Holineſs and Juſtice are ſufficient to aſſure us, that he will Command no unjuſt or impure Actions, but it is in his abſolute Juriſdiction over us, which forbids us to diſpute, and engageth us readily to comply with all that he requires of us. How often therefore do we find him affixing of that Seal to his Precepts, *I am the Lord?* Tho' he could have given other Reaſons, yet he will have us to underſtand, that if he ſay it, there is no liberty for us to demur about it.

3. THAT *Nothing elſe but God's Precept, can be the Rational Creatures Duty.* Nothing elſe can bind our Conſciences. Mat. 4. 10. *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve.* True, there is a Duty that we owe to Men, and that according to the rank and ſtation that God hath ſet them and us in. But the reaſon why we owe it to them, is becauſe it is God's revealed Will that we ſhould pay ſuch a deference to them. Nor can we lawfully ſubmit our Conſciences to them, any further than God hath told us his Will about it. Hence that, Eph. 6. 1. *Children obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.* Act. 4. 19. And the reaſon is, in the relation he bears to us, Iſai. 33. 22. *For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king, he will ſave us.*

4. *IT is neceſſary that Man know his Duty, in order to his doing of it.* It is a reaſonable Service, and therefore is not done by inſtinct, but on free choice; which cannot be, but according as he hath acquaintance with it. Ignorance muſt needs impede Duty, and make the Man either to ſit ſtill, or to do amiſs. Hence this is not the leaſt part of the miſery of Sinners, Rom. 3. 17. *And the way of peace they have not known.* This made *David* ſo often to pray for teaching, *Pſal.* 119. 33, *&c.*

5. *A Man may fulfill the ſecret Will of God, and ſin therein, and he may deſign otherwiſe, and yet pleaſe God.* That then cannot be the rule of our Duty. It is certain, that wicked Men, when they perpetrate the moſt notorious Abominations, do therein accompliſh the ſecret Will of God, who purpoſed, by his active Permiſſion, to let them fall into ſuch Enormities; but that no way takes from the ſinfulneſs of it. Hence we have that Obſervation on the Crucifixion of Chriſt, Act. 2. 23. *Him being delivered by the determinate counſel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified & ſlain.* And holy Men ſometimes, in purſuance of the Command, engage in that, which it is God's ſecret Will ſhall never be, and yet they do their Duty. As when we pray for our Enemies, or for Sick Perſons, when God intends to diſpoſe of them otherwiſe, yet we do our Duty. And when *David* purpoſed to build a Houſe for God, which God intended that he ſhould not, yet we read, 2 Chron. 6. 8, 9. *But the Lord ſaid to David my father, Foraſmuch as it was in thine heart to build a Houſe for my name, thou didſt well that it was in thine heart: Notwithſtanding, thou ſhalt not build the houſe, but thy ſon which ſhall come forth of thy loins, he ſhall build the houſe for my name.*

6. *NOR could Man have known to put difference between Sin and Duty, if God had not revealed it.* It is true, there was an impreſſion of the Rule on Man's Conſcience at the firſt, which we call the Light of Nature, and there are remarkable relicks of it on the hearts of fallen Men; according to *Rom.* 2. 14. But yet, it was God that left theſe impreſſions on Mens minds, and ſo revealed his Will in them. For we do not here conſider Revelation, as it is oppoſed to the ordinary way of knowledge, as it is ſometimes conſidered, but as it is contradiſtinguiſhed to God's ſecret Will, in what way ſoever he is pleaſed to make it known.

2. *THE proper Nature of Duty:* or that wherein it is to be performed by us, viz. *Obedience to this Will of his.* This is that which we owe to God, and therefore in the right diſcharge of it, we are truly ſaid to do our Duty. Here then we may take an Account of the *Nature of Obedience in General.* And it may be thus deſcribed; *Obedience to God, is the conforming of our Wills and Actions to the Command, from the reſpect that we bear to God commanding.* From which Deſcription we may obſerve theſe things,

1. *THE Rule of this Obedience, is the Command.* All that truly obey God, have a reſpect to that as their Directory, both to the extent and limitation of their Duty, Pſal. 119. 6. *Then ſhall I not be aſhamed, when I have reſpect unto all thy commandments.* And therefore we are limited hither, Iſai. 8. 20. *To the law and to the teſtimony: if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them.* If there were no Rule, it would follow, that there could be neither Obedience nor Diſobedience; for theſe muſt be meaſured by ſome Rule, which can be no other than the Command.

2. *THE Subject of it is twofold.*

(1.) *PRIMARILY the Will*; and that as it is in a Cauſe by Counſel, and ſo ſuppoſeth the Underſtanding; for without the Exerciſe of that, we cannot as we ought, will the good Will of God. And indeed, all true Obedience is rooted in the Heart, which firſtly points to the Will in Man, which is in him the ſupream Faculty, and unleſs that be devoted to the Service of God, all elſe that he doth, though it carry never ſo fair a ſhew with it, cannot be properly called Obedience. Hence thoſe complaints, Pſal. 78. 37. *For their heart was not right with him; neither were they ſtedfaſt in his Covenant.* Iſa. 29. 13. *Wherefore the Lord ſaid, Foraſmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear towards me, is taught by the precept of men.*

(2.) *THE Actions as they flow from, and are commanded by the Will.* Obedience is called a doing

doing of God's Will; and we know that the Command enjoyns things to be done, and avoided, which muſt terminate in the Actions; and all ſorts of Actions are comprized under it, which are ſummarily reduced to Thoughts, Word, and Deeds; all of which come under the very regulation of the Command; as the Word of God abundantly teſtifieth.

3. *THE ſpecial Nature of it is a Conformity of theſe to the Command.* When we lay this Rule before us, and meaſure all that we do by it, and take care, that we neither come ſhort of it, nor tranſgreſs it. Thus is Obedience deſcribed, Deut. 5. 32. *Ye ſhall obſerve to do therefore as the Lord your God hath commanded you: you ſhall not turn aſide to the right hand or to the left.* Which Conformity reſpects the Heart as well as the Actions, and therefore comprizeth in it all the Requiſites to render our Actions anſwerable to the Rule. And that reacheth, not only to the matter of the Duty, but to the manner, and principle, and end; to all of which God hath Regard, and reckons of what we do, accordingly.

4. *THE Riſe or Root of it is, a ſincere Reſpect that we have to God commanding.* It is an eſſential property of true Obedience, that it be done to God. Hence that, *Zech.* 7. 5. In which reſpect, theſe three things are comprized.

(1.) *AN unreſtrained Acknowledgement of his Authority.* Obedience ſuppoſeth a ſtate of Subjection, to a Superiour, to whom it is payed, and that cannot be done cordially without an Apprehenſion of the Right he hath to command us, elſe we ſhall never acknowledge our Duty to obey him. The Church is therefore brought in, aſcribing thoſe Titles to him, which include this Right, Iſa. 33. 22. *For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our law giver, the Lord is our king, he will ſave us.* And this muſt be unreſtrained, there muſt be no limits ſet by us to this Authority, but it muſt be *yielded to him in all things.* *Deut.* 6. 2.

(2.) *AN entire Approbation of the Command, in every Article of it, becauſe it is his.* Our Obedience cannot be voluntary, unleſs we approve of the Precept; for if we diſlike it, we ſhall reluct againſt it; and it muſt be univerſal, all the Commands, one as well as another, muſt have this Eſteem from us. Hence *Paul* confeſſeth, Rom. 7. 12. *Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and juſt, and good.* And the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 119. 128. *Therefore I eſteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and hate every falſe way.* *Pſal.* 19. 9. And this muſt be, becauſe they are his. There is a moral Equity appears in many of them, which we are to acknowledge. But if we ſee no more, yet this ſhould ſet us down, that he is wiſe, holy, &c.

(3.) *AN abſolute unchangeable Choice of it, from the Cordial Love that we bear to him.* All Obedience is called Love in the Word of God. And the reaſon for it is, becauſe we can no further ſincerely ſerve God, than we perform our Duty from this Principle. Chriſt puts theſe together, Joh. 14. 15, *If ye love me, keep my commandments.* And this Love flows from the election of the Will; becauſe we love God, we love his Law, and herein we prove it, in that we have without any reſerve, choſen it, as it is the declared Will of that God, whom we have choſen to be our God. So he, Pſal. 119. 30. *I have choſen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me.* And *ver.* 173. And this choiſe brings us under the ſtrongeſt bonds to Obedience, ver. 106. *I have ſworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous precepts.*

USE. *LET the Conſideration of theſe Things put us all upon it, to be much in ſeeking Acquaintance with the revealed Will of God.* There is a Duty lying upon us all; we owe Obedience to God on more Scores than one; we cannot live and pleaſe him without it: The neglect of it will expoſe us to his Wrath, which will be our Miſery. He hath revealed this Will of his to us in his Word, and gives us the Advantage to inform ourſelves in it. If we neglect this, it is a ſign that we have no Will or Deſire to obey him. And if we live in Ignorance of it, we cannot conform to it. We are naturally Strangers to his Will by Sin, and cannot know what is our preſent Duty and Happineſs, unleſs he make it known to us and in us. Let us then read, hear, pray, meditate, and wait on him for his Grace to help us, that we may ſeek to know, that we may do his Will; and ſo ſhall we be bleſſed in our Deed.

[JULY 30. 1700.]

SERMON *CXLVIII.*

QUESTION XL.

WHAT did GOD at firſt reveal to Man as the Rule of his Obedience?

ANSWER.

THE Rule which GOD at firſt revealed to Man for his Obedience was the Moral Law.

WE have under the former taken an Account of Man's Duty in general; both that there is a Duty which he owes to God, and what it is, viz. *Obedience to his revealed Will.* And this preſumes that there is ſome Revelation, that God hath made of his Will to Man, by which he may know, what is his Duty, and how he is to diſcharge it. Now the very Nature of this Obedience, ſuppoſeth a Rule, and points us to enquire after it; for except

except we are acquainted with that, we ſhall be at a loſs to know what is Man's Duty, nor ſhall we rightly underſtand what is the Miſery that he is under by the Apoſtacy. There are three Propoſitions lying before us, the clearing up whereof will give us light into this Affair; viz. 1. That *God did at firſt give to Man, a Rule for his Obedience.* 2. That *this Rule was the Moral Law.* 3. That *by giving him this Rule, he did reveal to him, what was his Duty.*

I. THAT *God did at firſt give to Man a Rule for his Obedience.* Man no ſooner came out of God's Hand by Creation, but he had a Directory afforded him, which pointed him how he was to live and pleaſe God. That Man had ſuch a Law given him from the firſt will appear, becauſe Man could not have otherwiſe ſerved to the end of his Creation. So that both the Wiſdom of God, the Nature of Man, and the End he was made for, require it. And this will be more diſtinctly evident by the following Concluſions,

1. THAT *Man was made to glorify God Actively.* God made all things for his own Glory, *Prov.* 16. 4. For he muſt needs be his own laſt End, in all his Works of Efficiency. As all proceeded from him, ſo all muſt return to him again. Rom. 11. 36. *For of him, and through him, and to him are all things.* But all things were not alike capable of paying him this Tribute, by reaſon of the diverſe Natures and Powers put into them. Some things therefore could only paſſively glorify him, being myrrours of his Perfections, in which they were to be read, Pſal. 19, 1, 2. *The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament ſheweth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth ſpeech, and night unto night ſheweth knowledge.* But having placed Man in a ſuperiour order of Being, he expected of him an active Service. Hence that, Iſai. 43. 21. *This people have I formed for my ſelf, they ſhall ſhew forth my praiſe.* Pſal. 145. 10.

2. THAT *Man might glorify God actively, he was to do it as a Cauſe by Counſel.* It is certain, that God can be actively glorified, by no other but a Reaſonable Creature, which having an Underſtanding to judge, and a Will to chuſe or refuſe, doth deliberately & voluntarily give unto him the Glory that is due to him; and conſequently, in no other Actions doth he ſo glorify him, but ſuch as proceed from this Principle. Pſal. 47. 7. *For God is the king of all the earth, ſing ye praiſes with underſtanding.*

3. THAT *Man as a Cauſe by Counſel then only glorifies God, when he conforms himſelf to his Will.* It is not Man's meerly uſing of his Underſtanding and Will as a Reaſonable Creature, that brings Glory to God actively. Nay, becauſe theſe are depraved by Sin ſince the Fall, he too often diſhonours God by ſo doing. It is only by a free and willing complying with God's revealed Will, that we can honour him. 1 Pet. 4. 2. *That he ſhould no longer live the reſt of his time in the fleſh, to the luſts of men, but to the will of God.*

4. *THAT he may ſo conform, it is neceſſary that he know this Will of God.* It is true, all ſecond Beings do in all their Operations, fulfil the Will or Pleaſure of God. But for paſſive Obedience, it is not neceſſary that they know it, but it ſufficeth, that God know his own purpoſe concerning them, and governs them by a Law which he hath in his Decree laid out to himſelf, under the powerful influence whereof he holds them; nor can they go *an hairs breadth beſides it.* *Eph.* 1. 11. But the caſe is otherwiſe in reſpect of Man, as to his active conformity. It is not ſufficient that he doth the thing that God wills, but he muſt do it upon choice, and as it is God's Will, that he may therein pleaſe him; which it is impoſſible for him to do, except he be acquainted with it. And therefore the want of this Knowledge, is inevitably deſtructive to Man. Hoſ. 4. 6. *My people are deſtroyed for lack of viſion.*

5. *THAT he may ſo know it, he muſt have a Rule given him by which he may diſcover it.* The Obligation lying on Man to conform to God's Will, neceſſarily ſuppoſeth, that there is right and wrong, and that the Man may as well miſs as go right. Now there can be no other way for him deliberately to take the right, and avoid the wrong, but by having a Rule before him, according to which, to make a judgment of things; for it is of the nature of a Rule to put a difference between that which is ſtrait, and that which is crooked. Hence that, Mich. 6. 8. *He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*

6. HENCE *if Man had been any time without this Rule, he had been ſo long at a loſs about his Duty.* For without this, he could not have known how to take one right ſtep in purſuit of his great End: He would therefore have been without one main part of his Furniture for the Service he was made for, and God would ſo long unavoidably have loſt his Glory by him, as he was a Man; which was altogether inconſiſtent with the Divine Wiſdom.

7. *IT was of infinite Concernment, that Man ſhould practice this Conformity, becauſe his Happineſs or Miſery were to turn upon it.* Beſides the common Government of God, under which Man was placed equally with other Creatures, there was a ſpecial Government, in which only intelligent Beings were concerned, in which God would lead them to an Everlaſting ſtate of Happineſs or Miſery, which was to terminate according to his Carriage in reſpect to the rule of Obedience given him, with theſe Sanctions. Becauſe therefore Man was made to be under this Government, he had the rule of conformity to the Law of it, given him as ſoon as he was made, elſe the Sanctions of it could not have taken hold of him.

II. THAT *this Rule was the Moral Law.* For a more diſtinct laying of this open, we may Inquire, 1. *What we are to underſtand by the Moral*

Moral Law? 2. Whether all Mankind are under the obligation of Obedience to this Law? 3. Whether the Fall do not take off this Obligation, or it continues ſtill? 4. To what Uſe the Moral Law is ſtill ſerviceable to fallen Man?

1. *WHAT we are to underſtand by the Moral Law?*

Anſ. I ſhall not here inquire into the Parts of it, which will afterwards come to be conſidered of: But only conſider it as diſtinct from all other Laws whatſoever. Which may be laid open in this Deſcription; *The moral Law is a Divine Unchangible Rule given to Man, and accommodated to his Nature, as he was created by God, obliging him to ſerve to God's Glory as his laſt End.* In the opening of which Deſcription, we may obſerve, both *wherein it agrees with, and wherein it differs from all other Laws?* To make way to which, we may take notice, that there are other Laws, both *Divine and Humane: The Divine* are generally diſtinguiſhed into *Ceremonial, Judicial, & Moral. Humane Laws, are ſuch Ordinances as are given by Men, who have in their hands a Legiſlative Power.* I ſhall not treat of theſe in particular, but take notice of them, in laying open this one. Here then we may obſerve theſe things in the Deſcription given,

1. *IT is a Rule.* And herein it agrees with all Laws whatſoever. For the very end of a Law, is to regulate Men and Things. And what is that which ſo doth, other than a Rule? There are *two Principle Uſes of a Rule*, both whereof belong to this Law, viz. *to direct us in our Actions*, by ſhewing what is right, and what is wrong. On which account *David* gives it that commendation, Pſal. 119. 105. *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.* And *to make Trial of our Actions by*, that we may know whether we have done well or ill. And therefore that is declared of the Word of God, Heb. 4. 12. *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and ſharper then any two edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of ſoul and ſpirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* And for both of theſe, the moral Law is abundantly furniſhed, in that it reacheth to all the Actions of Heart, Tongue and Hand. And for that reaſon it hath that title of *Perfection* given it, *Pſal.* 19. 7.

2. *IT is a Divine Rule:* i. e. it proceeds from God as the Author of it, and it derives from no other Original. For which reaſon he hath the Attribute of Lawgiver aſſigned to him, as his Prerogative, *Iſai.* 33. 22. And limited to him, Jam. 4. 12. *There is one lawgiver, who is able to ſave, and to deſtroy.* And hence thoſe Epethets muſt neceſſarily belong to it, Rom. 7. 12. *Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and juſt, and good.* It could not elſe be agreable to the Nature of him from whom it proceedeth. And herein it agrees with the ceremonial and judicial Laws, which proceeded from him alone, and are therefore ſtamped with his Authority, *I am the Lord.* And herein it differs from Humane Laws, which have their Authority immediately from Men. It is true, as Civil Powers are authorized by God, ſo there is a Submiſſion due to them and their Ordinances, *for Conſcience ſake*, Rom. 13. 5. i. e. *becauſe we acknowledge God's Authority in them*: For Conſcience is truly ſubject unto none but God. And here *we muſt diſtinguiſh of Humane Laws: Some are nothing elſe but the Laws of God, or moral Duties, reinforced with a Civil Sanction added to them.* Theſe, Men owe Obedience to Conſcienciouſly, becauſe they are indeed God's Laws; and for the ſame reaſon we ought to ſubmit to the Civil Sanctions of them, ſo far as they agree with the Word of God, becauſe herein they are properly the Miniſters of God: But if their Sanctions outdo moral Equity, though there is a paſſive Subjection due, yet we are not in Conſcience obliged to approve them, becauſe God doth not. *Some are Prudentials, concerning things in themſelves indifferent*; which are ſtinted & limited, with Humane Sanctions added, for the common benefit of the Subject: Theſe, ſo far as they are expedient and convenient, agree with the general Rules of the Law of God, and ought for that reaſon to be complied withal. But they add no new Obligation on the Conſcience, as they proceed from Men, nor doth the meer neglect of theſe Laws amount to Sin, except Contempt be added to it. Neither yet, can the Obligation on Conſcience to obey them, as they are for the common Good abide, any longer, than the reaſon of them doth. Others are wicked Laws; and there are many ſuch that proceed from humane Lawgivers, Pſal. 94. 20. *Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowſhip with thee, which frameth miſchief by a law?* Now we are ſo far from being bound to pay active Obedience to ſuch Laws, that we ſhall ſin againſt God if we ſo do: And hence, when called we are to refuſe it, and run the greateſt hazards. So they, *Dan.* 3. 16, 17. And the Apoſtles in that Prohibition, *Act.* 4. 19, 20. and 5. 29.

3. *IT is an Unchangeable Rule.* And herein it differs both from ceremonial & judicial Laws, which were of a ſhorter date. They were but temporary, & were to have an end. There were Sacraments in the ſtate of Innocence; but they ſoon ceaſed. There were many poſitive Laws given after the Apoſtaſy; and at length there was a Body of them given to the Church of *Iſrael*: but as theſe were of a later Original, not being from the beginning, ſo they were to expire, when the ſtate of the Church to which they were ſuited, was to come to an end, *Heb.* 9. 9, *&c.* And he tells us, Chap. 7. 12. *For the Prieſthood being changed, there is made of neceſſity a change of the law.* Whereas the moral Law took place as ſoon as Man was made, and continues to the end, without any alteration. The ſame that it was, when given to *Adam* in Integrity, the ſame it was when renewed on Mount *Sinai*, and is ſtill the ſame in the days of the Goſpel.

pel. Hence that in, Pſal. 119. 152. *Concerning thy teſtimonies, I have known of old, that thou haſt founded them for ever.* And Chriſt aſſures us, in Mat. 5. 18. *For verily I ſay unto you, Till heaven and earth paſs, one jote or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled.*

4. *IT was a Rule given to Man.* There are two ſorts of Creatures, that come under the ſpecial Government of God, Angels and Men, both of which were under a Law or Rule of active Obedience. But tho' we may ſuppoſe this Rule to agree to both in the main Articles of it, yet there was neceſſarily a difference between that given to one and the other in many Points, becauſe of their different Natures. Angels were Spirits purely, but Men were imbodied Spirits, and not only their Souls, but Bodies too, were under the direction and government of that Law, 1 Cor. 6. 20. *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your ſpirit, which are God's.* God did not treat with them jointly, but ſeparately. Hence that, Job 28. 28. *And unto man he ſaid, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom, and to depart from evil is underſtanding.*

5. *IT was accommodated to Man's Nature, as created by God.* How far it is diſſonant to Man's Nature as depraved by Sin, is another matter: But conſider him in his primitive State, and it was every way ſuited for him. And for this reaſon it is ſaid to be *Good, Mich.* 6. 8. And indeed, it could not have been a right Rule if it had not been ſuch. If it had been above his Nature, he could not have reached it; and if it had been below it, he could not have been made happy by conformity to it. Now there are two things, wherein this ſuitableneſs of it appears,

(1.) *IT was adapted to the Powers that were put into him, and conferred upon him.* He had an Underſtanding, Will, Affections, and theſe were furniſhed with the Image of God, or a moral rectitude, conſiſting in Knowledge, Righteouſneſs, and Holineſs. Now theſe ſanctified Powers in him, could not but approve, chuſe, and love the Law. That fallen Man in his natural ſtate doth not ſo, is becauſe he hath loſt that rectitude which was on his Faculties, and they are become depraved: But Godly Men, ſo far as they are renewed, have it reſtored to them again. Pſal. 119. 128, 30. 97. *Therefore I eſteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and hate every falſe way. I have choſen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me. O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.* Yea, the very relicks of the Law in the Conſciences of Men, do acknowledge the equity of this Law, and how unreaſonable it is to break them. *Rom.* 1. 32. and 2. 14.

(2.) *IT is a ſuitable Medium to his great End.* Man was made for an End, viz. to glorify God; and in ſubordination thereto, to ſeek and obtain Bleſſedneſs. Now where there is an End propounded, there muſt be a way to obtain it; and that which directs to this way, is the Rule; and when it is a proper way to it, it is then accommodated to the Deſign. Such was the moral Law. And for this reaſon *it is called the moral Law, becauſe it is fitted for the regulating of Man in all the Actions of his Will, both Elicite and Imperate.* And by his Obedience to it, he ſhould have attained Everlaſting Felicity. *Jam.* 1. 25. Man had a natural craving after Happineſs, and this was a way to have brought him to it. Herein alſo it differs from the ceremonial and judicial Laws. The former was only accommodated for fallen Man, while he was in expectation of a Redeemer to come, to help his Faith in the mean while: The other was only adapted to the preſent ſtate of the *Jewiſh* Church during their Minority.

6. *IT obliged Man, to ſerve to the Glory of God as his laſt End.* This was the proper End of the moral Law. We have already obſerved, that Man was to glorify God actively, for which he muſt have a Rule, elſe he will be ever at a loſs. Now as the whole Man is to be conſecrated to this Glorifying of God, and that in all our Life, and every Action of it, 1 *Cor.* 10. 30. So the moral Law is as large, to comprehend the whole of this. It is *David's* Obſervation, Pſal. 119. 96. *I have ſeen an end of all perfection: but thy commandment is exceeding broad.* It tells us how we ſhall order our Thoughts, our Words, and our Actions. It points to the Matter, Manner, and End of our Duty. It regulates us in our Carriages towards God, and towards Men: Gives us Rules how to manage our ſelves in every Relation that Providence ſets us in. So that we need not be at a loſs at any time, in any thing that we are concerned in.

2. *WHETHER all Mankind are under the Obligation of Obedience to this Law?*

Anſ. THIS may be briefly reſolved in a few Particulars,

1. *THE Law is to be conſidered, either as it is a Covenant, or only a Rule.* This diſtinction muſt be allowed, or elſe we ſhall not be able to reconcile many Texts in Scripture. Now the Law is then conſidered as a Covenant, when we look upon it as delivered with Sanctions, by vertue whereof it became the Foundation of relative Juſtice, in which God would proceed with Man in the Adminiſtration of his ſpecial Government: So to be underſtood, in Gal. 3. 10. *For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curſe: for it is written, Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.* Whereas, ſeperate from the conſideration of thoſe Sanctions, it contains in it all thoſe Precepts, which are to direct Man in his Life and Converſation, and ſo is look'd on only as a Rule. And ſo it is frequently uſed in the *Pſalms.*

2. THAT *Man is to be conſidered, either as before, or ſince the Fall.* There is a vaſt difference between the ſtate of Integrity, and the ſtate of Apoſtaſy. Man's primitive ſtate, was

a ſtate of Perfection, Eccl. 7. 29 *God made man upright.* There was a moral rectitude in all his Powers. He was an Inſtrument in Tune. But by the Fall, he hath loſt thoſe moral Principles which were in him by vertue of the Sanctification of his Nature, and is become *wholly corrupt*, Rom. 3. 12.

3. *MAN ſince the Fall is to be conſidered, either in his natural, or his regenerate ſtate.* As long as he abides in his natural ſtate, he is under the reigning power of Sin, and an utter impotency to that which is truly good: Whereas there is another better ſtate introduced by Chriſt, and wrought by the Spirit of God in Regeneration, into which Men are brought by the Grace of God. And the Condition of fallen Man is wonderfully altered hereby. As appears from *Eph.* 1. 5, 8. Now we are to reſolve the Caſe before us with a due reſpect to theſe things. Here then,

(1.) THAT *Man in his ſtate of Integrity, was under the Law as a Covenant, which comprehended all Mankind.* It is certain, that when God gave the Law to Man at firſt in Paradiſe, he gave it with its Sanctions, he annexed to it both the Promiſes and Threatnings, whereby it became a proper Inſtrument of Government. The Threatning is expreſt in Gen. 2. 17. *In the day thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die.* And the Promiſe is to be gathered from other Places in the Word of God; according to that, Rom. 10. 5. *For Moſes deſcribed the righteouſneſs which is of the law, that the man which doth thoſe things, ſhall live by them.* Now that this Covenant was plighted with *Adam*, not as a private, but a publick Perſon, repreſenting all Mankind that were to derive from him is evident, and hath formerly been made good, when we were on that Subject; and is plain from, Rom. 5. 12. *Wherefore as by one man ſin entred into the world, and death by ſin: and ſo death paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned.*

(2.) THAT *Man in his natural Eſtate abides under the Law as a Covenant.* This is plain from the forecited, *Gal.* 3. 10. For how elſe ſhould the Curſe of the Law take hold of him? The Law as a Rule ſaith, this thou ſhalt do, and this thou ſhalt not do. And as a Covenant it ſaith, if thou do ſo, thou ſhalt live, if otherwiſe thou ſhalt die. And hence the natural Man hath no other Rule to try his title to Life or Death but this. His Duty of Obedience abides, and he is ſtill liable to Penalty for defect in it.

(3.) THAT *regenerate Man is under a New Covenant, in which the Law ſtill abides as a Rule.* It is true, he being under the Covenant of Grace, is no longer under the Law as a Covenant: Which is evident, from Rom. 6. 14. *For ſin ſhall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law but under grace.* But that the Law ſtill abides to him a Rule of his Life is evident, becauſe it is reinforced in the Goſpel, and put into the Articles of this Covenant, which makes Sanctification one of the Benefits of Chriſt's Redemption, and enjoyns us Holineſs and Righteouſneſs. According to Tit. 2. 11, 12. *For the grace of God that bringeth ſalvation, hath appeared to all men, Teaching us, that denying ungodlineſs & worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly in this preſent world.* And is inforced from Evangelical Conſiderations, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. And on this account it is called, both *an old and a new Commandment*, 1 Joh. 2. 8, 9.

3. *WHETHER the Fall hath not taken off this Obligation, or it abides ſtill on fallen Man?*

Anſ. THIS might be reſolved from what hath been already ſaid: But to prevent Miſtakes let me here add,

1. THAT *the Fall hath not taken off from Man, the Obligation to Obedience to the Law, as a Rule.* This abides, and will ſo do, as long as Man abides under the ſpecial Government of God: As will appear from theſe Reaſons,

(1.) BECAUSE *the Law was the Rule of Relative Juſtice in that Goverment.* As Man owed himſelf to the Service of God, ſo God gave him this Law to direct him in that Service; and he cannot diſcharge himſelf from this Duty. Man is by the Fall a Rebel againſt his lawful Sovereign; but the Rebel owes Duty and Allegiance notwithſtanding; and it is his Fault that he denies it. That therefore is a Truth always, Job. 28. 28. *And unto man he ſaid, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom, and to depart from evil, is underſtanding.*

(2.) BECAUSE *the Law it ſelf is an Unchangeable Rule.* It was not a temporary Diſpenſation, as the ceremonial and judicial were; but ſtanding; it was never to be altered. And hence, whatſoever change the Man paſſeth under, that ſtill abides: As hath been already made evident.

(3.) BECAUSE *the Law is properly ſuited for the glorifying of God, by the Reaſonable Creature.* God did not only in Sovereignty, but Wiſdom too, give the Law at firſt. It was adapted to Man's Nature. And for that reaſon it is called by Divines *the Law of Nature*; as will hereafter be obſerved. For which reaſon the natural Conſcience ſubſcribes to the Equity and Goodneſs of it.

2. *THOUGH the Apoſtaſy hath not diſcharged Man from the Law as a Covenant, yet we are warily to take it up.* Many are miſtaken in their reſentments of this, and it is not a little hurtful to them. Here then, let two things be obſerved,

(1.) THAT *the Fall hath utterly cut Man off from ever obtaining Life by the Law, as a Covenant.* There was a Promiſe of Life in that Covenant made to perfect Obedience, and ſo Man at firſt ſtood as a Probationer for Life by it: But that is utterly ceaſed. That Covenant ſtill ſaith, that if Man had ſo obeyed, he ſhould have lived, but becauſe he obeyed not, but diſobeyed, it hath brought him under the other Sanction, which holds him faſt, and ſtands in the way to hinder this Life. So that they err, who think, that if fallen Man could now perform perfect Obedience to the moral Law, he ſhould live. For tho' he cannot, and

ſo it is a vain ſuppoſition, yet if he could, he is under Arreſt already, he is dead in Law, how then ſhould he live? Hence that, Gal. 3. 21. *Is the law then againſt the promiſes of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given, which could have given life, verily righteouſneſs ſhould have been by the law.*

(2.) HENCE *the Law, as a Covenant, holds the Sinner under the Curſe of it, and neither can his Ignorance nor Impotency excuſe him from the Condemnation of it.* The Law ſaith, Ezek. 18. 4. *The ſoul that ſinneth, it ſhall die.* Such is every fallen Man by Nature, and in Act. This Sentence muſt needs abide, till it hath taken place. Hence Chriſt ſaith, Mat. 5. 18. *For verily I ſay unto you, Till heaven & earth paſs, one jote or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled.* Sin hath made the man a Priſoner of Juſtice, and he muſt paſs a Trial; where if found guilty, he muſt needs die for it. It is vain for him to plead Ignorance of the Law; for Man was created with a perfect Knowledge of it, and loſt it by his own Default. Beſides, that there are the remains of the Law on Men's Conſciences, which they either ſtifle, or reſiſt, and impriſon *the Truth in unrighteouſneſs*, Rom. 1. 18. And this will leave them inexcuſable. And it will be as vain to pretend Inability; for tho' Man hath loſt his ſtrength, and that is a Truth concerning every Man in his lapſed eſtate, Joſh. 24. 19. *And Joſhua ſaid unto the people, Ye cannot ſerve the Lord; for he is an holy God: he is a jealous God, he will not forgive your tranſgreſſions nor your ſins.* Yet Man by his own folly, hath diſabled himſelf, who once was every way furniſhed for Obedience. And it would be a ſtrange way for a Servant to make up Accompts with his Maſter, to tell him he hath embezzel'd his Stock.

USE. FROM what hath been hitherto ſaid, let me only here obſerve, *How miſerable Man hath rendred himſelf by the Apoſtaſy.* Did God give the Law to Man as the Rule of his Obedience, and was it the only way to keep himſelf in God's Favour, and obtain true Felicity? Certainly then the Fall hath brought us under unconceivable Infelicity, in that we are thus fallen ſhort of the Glory of God, and have laid our ſelves open to his Indignation. Let us then bemoan this our Unhappineſs, and reſtleſly ſeek after the one Way of Delivery which the rich Grace of God hath open'd to us in the Goſpel.

[DECEMBER 17. 1700.]

SERMON *CXLIX.*

4. *TO what uſe the moral Law is ſtill ſerviceable to fallen Man?*

Anſ. THAT we may take this up aright, we may look upon fallen Man under diverſe Conſiderations: in every of which there is an anſwerable Uſefulneſs of the moral Law.

1. *MAN is to be conſidered, either as in a ſtate of Nature, or in a ſtate of Grace.*

2. *NATURAL Men are to be conſidered, either as being without the Goſpel, or under the Diſpenſation of it.*

3. *MAN in a ſtate of Grace is to be conſidered, either as in the Way to, or as arrived at the Kingdom of Glory.* Add to theſe,

4. *THE Moral Law, under which Man is, may be conſidered, either as a Rule only, or as a Covenant alſo.*

AND now we may take up the Reſolution of this Caſe under every of theſe Conſiderations. And here obſerve,

1. *ALL Men in a State of Nature are under the Law as a Covenant, as well as a Rule.* By a State of Nature we are to underſtand, that Condition which they were put into by the Apoſtaſy of the firſt *Adam*, in which State all Men abide, till they are delivered out of it, by being planted in the ſecond *Adam*, and that is done in effectual Vocation. And this is true concerning all ſuch, whatever other Advantages they are under, whether in the Darkneſs of Pagan Ignorance, or under the outward Revelation of Goſpel-Light. And that theſe are under the Law, not only as a Rule, but as a Covenant too is evident, becauſe they are yet in their Unbelief; concerning whom it is ſaid, Mark 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not, ſhall be damned.* Yea, John 3. 18. *He that believeth on him, is not condemned: but he that believeth not, is condemned already, becauſe he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God.* Which is interpreted, ver. 36. *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlaſting life: and he that believeth not on the Son, ſhall not ſee life: but the wrath of God abideth on him.* This therefore is declared to be the common Condition both of the Jew and the Gentile, *Rom.* 3. 9, 22.

2. *AS for natural Men that are without the Goſpel, the Law is ſerviceable to them on ſuch Accounts as theſe.*

(1.) *TO keep them in awe, & promp them unto Duty.* That there are the remains of the Law in the Hearts of ſuch, is certain. The Apoſtle proves it, *Rom.* 2. 14. And this, not only as they have in them rational Convictions of Right and Wrong, Duty and Sin, but alſo as they ſuggeſt to Men the Danger of ſinning, and the Wrath which they expoſe themſelves to thereby, whence they either accuſe or excuſe them, *ver.* 15. And theſe are proper Motives to put Men upon avoiding the one and purſuing the other; and doubtleſs by this Means God curbs in Men's exorbitant Luſts, which would elſe break all Bounds, as ſometimes they do, in Men deſerted by God.

(2.) *FOR the maintenance & preſervation of civil Societies from Ruin.* Man is made a ſociable Creature, and this End cannot be obtained but by a civil Order, and the upholding of Righteouſneſs. Man's Life, Chaſtity, Eſtate, good Name and Property muſt be preſerved, and how is this done, but by imprinting

ing on Men's Hearts the apprehenſion of theſe Rules of Juſtice and Equity, making them approve them, and holding a Curb on their Conſciences? And in this way God upholds his Government of the World, and raiſeth Men among Heathen, who ſubſerve him in it; but for which, the Wickedneſs of Men had long e're this reduced the World to a Chaos.

(3.) *TO direct in the ordering of the civil Government of Mankind.* Without civil Government, there would be nothing but Confuſion, as, Judges 21. 25. *In thoſe days there was no king in Iſrael: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.* Men cannot live as Men without Laws, nor well with them, unleſs they be righteous, it mends no Man's Condition, to be oppreſt by a Law; but there have been Governments among meer Pagans, which have had many excellent Laws, in reſpect of Righteouſneſs toward Men, under which they have greatly flouriſhed, and been a ſhame to ſuch as had the Word of God: See, *Acts* 25. 16. And whence had they this but from the Relicts of the Law of God in them, and the common Gifts of the Spirit enabling Men to improve the remaining Light in them to high meaſures.

(4.) *TO diſpoſe them to entertain the Goſpel, when it ſhould be offered to them.* God had a Purpoſe to extend his Salvation to the Gentiles, in the fulneſs of time, by ſending the Offers of a Chriſt to them, inviting them to embrace him, which was accompliſhed after our Saviour's Reſurrection. Now, that they might have ſomething in them to work upon as reaſonable Creatures, and that by which they might be perſuaded of their Need, God left theſe Principles in them. And for this reaſon we find that the Apoſtles when they preach'd to them built their Doctrines on theſe Principles, as will particularly appear in *Acts.* 5. 14. *Rom.* 1, & 2.

3. *WITH reſpect to natural Men that are under the Goſpel Diſpenſations.* Beſides what they have in common with others in the forecited Benefits, the Law is made ſerviceable to prepare them to receive Chriſt, and embrace the Terms of the new Covenant; and this ſeems to have been the deſign of the giving the Law at Mount Sinai, as is intimated in, Gal. 3. 23, 24. *But before faith came, we were kept under the law, ſhut up unto the faith, which ſhould afterwards be revealed, Where the law was our School maſter, to bring us to Chriſt, that we might be juſtified by faith.* It is certain that it was given for gracious Purpoſes, *ver.* 19. And therefore in the hand of a Mediator; and in this way only could it ſerve to promove the Goſpel Deſign. And here it ſerves,

(1.) *TO convince Men of Sin*; which is the firſt ſtep to Converſion. For though the Grace of the Spirit is infuſed by him immediately, yet the drawing it forth is mediate; and not only ſo, but the Preparation for it is ſo; for Man repents and believes as he is a reaſonable Creature, upon Perſuaſion, though the efficacy of it, be by powerful Operation Here therefore the Spirit begins with Men, Joh. 16. 8. *And when he is come, he will reprove the world of ſin, and of righteouſneſs, and of judgment.* And this he doth by the Application of the Law to the Conſcience: for, Rom. 3. 20. *By the law is the knowledge of ſin.* And good reaſon, for, Chap. 4. 14. *Becauſe the Law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no tranſgreſſion.* And this is by ſetting the Law before him as a Rule, and ſhewing it to him; he tells him, that the Law ſaith, this thou ſhalt do, and that thou ſhalt not do, but thus haſt thou done, and theſe things haſt thou omitted, and by this he knows it to be Sin. For, 1 John 3. 4. *Whoſoever committeth ſin, tranſgreſſeth alſo the law: for ſin is the tranſgreſſion of the law.*

(2.) *TO diſcover to them their woful Miſery by Sin.* And without this, the former will little avail; for fallen Man is ſo in love with Sin, that nothing but fear of Wrath will deter him from it; the Spirit therefore by the Law, ſhews the Man what is like to be the iſſue of theſe Sins, and that is nothing leſs than Damnation; and this he doth by repreſenting it as a Covenant; he tells him that the Law ſaith, Ezek. 18. 4. *The ſoul that ſinneth it ſhall die.* Rom. 6. 23. *For the wages of ſin is death.* That all the Curſes written in the Book of God are out againſt Sinners for their Sin. And hereby he makes them afraid of the Wrath of God; as, *Iſa.* 33. 14.

(3.) *TO ſlay them as to expectation of Help by any Righteouſneſs or Strength of their own.* The former Convictions do uſually put Men upon Endeavours to relieve themſelves, by reforming their Lives, in abſtaining from their former ſinful Courſes, and taking up of neglected Duties, and they are apt to tarry there; and comfort themſelves therein; and hereby they fortify againſt the Goſpel Offers; for a Man cannot come to Chriſt, till he forſakes himſelf; for this alſo he uſeth the Law, by giving the Man a deeper inſight into the ſpiritual Nature of it; and now he ſees, that it is another manner of Thing to keep the Law, than he before dreamed of; and this ſhews him his utter impotency, which he till then was ignorant of, which cuts him off from ſelf-ſufficiency, and ſo kills his vain Confidences in himſelf; ſo it was with *Paul*, Rom. 7. 9. *For I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, ſin revived, and I died.*

(4.) *TO awaken in them, an Apprehenſion of their abſolute need of Help from abroad.* And this is done, by applying the Law home to their Conſciences, under the forecited Conſiderations. He ſhews them that the Promiſe of Life, is limited only to perfect Obedience to the Law, and that the Curſe of Death is out againſt Sinners for the leaſt flaw in their Obedience, *Gal.* 3. 10. He aſſures them of the rigour of the Law in theſe reſpects, & that it will not bate the leaſt in either of them, but exact the full thereof, *Mat.* 5. 18. And herewithal, lets

them ſee, that they come ſhort in both; that they cannot do the things required in it, but miſs it in their beſt; that they cannot by themſelves pay the Arrears, but they will break them forever. And now the reſult of this is, that except ſome other Hand afford them ſuccour, to reſcue them out of this Diſtreſs, they muſt periſh unavoidably and Eternally.

(5.) *TO make the glad tidings of Chriſt, & Salvation by him welcome.* And this is the genuine reſultancy of all the former. No man cares for Chriſt, as long as he can maintain in himſelf any hopes that he may do well enough without him. But when once the Man finds himſelf periſhing, now an Hand ſtretched out from on high to help him, is welcome. And therefore Chriſt is commended as an helper for ſuch, Pſal 72. 12,13. *For he ſhall deliver the needy when he crieth: the poor alſo and him that hath no helper. He ſhall ſpare the poor and needy, and ſhall ſave the ſouls of the needy.* And this ſenſe is wrought in the Man by the Law, by which he is made to know himſelf poor, and in debt, beyond the ſuccour of any created Power.

4. *AS to thoſe that are under Grace, the Law is no more a Covenant of Works to them.* It was ſo to them before, and as ſuch it was made helpful to bring them over to Chriſt, and ſo put them under Grace. But now, it loſeth its claim over them as ſuch. And the reaſon is, becauſe there is an inconſiſtency between theſe two. The Covenant of Grace was introduced as a remedial Covenant, to deliver Sinners from the Law in regard of the Curſe, which it held them under as a Covenant. And for this end, Chriſt, who opened the Way of this Covenant, engaged in, and accompliſhed the Redemption which he undertook. As *Gal.* 3. 13. 4. 4, 5. So that now, neither is the Promiſe of that Covenant our Encouragement to Obedience, for that was only to that which was perfect, which our beſt is not; nor are the Threatnings of that Covenant our Terrors from Sinning, becauſe we are diſcharged from them, and thoſe Terrors belonged to the Spirit of Bondage, which Believers do not receive again; tho' not at preſent utterly free from the remorſes of, *Rom.* 8. 15. Though ſtill there are the Promiſes & Threatnings of the New Covenant, in the Evangelical Diſpenſation of it, which are ſuited to the preſent ſtate of the Children of God: But that is true, Rom. 6. 14. *For ſin ſhall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*

5. THAT *thoſe who are in the New Covenant, and as yet, but in the way to the Kingdom, are under the Law, as a Rule of their Life.* Though it is not a Covenant of Life to them, having Life ſecured to their perſonal Obedience, yet it is a Rule according to which God expects that they ſhould order their Life and Converſation. This is denied by ſome, practically abuſed by others, and not rightly underſtood by many. And may therefore be made clear and evident in the following Concluſions,

1. THAT *God's People have a Life & Converſation to lead in this World.* Man is a living, and conſequently an active Being: And he is of a rational Nature, and hath thereupon a Power in him of conſulting and chuſing his way. Men have ſomething to do in this Life, and they cannot ſit ſtill, but will be ſome way engaged. Every Man hath ſome End in his eye, and will contrive and purſue ſome Means for his obtaining of it, to which he will direct the courſe of his Life: Yea, the powers of Action were put into the Creature for their being exerted in it. So that every man, will certainly be ſome way employed.

2. THAT *it is not at the Liberty of God's People to live as they liſt, nor ought they to live as other Men.* Man was put under the ſpecial Government of God at firſt, nor can he fall out of it, ſo as not to be under the lawful Command of it, but God muſt therein loſe his Glory ſo far, which he will not. Hence the Goſpel Liberty doth not open to them a door of Licenciouſneſs, or give them leave to follow their own Suggeſtions. For tho' Grace in them, inclines them to love and ſerve God, yet they have Corruption which withſtands the Will of God, and draws after the ſinful gratifying of the Luſts of the Fleſh, & often *leads them captive*, Rom. 7. 23. And what then would it do, were they left at their unlimited Liberty? And God forbids them to run in the ſame Courſes which others, viz. Unregenerate Men do, Eph. 4. 17, 18. *This I ſay therefore, and teſtify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the underſtanding darkned, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them becauſe of the blindneſs of their heart.* And Chap. 5. 7, 8, 11. Hence that advice, 1 Pet. 4. 3, 4. *For the time paſt of our life may ſuffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, wherein ye walked in laſciviouſneſs, luſts, exceſs of wine, revillings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: Wherein they think it ſtrange that you run not with them to the ſame exceſs of riot, ſpeaking evil of you.*

3. *THERE muſt therefore be a Rule for their Direction in leading ſuch a Life.* Where Men are not left at Liberty, there is a Limitation, and therefore there muſt be ſomething to ſet the Bounds to them, that may tell them, this you ought to do, and this you ought not to do; and this muſt be contained in that Covenant, which is contrived to be a Medium of bringing ſinful Men to Salvation. The Goſpel therefore contains, not only the glad *Tidings* of Peace, but alſo the *Way of that Peace.* For if there be a Way, it muſt belong unto that œconomy in which Man's well being is laid out. Hence that is expreſt as one Advantage of it, Luke 1. 79. *To guide our feet in the way of peace.*

4. *THE Children of God are therefore ſanctified, that they may be fitted for Compliance with this Rule.* There is the Sanctification of the Spirit, which is one of the Benefits of the new

new Covenant, to which all God's Elect are appointed, 2 Theſ. 2. 13. *But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, becauſe God hath from the beginning choſen you to ſalvation, through ſanctification of the ſpirit, and belief of the truth.* And what elſe is this Sanctification, but the renewing of the Image of God in Man, which is proper Furniture to fit him for the Service of God, according to his revealed Will? Now the uſefulneſs of all Powers, whether natural or ſupernatural in the Creature, is in the applying of them to the deſign of them, and that is by their acting regularly. So that the end of Sanctification would be loſt, if there were not a Rule to direct it in its exerciſes.

5. *THOUGH Sanctification diſpoſe them to comply with it, yet it is not itſelf the Rule.* They err who confound the Principle and the Rule, and make them the ſame, whereas they are two diſtinct things. It is one thing to be fitted for Work, and another to be directed in the Proſecution of it. They therefore who ſay, that there is no need of a Law or Rule to be given to a Believer, becauſe his Grace itſelf will be a ſufficient Rule to him, do greatly err. *David* was of another mind, elſe he would not have prayed, as, *Pſal.* 119. 18, 33, *&c.*

6. *THIS Rule is not made known to every one, by immediate Inſpiration, but is laid down in the Goſpel.* It is true the Spirit of God, acting in and with the means, giveth Illumination, by which we diſcern the ſpiritual Mind of this Rule. For, 1 Cor. 2. 14. *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſs unto him: neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.* But the Rule itſelf is laid down in the Goſpel, and is there to be ſought. And we are adviſed to ſearch for it, Rom. 12. 2. *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.* And for this are the Scriptures recommended, 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. *All ſcripture is given by inſpiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction in righteouſneſs: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furniſhed unto all good works.*

7. *IT is the moral Law which is reinforced in the Goſpel, as a Rule for the Children of God to order their Lives by.* Not to mention how much this is inculcated in the Old Teſtament, which were ſufficient. He that is converſant in the Writings of the New Teſtament ſhall find it in every Article or Precept thereof, urged and preſſed upon the Children of God, as is manifeſt in the Hortatory parts of the Epiſtles: Yea, what need had our Saviour to have vindicated the moral Law from the falſe gloſſes and abuſive Interpretation of the Scribes and Phariſees, as he doth, in *Mat.* 5, *&c.* if it had not been of uſe in Goſpel times as a Rule, and therefore ought to be rightly underſtood?

8. *THE Law is holy, juſt and good, and ſo adapted to regulate their Lives as becomes Men.* Grace doth not make them ceaſe to be Men, and ſo to owe to God a Service as Men; and to this the Law was ſuited at firſt, and continues to be ſo, notwithſtanding Man's Sin. Hence that encomium, Rom. 7. 12. *Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and juſt, and good.*

(1.) *IT is ſuited to direct Man how to pleaſe God, becauſe it is holy.* It is therefore called *his acceptable Will*, Rom. 12. 2. Holineſs in a Creature, is properly a ſeparation to the Service and Glory of God, and the Law is ſuch, becauſe it tells us how we may live & pleaſe him, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 1.

(2.) *IT is fitted to teach us how to carry right towards Man, for it is juſt.* And it is ſaid to be ſo, with reſpect to the Duties of the Second Table, when uſed diſtributively with Holineſs. And there is nothing wherein we can have to do with Men, but it gives order about in the beſt manner, to the very conviction of Men's Reaſon and Conſciences.

(3.) *IT is ſuited to ſhew Men how beſt to profit themſelves, for it is good.* Hence that, *Mic.* 6. 8. It is the beſt Rule to direct Men in their Carriage, ſo as to comply with right Reaſon; as might be inſtanced in particular. And all theſe three are put together, Tit. 2. 12. *Teaching us, that denying ungodlineſs & worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, & godly in this preſent world.*

9. *HENCE as a Rule, it is every way ſerviceable to the People of God.* As a Covenant they have reaſon to dread it, for they cannot ſtand by it, Pſal. 143. 2. But as a Rule, they cannot do without it. And there are theſe things more eſpecially, wherein they have conſtant uſe of it:

(1.) *TO inſtruct them in the way of Sobriety, Righteouſneſs, and Holineſs.* Under theſe is comprehended all moral Duty. And we obſerved but now, that all theſe are the teachings of the Goſpel, in *Tit.* 2. 11, 12. A Man cannot live as a Chriſtian ought without theſe Rules. And they all belong to the moral Law. And that Heathen have reſentments thereof, is plain from the relicks of it in them.

(2.) *TO diſcover to them the Wiles of Sin and Satan.* The deceitfulneſs of Sin in us, and the cunning of Satan our grand Adverſary, are always offering to trapan us into ſome Sin or other. And we are *not to be ignorant of their cunning*, 2 Cor. 2. 11. Now the way to detect them, and ſo to eſcape the fallacy of them, is to bring them to this Law. So we are directed, *Iſai.* 8. 12. And the Pſalmiſt acknowledgeth, Pſal. 19. 11. *Moreover by them is thy ſervant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.*

(3.) *TO prove their Actions by, in reſpect of the Matter of them.* As to the gracious and acceptable manner of performing them, the moral Law doth not of it ſelf inform fallen Man about that, but it purely belongs to the Goſpel-Revelation, but as to the Matter of

Duty,

Duty and Sin; this belongs to the Law to make diſcovery of to us; and that not only to direct us how to chuſe our Actions aright, as *Pſal.* 119. 105. but alſo to prove them, and judge of them. And by bringing our ſelves to that, we may judge on this account: According to the forecited, *Rom.* 3. 20.

(4.) *TO convince them of the imperfection and inſufficiency of their own Righteouſneſs for their Juſtification.* The Law muſt juſtify us, if we be juſtified, i.e. it muſt have nothing to charge us withal. We muſt therefore have a Righteouſneſs to offer, that is commenſurate with it. But the Law itſelf will tell us, that this cannot be our own perſonal. By this *David* was brought to that acknowledgement, Pſal. 130. 3. *If thou, Lord, ſhouldeſt mark iniquities: O Lord, who ſhall ſtand?* And the Apoſtle plumply aſſerts, in Rom. 3. 20. *Therefore by the deeds of the law, there ſhall no fleſh be juſtified in his ſight.*

(5.) *TO help forward their daily Repentance.* Repentance belongs to the exerciſe of Sanctification, and is to be purſued by Believers, as long as they live. In it we are to mourn for Sin, fly from it, and ſeek the Pardon of it; and this is to be done every day, *Mat.* 6. 12. Now the ground of this, is from the remaining Sin that moleſts us. And how ſhall we find Matter for it, but from the Law, which will ever offer us Ground for it?

(6.) *TO help us rightly to carry it under the Judgments of God that we are viſited withal.* Theſe Judgments are God's Corrections, and they are for Sin, *Pſal.* 39. 11. And the Children of God are often under ſuch Chaſtiſements, and it becomes them to be patient under, and receive inſtruction by them. And how ſhall they get & maintain ſuch a frame, but by juſtifying God, and taking blame to themſelves. And this muſt be, by comparing themſelves with the holy Law, which will ſhew them their Tranſgreſſions.

(7.) *TO make Chriſt more precious to them.* It is a Character of a true Believer, 1 Pet. 2. 7. *Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious.* And hence that which ſerveth to enhaunce his Worth, is to conſider and affect our ſelves with the great Kindneſs of his to us; and nothing will more diſcover it to us than the Law, by which we diſcover what Sin had made us, and what had become of us, but for him. Hence that, Luk. 7. 47. *Wherefore I ſay unto thee, her ſins which are many are forgiven, for ſhe loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the ſame loveth little.*

6. *AS to thoſe who are arrived at the Kingdom of Glory,* let me only make theſe three Remarks,

1. THAT *this Law, is no longer a Rule of ſpecial Government to them.* It was adapted as ſuch, for God's People, as long as they are in the Way, and will be made uſe of in the Great Judgment that is coming, being without doubt one of the *Books which is then to be laid open,* Rev. 20. 12. It is their Probation time now, and by their Obedience to God's Law, they are to approve their Fidelity to him: But when they go to Heaven, they paſs to receive their Rewards, which we are aſſured will be according as they have carried themſelves in this Life, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10.

2. *IT will be a Rule for them to judge of their Perfection by.* Such is the ſtate of the Glorified. Hence that, Heb. 12. 28. *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may ſerve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.* Now a ſtate of Perfection referring to Man conſiſts in his compleat conformity to the Rule of Perfection which was given him; a defect wherein, was his Imperfection in this Life. Now therefore ſhall all Sin be done away, and Holineſs compleated, and by knowing the breadth of the Law, and the entire aſſimulation of all their Powers to it, they will be ſatisfied.

3. *PROBABLY it will influence their Eupraxy, ſo far as is conſiſtent with their ſtate of Glory.* We have but dark apprehenſions of that State at preſent. However, to love God, and love his Neighbour, were ſuited to Man's Nature, which tho' perfected, yet will not be changed into another: And tho' ſome Duties will ceaſe, becauſe they will then be like the Angels; yet their Love will be perfected, and that will be in the perfection of the Grace which was here begun, and ſhall act upon the ſame Objects, tho' in another and more glorious manner.

USE. *LET theſe Conſiderations ſerve to ſtimulate us to love, prize, ſtudy, and practice the Law of God.* Let every one that would approve himſelf to be a Chriſtian indeed, endeavour to be able to ſay with *David,* Pſal. 119 97. *O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.* Let our Love make us delight to be always converſant with and contemplating of it. And let our Contemplation lead us to more conſtant endeavours to conform our Life and Converſation to the Precepts of it, and avoiding of whatſoever is contrary to it. Only that our Obedience may be acceptable to God, and profitable for us, let us renounce Reliance on our own ſtrength & worthineſs, and ſeek all our Help from Chriſt by Faith in him; and reſolve all our Hope into him, both to have our Imperfections covered, and Sincerity rewarded: So ſhall we have great Peace in keeping the Law.

[JANUARY 14. 1700.]

SERMON CL.

III. THAT *by giving him this Rule, God did reveal to Man what was his Duty.* For the clearing of this two Inquiries may be made, viz. 1. *After what Manner God revealed this Law to Man at firſt?* 2. *How far this Law comprized in it Man's Duty, or the whole Rule of his Obedience?*

1. *AFTER*

1. *AFTER what Manner God revealed his Law at first?*

Ans. WE may trace this in the following Conclusions,

1. THAT *the Law was the Rule of Relative Justice, which God fixed between Him and Man.* God, who is the Creator, is also the rightful Governour of his Creatures: And he in Wisdom governs them according to the Nature he put into them. Man was made a reasonable Creature, and God would treat him in a rational way: And for that end put him under special Government, to which he accommodated a Rule; and this was the moral Law. Hence that *Job* 28. 28. And this was, for the display of his Justice, which can in no other way be manifested on a Creature, but according to some Rule of Proceeding: And in his Proceeding with it according to the tenour of that, He appears to be just. And we may call this relative, because it was that on which this Relation between God and Man was founded.

2. THAT *it was necessary that Man should at first know his Rule.* And that upon a double Account,

(1.) *THAT he might comply with it as a Cause by Counsel.* He was not only to be regulated by the instinct of it, but to be taught and instructed by it in his Duty. It was not only God's Rule, by which he would govern Man, but also Man's Rule, by which he was to order himself in his whole Conversation in this World. It was a *Reasonable Service* that was required of him, *Rom.* 12. 12. 1. He must therefore perform it with Reason: And he was to be voluntary in it, and to do it on Choice. Hence that, Psal. 119. 30. *I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me.* And this he could not do except he had known what his Rule was.

(2.) *THAT he might be capable of being treated with in a way of Justice, according to his keeping or breaking of it.* Though God in Sovereignty may dispose of his Creature as he sees meet, and do it no wrong; yet to make it happy or miserable in a way of Reward or Penalty, necessarily supposeth a Rule of Proceedure. And this Rule was once made known, and that he either actually knows it, or that it is his own fault if he be ignorant. Nor can it be a declaration of Justice to punish any for the breach of a Law never promulgated.

3. *THAT he might thus know it, it was necessary that God should some way reveal or make it known to him.* A thing may be more ways than one revealed to a Man: And we here understand it in the largest sense. And here let us observe,

(1.) *THAT the Law was the Contrivance of God's Supreme Will.* True, it is the product of his infinite Wisdom, and was adapted for the Government of Man, being suited to his Nature; and was therefore *holy, just, & good,* Rom. 7. 12. But the Will of God was the Supreme Authority from which it proceeded. Hence so called, *Rom.* 12. 2. And see, 1. *Pet.* 4. 2. God's Requiring it is Man's Warrant for his Doing it, and the highest Reason of his Obedience. God therefore counts it sufficient Obligation to subscribe every Precept, with, *I am the Lord.*

(2.) HENCE *Man could not know it, but by his some way signifying it to him.* Man must know it to be his Duty and consequently that it was God's Will, on which his Duty depends; and that he knows this, God must make it known to him: For it is not his secret Will that is our Rule, *Deut.* 29. 29. Hence we have that, *Mic.* 6. 8.

4. *THAT God did at first imprint this Law on the Heart of Man immediately, in his Creation.* And for our right taking this up, let us observe,

(1.) THAT *in the Law, as given at first, we are to consider both the Precepts and Sanctions.* God gave the Law unto Man at his Creation, in a Covenant: And that it might be such an Instrument, it had these two parts in it, viz. *Preceptive, which contained all that of Duty that God required of Man*; and *Obligatory, which consisted in a Promise made to Obedience, and a Threatning against Disobedience, by which it was suited for the Administration of Justice*: Both of which the Word of God gives a full account of.

(2.) THAT *this Law was suited to the Nature of Man, which was therefore capable of the Impressions of it in his Creation in both of these respects.* That it was thus suited, may be read in the Law it self, and comparing it with Man's Capacity: but needs no other proof, then to consider that God is a wise Lawgiver, and both knew what was the Nature that he gave to Man, and what was convenient to direct him how he might serve to the Glory of his Maker, which must needs be his last End. And that Man's Nature was capable of receiving these Impressions, is evident if we consider,

[1.] THAT *God put into Man a natural Conscience, as he was to be a Subject of the Law.* That every Man hath a Conscience in him, is witnessed by his own Conscience, for he experienceth such a thing; as will appear in that which follows. God therefore put it into him; and it was for some End & Use. And that this was to render him better fit to be a Subject of the moral Law, ariseth from the Nature of it; as will be seen. Hence,

[2.] THAT *this Conscience was every way suited to receive the forementioned Impressions.*

For,

1. *CONSCIENCE properly belongs to the practical Understanding, and is therefore fitted to conduct a Man in acting according to Rule.* Whether Conscience be an Habit, or only an Act, I dispute not; but that it is not a Faculty or Power distinct from the Understanding, I think may be made good, if we consider the Nature of the Understanding and Usefulness of it in Man, which is not only to inform him in the Theory of things, but also to guide

him

him in practice; and for this it is endued with a power of Judgment, by which it can inquire into the Nature of Things, and compare them, and diſcern the Connections and Conſequents of them, and accordingly, commend or diſ-commend them to the Will. Now, when it thus exerts it ſelf with reſpect to the Law of God, and makes a Judgment of it, and of our Relation and Carriage towards it, then it is called Conſcience. Hence that, *Rom.* 2. 14, 15.

2. HENCE *Conſcience is a Subject recipient of the Rule into it.* And indeed, it were not otherwiſe fitted for its proper Function: For the Judgment it is to make is, whether this be Right or Wrong, a Duty or a Sin, commanded or forbidden; which cannot be done but by bringing and applying it to the Rule, which is the meaſure of Obedience and Diſobedience. For we are told, 1 Joh. 3. 4. *Whoſoever committeth ſin, tranſgreſſeth alſo the law: for ſin is the tranſgreſſion of the law.* It muſt therefore be acquainted with the Law in order to its paſſing ſuch a Judgment; nor can it do it any farther then it knows the Rule, and is able thus to apply it. Hence an erroneous Conſcience, ever makes a falſe Judgment about thoſe things wherein it is erroneous. It muſt therefore be capable of receiving the Rule into it, or elſe it would not be truly Conſcience.

3. THAT *God ſtamped this Rule on Man's Conſcience at the firſt, together with the Sanctions of it, and thereby fitted him to be a Subject of his ſpecial Government.* It is enough to evince the Truth of this, to conſider that Man was ordained to be a Subject of this Government, which he could not have been capable of without it. But beſides, it is apparent in our firſt Parents immediately after their Fall, Gen. 3. 8, 9. *And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themſelves from the preſence of the Lord God amongſt the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and ſaid, Where art thou?* And whence was this but from the impreſſion the Law had on their Conſciences. The relicks alſo of the Law that are found in the Hearts of meer Heathen, thus acting, are a further witneſs of this. As, Rom. 2. 14, 15. *For when the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, theſe having not the law, are a law unto themſelves: Which ſhew the works of the law written on their hearts, their conſcience alſo bearing witneſs, and their thoughts the mean while accuſing, or elſe excuſing one another.* And it is further confirmed, in that it is promiſed as a great Benefit of the New Covenant, that God will anew write his Law upon the Hearts of his People, which had been ſo defaced by the Apoſtaſy, Jer. 31. 33. *But this ſhall be the covenant that I will make with the houſe of Iſrael, After thoſe days, ſaith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write them in their hearts, and will their God, and they ſhall be my people.*

4. *THE Image of God, on Man's Underſtanding, not only gave him a perfect Knowledge of the Law, but alſo an Approbation of it, & Aſſent to it, as holy, juſt, and good.* The Image of God, concreated in Man conſiſted in the Sanctification of all his Faculties & Powers, one of which was his Underſtanding; and the Operation of it on that was, not only the giving him a clear Light to know what was commanded, and what forbidden, and on what Terms he ſtood with God, but mainly, in the right Judgment that he had of the Rule, and a full conſent which it gave to it, as every way proper and convenient for Man. This therefore we find *Paul* when renewed again, fully aſſented unto, *Rom.* 7. 12. And he declares it to be a fruit of the Transformation which is wro't by Regeneration, *Rom.* 12. 2. On the account therefore of this firſt impreſſion of the moral Law on the Conſcience of Man, as well as of the remaining light in fallen Man, it is uſually called the Law of Nature. And here this Queſtion may in few words be diſcuſſed, viz.

Queſt. *WHETHER the Law of Nature be the ſame with the moral Law?*

Anſ. LET us here obſerve theſe Things,

1. *THE Law of Nature may be conſidered, either as it was given to Man at firſt, or as to the Relicks of it in the Conſciences of fallen Man.* When God firſt wrote it on Man's Heart, it was perfect and compleat in all the Rules that belonged to Man in a ſtate of Integrity, and of ſubordination to the Government of God. Whereas the remains of it in ſinful Men are broken fragments and imperfect: fallen Man being under ignorance and error.

2. *THE moral Law is to be conſidered, either as it is purely Moral, or as it hath ſomething Poſitive annexed to it.* And from theſe diſtinctions, we may take up the following Concluſions,

1. *THAT the Law of Nature, and the moral Law, are the ſame for the Subſtance.* If we ſpeak of the Matter of Duty required in them, there is no ſubſtantial difference between them; for the Law given to *Adam* was perfectly ſuited to direct him as a moral Agent: Yea, it was a Law of Life; and therefore hath nothing wanting to it as ſuch. The *Ten Commands*, which are the Sum of the Law moral, (as will be conſidered in the next,) were all in the Law of Nature.

2. *WHATSOEVER Poſitive Precepts were annexed to the moral Law in the new Edition, were generally contained in the Law of Nature.* There are ſome Precepts laid down in the Word of God, whoſe Reaſon is Moral, and yet the particular Determination of them is Poſitive: Such as the limitation of the Sabbath to a Seventh Day, and to this Seventh, before, and another after Chriſt's Coming in our Fleſh; but it is not for that Reaſon to be counted Ceremonial, but Moral; tho' the fixing of it thus were arbitrary, and depended on a further Revelation.

3. *THAT*

3. *THAT the moral Law as it was given or proclaimed at Mount Sinai, differed from the Law of Nature as given at firſt, in reſpect of the Deſign or End of it.* In the firſt Edition of it, it was to be the Law of a Covenant of Works, to which Man was either to ſtand or fall: It had Happineſs promiſed to Obedience, and Miſery threatned to Diſobedience; but in the new Edition it was given in the hand of a Mediator, and for gracious Purpoſes, Gal. 3. 19. *Wherefore then ſerveth the law? It was added becauſe of tranſgreſſions, till the ſeed ſhould come, to whom the promiſe was made, and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.* It was therefore to be a *ſchoolmaſter to bring us to Chriſt*, ver. 24. It was to convince God's People of their Sin and Miſery, and thereby to make them to look out to Chriſt for their Salvation, who was typically repreſented to them by the ceremonial Law which followed.

2. *HOW far this Law comprized in it Man's Duty, or the whole Rule of his Obedience?*

Anſ. FOR a through Underſtanding of this, we are to conſider the State of Man in Integrity, and under the Apoſtacy. And here,

1. IN general, concerning both of theſe States. Two things may be remarked.

1. *THERE was a Reſervation for particular poſitive Precepts in the Law, which were not particularly imprinted on Man's natural Conſcience, but yet a general Obligation to ſuch, when revealed, was therein contained.* All the poſitive Laws ceremonial & judicial refer hither, and all Inſtitutions Evangelical. For though the Law of Nature did not expreſſly command them, nor could the meer Light of Nature have known them, nor had they been Duties if not particularly promulgated, yet the Obedience to them is Moral, i. e. required by the command of the moral Law, in general by the firſt Command. Hence that, Deut. 12. 32. *What thing ſoever I command you, obſerve to do it: thou ſhalt not add thereto, nor diminiſh from it.* And particularly by the ſeveral Commands, to which they are nextly to be reduced.

2. THAT *none but God could make any ſuch Precepts to oblige the Conſciences of Men.* He hath therefore abſolutely forbidden either *to add too, or diminiſh from what he is pleaſed to command*, in the forecited, *Deut.* 12. 32. And hence that Curſe denounced againſt thoſe that ſhall dare ſo to do, Rev. 22. 18. *For I teſtify unto every man that heareth the propheſie of this book, if any man add unto theſe things, God ſhall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.* And there is reaſon for it, becauſe Man's Conſcience, as ſuch, is liable to no other Judgment but that of God.

2. IN particular; referring to theſe ſeverally.

1. *CONCERNING Man in a ſtate of Integrity.* Theſe two things may be obſerved,

1. *THERE was no moral Duty lying upon Man in that State, but what was contained in this Law.* Elſe it had been imperfect, and conſequently not a Law of Life, nor a fit Inſtrument to advance the End of ſpecial Government, which was to conduct Man to an everlaſting State of Happineſs or Miſery, according as he kept or brake that Law. That Law ſaid, *do and live*, Rom. 10. 5. It therefore had all in it, that was neceſſary to Life in a Rule, and conſequently no moral Duty wanting to it.

2. THAT hence, *Man by a perfect Conformity to that Law, ſhould have obtained his End and Happineſs.* This neceſſarily follows from the former, and becauſe the Promiſe of the firſt Covenant, under which he then was, referred to no other as the Condition with which it was connected. There were indeed Sacraments annexed to that Covenant, for the Confirmation of the Sanctions of it; which being revealed, they could not violate, but by a Tranſgreſſion of one at leaſt of the Commands of that Law.

2. CONSIDERING *Man in a State of Apoſtaſy.* There are theſe things to be obſerved,

1. THAT *the Law will be the great Rule of the Judgment at the laſt Day.* In that Day there are Books to be opened, and Men are to be judged out of them, and this is one of thoſe Books. There muſt be a Rule of Judgment, and that muſt be the Law of Government under which Men are in this World. Hence that, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. The Caſe of all will be tried according to the moral Law, whether the Condition of Life required in that Law be anſwered, and that will turn the caſe. True, the Goſpel hath brought in a Suretiſhip, in which Chriſt is accepted to anſwer the demands of Juſtice for all that are in him by Faith; which will be then enquired into, and will iſſue the Matter on the ſide of all true Believers; but the Reaſon will be, becauſe the Law is ſatisfied and they juſtified by the Righteouſneſs of the Mediator: Which made *Paul* ſo ſolliciteous to *be found in him*, Phil. 3. 9. But ſtill, the Law is regarded in all this, according to *Mat.* 5. 18.

2. HENCE *none of fallen Men can be acquitted then unleſs he hath either by himſelf or by his Surety anſwered the Demands of this Law. The judge of all the Earth will do that which is right*, Gen. 18. 25. The Law is the Rule of that, and therefore none can ſtand in the Judgment, but ſuch as can ſhew a true Claim to a Righteouſneſs by which the Law hath been ſatisfied in their behalf; for the Goſpel doth not undermine the Law, but ratify it, *Rom.* 3. 31.

3. *BUT the Law is not a ſufficient Rule of Life to fallen Man, by his perfect Obedience to it.* Not only can he not obtain Life by it, becauſe he hath loſt his Power of perfect Obedience to it, and therefore it muſt needs condemn him if he ſtand to the trial of it, *Eccl.* 7. 20. *Prov.* 20. 9. 1 *John* 1. 8. But it ceaſeth to be a Rule of Life to Man that is fallen, becauſe all Men are by *Adam*'s Fall under the Condemnation of Death, by it, *Rom.* 5. 12.

Which Guilt they cannot expiate of themſelves, and by that means the Law becomes incapable of conferring Life on them, Rom. 8. 3. *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the fleſh. God ſending his own Son in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and for ſin condemned ſin in the fleſh.* Gal. 3. 21.

4. *HENCE the new Covenant hath introduced new Duties, which were not accommodable to the Law, in this State of Integrity.* The Goſpel hath brought in Faith in Chriſt, as neceſſary to Salvation, *Mark* 16. 16. And it is not only indulged Men, but commanded them, 1 *John* 3. 23. And it hath introduced Repentance both as a Duty, and is therefore commanded, *Acts* 17. 30. Yea, and it is made a neceſſary medium to the obtaining of Life; yea, and Life is ſecured to it. Hence is that Title put upon it, Acts 11. 18. *Repentance unto Life.* Whereas there was no occaſion for juſtifying Faith, during Man's Integrity, nor room for it in the Covenant of Works, becauſe Man by that was to be juſtifyed by his own perſonal Righteouſneſs; nor was there any room for Pardon upon Repentance, becauſe that Covenant poſitively denounced Death upon Sin, *Ezek.* 18. 4.

5. *NEVERTHELESS, theſe Duties, conſidered as Works required of us, are reduceable to to the moral Law.* We before obſerved, that by that Law, Man was bound in Subjection to God, to yield him Obedience in whatſoever he ſhould ſee meet to enjoyn him in, and reveal to him to be his Will. When therefore God, in Favour to Man, did upon his fearful Apoſtaſy, open to him a way of Recovery in a new Covenant, and preſcribe to him the Duties which he required of him in order to his re-obtaining of Life; Man now was bound by that Law to obey him in it, and is guilty of moral Tranſgreſſion if he refuſe or neglect it, and is liable to Puniſhment for Diſobedience, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 9.

6. HENCE, *whatſoever is required in new Evangelical Obedience, is comprized in this Law.* Not only are the moral Duties, under which Man was expreſly engaged at firſt revived in it, and have a new Force put upon them, by the Conſideration of Chriſt's Redemption, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. But alſo the Duties of Faith and Repentance are reduceable to it, ſo far as they are commanded by that Authority which we are obliged to own and obey by the firſt Command.

USE. I. LEARN hence, *how vainly they expect Salvation by Chriſt, who deſpiſe the moral Law.* How many are there, who if not profeſſedly, yet practically allow themſelves in Sin, under a Preſumption that Chriſt hath freed them from the Law, and there is now no more danger by Sinning againſt it. Such are all they that pretend, they may ſin that Grace may abound; which the Apoſtle rejects with Deteſtation, *Rom.* 6. 1, 2. Theſe will find themſelves miſerably deceived at laſt.

USE. II. LEARN we hence, *how dangerous a thing it is, to ſin againſt the light of a natural Conſcience.* God hath put into every Man a Conſcience to curb the exorbitant motions of Luſt in him, from breaking out into leud Actions; and requires him to hearken to the Voice of it, and not ſo to do is Wickedneſs. Conſcience is God's Deputy in a Man, and ſpeaks to him in God's Name, he therefore that rejects the warnings of that, in ſo doing, renounceth God's Government over him, and may expect his fearful Wrath to fall upon him. Hence the Apoſtle hath ſuch an Obſervation 1 John 3. 20. *For if our heart condemn us, God is greater then our heart, and knoweth all things.* Such therefore as hearken not to it, are grown to a prodigious height of Impiety.

USE. III. *THIS ſhould put us upon frequent ſtudying of the moral Law; if we would live and pleaſe God.* True, it concerns us to ſtudy the Goſpel, becauſe thence all our Hope and Conſolation muſt derive; and the Law alone, will offer to fallen Man nothing but Terror; but if under pretence of the Goſpel we neglect the Law, and nouriſh in ourſelves Ignorance of it, we can never lead a Life of Evangelical Obedience, which God requires of us, but muſt do the things that diſhonour and diſpleaſe him. Let us then labour to know our Duty by it, and then improve the Goſpel to point us how we may do this Duty in Faith, ſo as may be acceptable to him.

[FEBRUARY 11. 1700.]

SERMON *CLI.*

QUESTION XLI.

WHERE is the moral Law ſummarily comprehended?

ANSWER.

THE moral Law is ſummarily comprehended in the Ten Commandments.

WE have already conſidered the moral Law in the Nature of it; and how God gave it to Man at the firſt for the Rule of his ſpecial Government over him, and after what manner he pleaſed to reveal it to and in our firſt Parents: As alſo what Obligation Man is under to pay Obedience to it notwithſtanding the Apoſtaſy; and what uſe it is of to Chriſtians under the Covenant of Grace: How far alſo it may be ſaid to comprize under it the whole Rule of Man's Obedience.

THAT

THAT which next comes under Inquiry, is, *How Man may come to be acquainted with it since his Fall?* For if it still remains to be such a Rule, it is very necessary that Man be acquainted with it, how else shall he be able to yield conformity to it? For this there must be a new Revelation, as will presently be manifested. And this our Catechism tells us, that God hath given us the Sum and Abstract of it in the Ten Commandments.

HERE we may Inquire, 1. *Why God was pleased to renew the Revelation of the moral Law to fallen Man?* 2. *To whom he hath made this Revelation?* 3. *After what manner he hath made it?* 4. *How it may be said to be comprized in the Ten Commandments?* 5. *By what Rules we are to reduce all moral Duties to these Ten Commandments?*

I. *WHY God was pleased to renew the Revelation of the moral Law to fallen Man?*

Ans. WE may take a brief Account of this in the following Remarks,

1. *THAT it is Man's indispensible Duty to serve God in Holiness and Righteousness.* It was not only *Adam*'s Duty in a state of Integrity, when he was furnished with the Image of God for it; but, though the power be lost in fallen Man, yet the Obligation remains, these being the parts of Man's Obedience which God enjoyned him in, by the rule of special Government under which he was placed in his Creation; nor can his sinful losing his ability discharge him from his Duty. We are therefore told, in Job 28. 28. *And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.* And this is declared to be one end of Christ's Redemption, viz. to restore us to such a power, and re engage us in this Service, Luk. 1 74,75. *That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.*

2. *THAT the moral Law is the Rule of this Holiness & Righteousness, and must therefore be known in order to Practice.* That these are the two parts of moral Obedience, and how they comprehend the Sum of Man's Duty under them, will be particularly considered under the next Question. From whence it will appear that this Law is the Rule by which we are directed to and in them. And indeed all moral Goodness is comprized under them, as may afterwards be further demonstrated. Now if Men would practice these as a Reasonable Service unto God, it is requisite that they be acquainted with them. Blindness and Ignorance must needs leave Men to error and wandring. And without this Knowledge the Mind cannot be good; though a bare literal knowledge is not sufficient to make it good. Hence that, Joh. 13. 17. *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.*

3. *THAT by Man's Apostacy the first inscription of that Law on his Heart is greatly defaced.* We observed that the whole Law was fairly engraven upon it when he came out of God's Hand. But Sin did not only rob him of the Image of God, but also made woful blurrs and blots upon his Rule, so that many Principles of it are quite lost, and others are wofully obscured. Hence a Sinner, and a Fool, are in Scripture terms Synonymical, *Psal.* 14. 1. Sin hath rendred us foolish, sottish, bruitish. We have lost the knowledge of the true God, and are bewildred in our apprehensions about him, and entertain wrong notions about his Nature and Perfections, and have set up an Idol in his room. We have lost the right conceptions of true Happiness, and taken up in the room of them such opinions of Felicity, that will lead us into and leave us in misery. The Law of God is thurst out, and the law of Sin hath taken place in our Hearts in the room of it. We are mistaken in the true Worship of God, and turned to Idolatry, nor are we a-right opinionated about the Duties of Justice and Charity. In a word, we *call good evil*, &c. *Isai* 5. 20.

4. *THAT though, since the Fall, there are some remains of the Law on the Consciences of Men, enough to leave them without excuse, yet not sufficent to direct them in a way of Holiness and Righteousness.* Here are three Things,

(1.) *THAT since the Fall there are some remains of the Law on the Consciences of Men.* The Heart of fallen Man is like to some old ruined Fabrick, which was once stately, but now lies in rubbish, only here and there are to be seen some relicks of its Glory, which serve only to let Men know what a woful Catastrophe hath befallen it; and witness that once it was Glorious, to help us the more to bemoan its Desolation. The Heathen have some moral Truths left in them, but they are *imprisoned in unrighteousness*, Rom. 1. 18. Hence they have used the light of Nature in them so far as to let us know that there is a Synteresis in their Conscience, out of the Records whereof many broken fragments of Divine Truths may be read: Though we are not to suppose that all the natural Divinity pretended to by Etheick Philosophers was gathered meerly from their own reason, but much of it by Converse with the People of God.

(2.) *THAT these remains of natural light on the Heathen, are sufficient to leave them without excuse.* When God calls them to their Trial, there will be enough found of the Law written on their Consciences, to convince & condemn them. See *Rom.* 1. 20. 2. 14, 15. They will be found to have sinned against Light, and inward Warnings; to have done things, which their Consciences told them they ought to have avoided, and neglected Duties which they suggested to them. There are the common Principles in the Light of Nature, that are practical and improvable by humane reason, in the observation of the Works of Creation and Providence; the neglect whereof will inforce Men to confess themselves Guilty. That told Men that there is a God, that he is the greatest and best of

Beings, and ought therefore to be worshipped and served by Men: That Man is made for an End, which must be better than himself; and that because God is the best Being, he must needs be Man's last End. That there are Rules of Righteousness, and a Justice, Equity, and Charity to be maintained between Men; and that there are Sins against these which deserve Death, Rom. 1. ult. *Who knowing the judgments of God, that they which do such things are worthy of death.* Hence, how many of them have been terrified & distracted with the Stings and Reverberations of their own Consciences, after the commission of some enormous Crimes, which was nothing else but a judgment which they past upon themselves, according to the Law of God.

(3.) *YET they have not sufficient to direct them in the way of Holiness and Righteousness.* Not only have they no knowledge of the new Way, revealed in the Gospel, but they have lost the knowledge of the latitude of the Law of the first Covenant. Many moral Duties they are ignorant of, both in respect of the Worship of God, and Righteousness towards Man. Their Minds are blinded; they have condemned many Vertues of Folly, and advanced many Vices into the number of Vertues. The Apostle giveth them such a Character, Eph. 4. 17, 18. *This I say therefore and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind, Having their understanding darkned, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.* They trust to their own carnal reasonings, and they contradict the Spiritual things of the Law of God, and mislead them into deceits and errors.

5. *THAT except God had again revealed this Law, fallen Man must have abode in his natural Ignorance of it.* The whole World was gone out of the way. Not only had they lost all the impressions of Holiness and Righteousness on their Hearts, by losing the Image of God on them, but they were filled with all carnal Lusts, which possessed them, and fixed them in those cursed Principles, that they still were on the losing hand; and their Minds were so perverted, that they could not so much as discover the deceit they were under. Hence that, Isai. 44. 20. *He feedeth of ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?* *Rom.* 1. 21. Hereupon we have them sadly Characterized, *Rom.* 3. 10,—19. Who then should have shewn them the Rules of Obedience, required by the Law, if God had not a new declared them?

6. *THAT God had merciful Ends in thus revealing it to Men.* It was a great favour of God, to give to Man a new fair transcript of the moral Law, when that which was at first written on their Hearts was so wofully defaced. And this may be confirmed, if we consider what it was for; viz.

1. Negatively; *NOT that the moral Law was sufficient to point fallen Man to Felicity.* That now ceased of it self to be able to shew Sinners the way how they might recover God's Favour, and so live as to please him. It now no longer offered to Man the terms of a Covenant of Life, as it did at the first; it doth not now say to him, this do and live. For all this is introduced by the Gospel, in the New Covenant, which is there opened, and Men are invited into. The Apostle lays down that assertion, and gives the reason of it, Rom. 3. 20 *Therefore by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

2. Positively; IT had especially these three Ends in it,

(1.) *TO convince Unregenerate Men of their Sin and Misery.* We are told, in the forecited, *Rom.* 3. 20, *&c.* So that Man's losing his clear knowledge of the Law, rendred him very insensible of his sinful and undone state. Hence arose that woful security that Men laboured of; Conscience not being able to do its Office fully for want of Light. *Paul* tells us how it was with him, when though he had the Law in the Letter, yet he was without the right apprehension of it, *Rom.* 7. 9. How then must it be with them that have not the Letter of it afforded them.

(2.) *TO make way for their entertainment of Christ in the Gospel Revelation.* The end of Christ's coming was to supply the Law's deficiency of being able to lead sinful Man to Blessedness, *Rom.* 8. 3. Now that Men may be brought to see their need of Christ to be a Saviour, that so they may be perswaded to seek to him for Salvation, it is necessary that they be made to know what their Condition is by Sin; how miserable and helpless that hath made them: And for this, God renewed the Law, as being most serviceable thereunto. And by this means it becomes a School-master to Christ; as we are told, *Gal.* 3. 23, 24.

(3.) *TO help Believers in their new Obedience.* The Law is the Rule of Man's Obedience. Believers are in Regeneration Sanctified, with a new Principle furnishing them for this Obedience; in the faithful performance whereof they glorify God, and honour their Profession, and serve to the End they were made for. God therefore hath required this, that so they may have their Rule made plain, by which they may be pointed in their way. And therefore *David* gives it that commendation, Psal. 119. 105. *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my paths.*

7. *GOD also did it in Sovereignty, to leave some the more inexcusable.* It doth not attain its gracious End in all to whom it is revealed, but they neglect it, and using it to lead them to Christ, and hereby they aggravate their Guilt, and bring the greater Condemnation upon themselves. The Apostle on this account hath that distinction, Rom. 2. 12. *For as many as have sinned without the law, shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the*

the law, shall be judged by the law. Without Law, i.e. the written Law: And they shall perish without Law, i.e. it shall not be Charged on them, that they had it thus given them. The contrary to which he asserts of the other; intimating an aggravation of Sin by it.

II. *TO whom he hath made this Revelation?*

Ans. WE may briefly take this up in three Particulars,

1. *NOT to all the World.* Though all Mankind are equally fallen under the loss of the primitive engravings of it, yet all are not favoured with the new Edition of it. The Apostle plainly distinguisheth between such as are without it, and them that are under it, in the forecited, *Rom.* 2. 12. God hath hitherto left the bigger part of Mankind without this Priviledge.

2. *NOT only to his Elect.* For though God graciously revealed it for their sakes, and with a design of their good; and though none but these, have the new inscription of it made on their Hearts; yet the outward Dispensation of it is more extensive, and it is made a common Priviledge to the Elect and others; and it must needs be so, because these are mixt together, and are accordingly equally made to partake in the outward Benefits of the New Covenant, whereof this is one. This is supposed, in Luk. 12. 47. *And that servant which knew his lords will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.*

3. *BUT to the Visible Church.* God, designing to dispense his Grace to his Chosen, in the way of Means and Ordinances, accommodated to Men as Reasonable Creatures, hath accordingly sent his Word to Men as he pleased, and they have been perswaded by it to give entertainment thereto by an outward Profession, and thereby brought into a Visible Church State, and made Partakers in the means of Grace, though not all in the saving Fruits thereof. According to that, Mat. 20. 16. *For many be called, but few chosen.* We are therefore told, Rom 9. 6. *For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.* And to these pertained the giving of the Law, *ver.* 4. Now this was of old limited to the literal Israel, *Psal.* 147. 19, 20. But hath, since Christ's appearing in our flesh, been extended to the Gentiles.

III. *AFTER what manner he hath made this Revelation?*

Ans. THAT we take this up right, we must observe, that this Revelation is either External or Internal: Between which there is a difference,

1. CONCERNING the External, we may observe,

1. *THAT God was pleased to signify this to some of his Servants by Inspiration and immediate Revelation.* The Apostle hints, Heb. 1. 1. *God who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers.* And this was one of them. There were therefore extraordinary Persons from the first: *Enoch* was such, *Jude* 14.

2. *THAT these Communicated it to others.* They were sent by God to Men for this End, and hence they spake to others, as God had signify'd his mind to them, 2 Pet. 1. 21. *For the prophesy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy Men spake as they were moved by the holy Ghost.*

3. *AND this was from Adam to Moses handed down by Tradition.* The Fathers told their Children, and they their Children. And thus was the mind of God continued from one Generation to another, Psal. 78. 5. *For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel: which he commanded our fathers: that they should make them known to their children.*

4. *WHEN this Tradition grew into decay, God raised up others, extraordinarily spirited, to revive it.* Men through neglect and folly, lost the Doctrines taught them, and fell into Apostasy: and God pleased to send Prophets to restore them again; so that this knowledge might not be utterly lost.

5. *FROM Moses till the Canon was perfected, he did it partly by Tradition, partly by Revelation, partly by Writing.* The first writer of Canonical Scripture was *Moses.* The Canon was not perfected till all the Sacred Writings were compleated; till then therefore, there were Men continued in the Church, who were extraordinarily inspired.

6. *SINCE that, it is compleatly contained in the holy Scriptures; where only we are to seek to know our Duty.* Hence that Text of the Bible, Rev. 22. 18. *For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophesie of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.*

2. *THE Internal is by a new inscription of the Law, in the Hearts of God's Children, which is done in Conversion.* Of this we read, *Jer.* 31. 32. And this belonging to Sanctification, is done by Degrees.

IV. *HOW it may be said to be comprized in the Ten Commandments?*

Ans. 1. *WHEN God revived the Law at Mount Sinai, he delivered it in Ten Words, or Precepts.* This is evident both by the Matter it self recorded, which hath neither more, nor fewer distinct Subjects in it; and because God himself hath so enumerated them, *Exod.* 34. 28. *Deut.* 4. 13.

2. *THIS being given as a Rule of moral Obedience, it must needs comprehend the substance of the whole Law.* God is said to make a Covenant with them, *Deut.* 5. 2. And we are told what that was, viz. the giving of this Law, and it is said, *ver.* 22. *and he added no more.* Now this was a revival of the Covenant of Works, to make way for the gracious Covenant that followed; and therefore it must comprize all the Precepts of that Covenant.

3. *GOD afterwards gave forth many particular moral Precepts to his People.* And that both by *Moses*, for many of the Laws, delivered

vered by him, were purely Moral, as *Lev.*18. and elſewhere; and by the Prophets that ſucceeded after *Moſes*, whoſe Writings abound with them.

4. *THAT all theſe Precepts are but Commentaries upon the ten Commands.* God did, in and by them explain the meaning of theſe, and therein give a Specimen of the great breadth of that Law. So that there is not one of them but is referrible to one or other of theſe Claſſes. And if we would rightly underſtand the full purport of them, we muſt reduce them hither. And herein the great Wiſdom of God hath diſcovered it ſelf, in ſo Epitomizing all moral Duties, for our better carrying of them in our Minds, and to facilitate our right underſtanding of them. It therefore becomes us, whenſoever we find any particular Precept in the Word of God, to reduce it to its proper Head in the Decalogue. And for our help in this, we may proceed to inquire,

V. *BY what Rules we are to reduce all Moral Duties to the Ten Commandments?*

Anſ. THERE are divers profitable Rules for this laid down by Divines, and variouſly expreſſed: The ſubſtance whereof may be taken up in theſe that follow.

1. *THAT every of theſe Commands hath ſomething in it diſtinct from every other.* The Matter of each is diverſe from all the reſt. There are no tautologies in them. This may be diſtinctly evidenced, when we come to the Conſideration of each of them in particular. And hence if we would know God's Mind, and our Duty, we muſt inquire after the particular Subject deſigned in either of them.

2. *THAT every of theſe Precepts extends to the whole Man.* They greatly err, who think theſe Commands to require only the outward behaviour of Men, for the ſufficient obſerving of them. Men's Laws can reach no further, but God is Lord of the Conſcience, and Judge of that; and he obſerves, not only what we do, but with what Heart. Hence that, 2 Chron. 25. 2. *And he did that which was right in the ſight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart.* God requires the inward Man, Prov. 23. 26. *My ſon, give me thine heart.* And we are told, Heb. 4. 12. *For the word of God is quick and powerful, and ſharper than any two-edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of ſoul and ſpirit, and of the joints & marrow, and is a diſcerner of the thoughts & intents of the heart.* This Law, reſpects the Thoughts, as well as the Words and Actions; and may as well be broken by them, as by the other, *Mat.* 5. 28. They alſo are miſtaken, who think, that the outward actions are aimed at in ſome, and the Heart only in others, for every Command of the Law is Spiritual, *Rom.* 7. 14.

3. *THAT hence the Habits of Sanctifying Grace are required in every of them.* As when the Law was given, Men had all Grace fitting him for Obedience, ſo the Law expects that the Man ſhould have kept that Image, and condemns the loſs of it. Hence that Law not only forbids Actual, but alſo Original Sin; and condemns that luſt or concupiſcence in the Heart, which unfits us for moral Obedience, Rom. 7. 14. *For we know that the law is ſpiritual: but I am carnal, ſold under ſin.* That looks after the Principle from which all our Actions flow; and that is the reaſon why the natural Man cannot ſerve God, but ſins in his Duties. This is the reaſon why the Prayer of the Wicked is abomination.

4. *THAT both the Affirmative and Negative is included in every Precept.* There are ſome of theſe expreſſed Affirmatively, as the *Fourth* and *Fifth*, and the reſt Negatively; but in each of theſe the other is included. When we are forbidden to have any other God, we are therein enjoyned to take the true God, and him alone for our God. When we are forbidden Adultery, we are commanded Chaſtity. When we are commanded to keep the Sabbath Holy, we are forbidden all Prophanation of it: and ſo of the reſt. *Iſai.* 58. 13. And the reaſon is evident, becauſe of the inſeperable connexion between Sins of Commiſſion, and Omiſſion.

5. *THAT where any thing is commanded or forbidden, it extends to every kind and degree relating thereto.* Some of the Precepts mention only one Species, but this is to be underſtood Synechdochically, and applied to every other. When Adultery is forbidden, which is properly a defiling of the Marriage-Bed, all ſorts of Uncleanneſſes are comprehended, even to a laſcivious Look. Hence that, 2 Pet. 2. 14. *Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot ceaſe from ſin.* Yea though *on a maid*, Job 31. 1. *I made a covenant with eyes, why then ſhould I look upon a maid?*

6. *THAT every Precept includes all the Means, Occaſions, and Advantages, which refer thereto.* When it requires ſuch a Duty, it therein requires that we uſe all proper Courſes to help us in it. When it forbids ſuch a Sin, it therein prohibits our uſing, and requires our avoiding all the Temptations and Occaſions leading thereto. And this may be part of the meaning of that, 1 Theſ. 5. 22. *Abſtain from all appearance of evil.* When it forbids Murder, it conſequently Prohibits unjuſt Anger, that is leading thereto, *Mat.* 5. 22. When it forbids Adultery, it warns us againſt coming into the Company of laſcivious Perſons, where a train will be laid for us, *Prov.* 5. 8, 9.

7. *EVERY Precept bids us not only to avoid the doing of ſuch things our ſelves, but to take heed that we do not partake in other Men's Sins.* 1 *Tim.* 5. 22. And we bring this Guilt upon our ſelves when we either encourage them in their Sin, and ſeek to hide or cover it, or do not uſe endeavours according to our Opportunity to prevent them.

8. *THE ſame Duties may have a reference to divers of theſe Commands in ſeveral reſpects.* There are ſuch ſeveral reſpects which Actions may be cloathed withal, and accordingly are diverſely

diverſely applicable. A Poſitive Command, may be conſidered as Poſitive, and ſo it belongs to the Firſt, or it may be conſidered as referring to Inſtituted Worſhip, and ſo to the Second, or as limiting the Time, and ſo to the Fourth; excels in Meats, Drinks, and Apparel, may be reckoned as pernicious to the Health, and to belong to the Sixth, or as contrary to Sobriety, and incentives of fleſhly Luſt, and ſo to the Seventh, or as a prodigal waſting of Men's Eſtates; and ſo to the Eighth.

9. *AND where there are Promiſes or Threatnings annexed to any Command, the contrary is included.* As the Promiſe refers to Obedience, ſo it involves a Menace againſt Diſobedience. In the Third Command there is a Threatning, not to hold Guiltleſs, &c. which aſſures us, that God will accept, commend, and reward ſuch as reverence his Name. In the Fifth, there is a Promiſe, &c. And this infers, that if Men deſpiſe their Parents, ſome fearful Curſe awaits them, as, *Prov.* 30. 17.

USE. *THIS may point us, what is the proper uſe we are to make of the Decalogue*, viz.

1. *NOT to make our moral Obedience to it, the Ground of our Hope to obtain Eternal Life.* We ſhall certainly labour of an undoing miſtake if thus we do, Rom. 3. 20. *By the deeds of the law, there ſhall no fleſh be juſtified in his ſight.*

2. *TO regulate our Converſation by, in our whole ordering of it.* Would we know what is Duty, and what Sin? Would we keep the right Way, and not turn into the Paths of the Deſtroyer? Let us then keep cloſe to this. Iſa. 8. 20. *To the law and to the teſtimony, if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them.* Truſt not to our own Reaſon, for that is blinded & prejudiced: Lean not upon Impulſes and inward Motions, for they are uncertain, and often proceed from the Evil one, &c.

3. *TO judge of our Actions by, and that not only as to the Matter, but alſo the Sincerity of them.* And hence to lay our ſelves by it, both in the thing done, the Principle by which, and the End for which; all whereof come under the Cognizence of this Law.

4. *TO convince us of our ſhort-coming in all this, and to drive us out of our ſelves, to place our whole reliance upon Chriſt, for Pardon and Acceptance.* And if thus the Law raiſe our eſteem of Chriſt, it will ſerve to Evangelical Purpoſes.

[MARCH 11. 1701.]

SERMON CLII.

QUESTION XLII.

WHAT is the Sum of the Ten Commandments?

ANSWER.

THE Sum of the Ten Commandments is, to Love the Lord our God with all our Heart, with all our Soul, with all our Strength, and with all our Mind, and our Neighbour as our ſelves.

THE Moral Law being given to Man for a Rule to direct him, in the ordering of his whole Life ſo as to pleaſe God, God not only ſaw meet to revive it, when Man's Sin had defaced that fair engraving of it, which was at firſt written upon his Heart, but alſo to reduce it to the general and comprehenſive Heads, which might help us the better to underſtand and remember it. In the Proclamation of this Law on Mount Sinai, it pleaſed God to reduce it to Ten Commands; of which, how far they comprize the Subſtance of that whole Law, we have conſidered under the former. But he ſaw good afterwards to commit theſe Precepts to Writing; for which he made choice of two Tables of Stone, on which he himſelf engraved them, *Exod.* 34. 28. I ſhall not inſiſt on the *Reaſons*, why he wrote them on *Tables of Stone*; probably it might be, partly to ſignify *the Hardneſs of Heart* which Man had contracted by Sin. For the natural Man's Heart is called an *Heart of Stone*, Ezek. 36. 26. Partly to expreſs the *Durability of the Moral Law*, it being an Unchangeable Rule of Obedience given to Man; whereas the Ceremonial Law was Temporary, and in time to vaniſh away. Hence we find ſuch expreſſions, Job 19. 23, 24. *O that my words were now written, oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen, and laid in the rock for ever!* But that which will be direction to our preſent Conſideration, is, that God wrote theſe upon two diſtinct Tables; which leads us to a yet more comprehenſive diſtribution of the moral Law; and that which reduceth the Sume of it into a narrower compaſs. Had God ſeen meet, he could have written them all upon one Table; and why he did it rather upon Two, we may be informed both from the Scriptures, and from the Nature of the thing it ſelf. We may gather this from the recapitulation of the whole Law under two Heads, by our Saviour, *Mat.* 22. 37, *&c.* So that there is no moral Precept, but it is reducible to one of theſe; and the matter of the Commands themſelves will convincingly infer it. And this will be evidenced by a particular Explication of the Anſwer before us, which is taken from thoſe words of our Saviour; who perfectly underſtood the Mind of God, and the Nature of his Law.

THERE are then, two Things here to be obſerved, in which the Sum of theſe Ten Com-

Commandments is comprized, viz. 1. *There is ſomething generical, or wherein they all agree,* viz. *Love.* 2. *There is ſomething ſpecifical, or a diſtribution of this Love into its diverſe Objects; which are God and our Neighbour, and diverſe Degrees.* And ſomething may be ſpoken to each of theſe, to make way for a more diſtinct handling of them.

I. *THERE is ſomething in general, in which all the Commands do agree:* They may all be ſummed up in one Word, and that is *Love*, Rom. 13. 10 *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.* For the whole Law is nothing elſe but a Rule of Love: and for that reaſon, all Obedience is expreſſed under that Title. This therefore makes one eſſential part of fallen Man's Religion, 2 Tim. 1. 13. *Hold faſt the form of ſound words, which thou haſt heard of me, in faith & love which is in Chriſt Jeſus.* Obedience is called Love Metonymically, becauſe, if it be true, it ever proceeds from that Principle, which is rooted in the Will, and operates by the Affections; and becauſe Love is the root of all the chuſing Affections, it very aptly ſerves to ſet forth this Principle of new Obedience; as it implies the choice of the Will, which is diſcovered in and by the Activity of this Love. And there are two Things which it points us to,

1. *THAT there is no Command in the moral Law, but what is in itſelf exceeding lovely & deſirable.* Certainly where Love is required, there is an Object exhibited that is ſuited to attract it, and a Duty very agreable to the Nature of the Subject. Sin indeed hath defiled our Nature, and ſown prejudices in our Hearts againſt the Law of God, and filled them with enmity. *Rom.* 8. 7. But the Law it ſelf, in every Article or Canon of it, is ſo accommodated to the Nature of Man, as it was in its Integrity, that nothing could be more obliging; and where the Spirit of God hath renewed his Image in any, it is lovely to them, ſo far as renewed. And indeed, there is no property in the Law of God, but what renders it amiable, *Pſal.* 19. 7, *&c.*

2. *THAT true Obedience is of Choice, and not by Compulſion.* The Affections are the Inſtruments of the Will, by which it exerts itſelf in the Imperate Actions, and is therefore to be judged of by them. They are the Feet of the Soul, which carry it to or from the Object which it hath either choſen or rejected, and are accordingly ſignals of thoſe Elicit Actions: Where then our Love is exerted and exerciſed about any thing, it is a witneſs that we have choſen that thing, upon an high eſteem of, and value for it. For this Election being an act of a Cauſe by Counſel, it argues, that the Soul hath diſcovered that in the Law, which hath ſatisfyed him of the worth and excellence of it, for which it hath rationally given it the preference to every other thing. And he can ſay of it, as, Pſal. 119. 72. *The law of thy mouth is better unto me, then thouſands of gold and ſilver.* And this choice is not made on the account of any external or adventitious Advantages, which he apprehends that he may gain by his Obedience, which often allures Hypocrites to a temporary compliance, and they are pleaſed in it, as long as that laſts, but from the intrinſical goodneſs and worth of the Law, which they are perſwaded of, and can teſtify for it, as he, Rom. 7. 12. *Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and juſt, and good.* And let Men's pretended Conformity to the Law be otherwiſe never ſo exact, yet if it wants this Principle to animate it, it will not be accepted by God as Obedience. And where this Love doth influence, he will accept and reward it in Chriſt, notwithſtanding much imperfection adhering to it.

II. *THERE is ſomething ſpecifical, in which this Love is diverſifyed, and that is with reſpect to the next and immadiate Objects about which it is to be imployed, or unto which it is to apply it ſelf, and the different degrees of this Love in regard of the diverſe Objects of it.* Both of theſe may be conſidered jointly, i.e. We may together with each of theſe Objects, conſider the degree which is required in our Love to either of them; and that will appear by the conſideration of the diverſe Nature of the Objects, and different ground of the Obligation lying upon us to our loving of them. Now the Objects commended to us in this diſtribution are two, viz. God and our Neighbour. And as by God we are to underſtand the Infinitely Glorious, Firſt Being, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, who, tho' they are Three Perſons, are yet but One God, of the ſame undivided Eſſence: So by our Neighbour we are to underſtand comprehenſively the Creature, or all Second Beings, ſo far as we ſtand related to them, and owe a Duty to them: But it more eſpecially refers to Mankind, who are of the ſame Nature with us, and there is ſome relation or other which we bear unto them, in every of which there are Duties enjoyned us by the Law of God. Now for the right ſtating of this matter, let us obſerve the following Particulars,

1. *THAT the Firſt Table of the moral Law, points us to the Duties of Love, which we owe to God immediately & ultimately; the Second Table contains the Duties that we owe to our Neighbour mediately & ſubordinately.* On this Account the Four firſt Commands comprehend the Firſt Table, as is apparent in the very matter of them: And the Six latter Commands conſtitute the Second Table, as is alike obvious. On this account, all moral Duty is diſtributed into Worſhip and Charity, and for this reaſon all Obedience is divided into Holineſs and Righteouſneſs, and therefore the Image of God, which is the Principle over-powering of us to this Obedience is ſo diſtributed, Eph. 4. 24. *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs, and true holineſs.*

2. *THAT this diſtribution of the Objects, is not Univerſal, or of things co-ordinate, and oppoſite,*

poſite, but of things ſubordinate. God and our Neighbour do not ſtand upon even ground, ſo as that theſe muſt divide our Love and Obedience between them; but though it may ſeem to be a Paradox, yet it is a great Truth, that God muſt have all our Love, and yet our Neighbour muſt have ſome of it too; He muſt have our whole Heart and Soul, and yet the other muſt have our hearty & undiſſembled Love; and this would be a contradiction, if it were not for this ſubordination. But here is a manifeſt Solution of it, viz. God ſtands as the ultimate Object, and higheſt End and Center of all our Love, to whom it is to be directed finally and intentionally: but the Creature in ſome things ſtands between us and God, and is to taſte of our Love as it goeth along to him, tho' ſtill it is to paſs thro' the Creature, and not to reſt till it determines in him: As a River that in its courſe, waſheth the Shore, and refreſheth the Lands it runs through, but yet goes along, and ceaſeth not till it falls into the Ocean, where it loſeth it ſelf. And the reaſon of this is, becauſe God is the chief Good, and laſt End of all things: Whereas, tho' other things may bear the relation of an End to ſome things, that are in ſubordination to them, yet in order to the laſt End, they are all but Media, and he is the End of them. And hence, what a Man doth for the ſubordinate End nextly, he doth it vertually and intentionally for the laſt End. And hence, let a Man love his Neighbour never ſo paſſionately, yet if it be ultimately for any othe reſpect but for God, & for his Glory, his love will not be reckoned to him for Obedience.

3. *THAT on this Subordination is founded the reaſon of the difference in the quality & degree of the love that we owe to God & to the Creature.* There is a love due to both, but it neither acts in the ſame manner, nor is it to be in the ſame degree. Doubtleſs there is a difference between the reſpect that we bear to the End, and to the Means ſerving to it, which cannot but diverſify our eſteem of the Objects; for the End is ever to be loved for itſelf, whereas the Means are to be valued according to their ſerviceableneſs to the End, and for the ſake of that, and therefore not meerly for their own ſake. And hence our Love to God, and our Love to our Neighbour, are very differently expreſt in our Anſwer, agreable to the Word of God, of which indeed they are a part. We may therefore briefly conſider the import of each manner of expreſſion here uſed, which will give us a clear diſcovery of the difference.

I. *THE Love of God required of us, is to be with all the Heart, &c.* The cumulation of theſe expreſſions, in *Mat.* 22. 37. and fetcht from *Deut.* 6. 5. is emphatical; and ſerves to ſhew with what intenſeneſs and largeneſs it ſhould exert it ſelf. I ſhall not be ſo critical as to enquire, Whether there be diverſe things intended in Heart, Soul & Mind: Or, Whether they are Synonimical; ſurely they compize under them a moſt ſuperlative and extenſive Love; and may in particular point us to theſe things,

1. *THAT we ought to Love God with the whole Man.* That all our Faculties & Powers both of Soul & Body, are to be devoted to him and his Service. For this Love is the root of Obedience, and therefore it muſt extend equally with that; and we owe our Spirit, Soul, and Body to his Service, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 23; 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. As our Love muſt have a deep fixation in our Heart, elſe it cannot be cordial and ſincere, ſo it muſt exert itſelf in our Life and Actions, elſe we may well queſtion whether we love him at all.

2. *THE whole of our whole Man muſt be devoted to him and to his Service.* As we are not to reſerve any power in us for any other Object, ſo neither are we to divide any between him and others. It is all the Heart, &c. it is to be his alone. It is like a Conjugal Love, which one alone can ſhare in, and if any go about to divide it, they deſtroy it. It is ſuch a Love, as none in Heaven or Earth may be Partners with him, *Pſal.* 73. 25. Nay all our love to the choiceſt of Creatures is to be hatred in compariſon with it. Hence that, Luk. 14. 26. *If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and ſiſters, yea and his own life alſo, he cannot be my diſciple.* And on this account our Saviour hath ſuch an expreſſion, Mat. 6. 24. *No man can ſerve two maſters.*

3. *THE higheſt degrees of Love from the whole Man, muſt be ſet upon him.* This alſo is implied, in all our Heart, &c. it ſaith, that we cannot love God too much; there can be no exceſs in the Love it ſelf, though there may be error in the manner of expreſſing it, which will be, if we go beſide the Command which directs and regulates it, on pretence of over-doing; but that we cannot love God enough, much leſs over-love him, is therein evident, becauſe he is an Object of ſuperlative Goodneſs. Our Saviour tells us, in Mat. 19. 17. *There is none good but one, that is God.* i. e. There is none whoſe Goodneſs is comparable to his; that all Goodneſs is Originally centred in him; and that they are but rays of his Goodneſs, which are to be ſeen in the Creature. Hence we cannot love him ſo well, but that he deſerves more. His Goodneſs is increated and infinite; but our Love, when we have extended it to the outſide of its Capacity remains finite, and he only can love himſelf with an adequate Love.

4. *THAT God is to be loved by us for himſelf, or for his own ſake.* The reaſon of our loving him, is to be ſought and found in him alone. It is true, the diſcoveries which he makes of himſelf to us in his Word and Works, in which he hath made himſelf known to us to be an Object every way ſuitable for us to place our hope and truſt in, are the next motives to ſtimulate us to Love him. And hence we are to Love him, both becauſe he is Good in himſelf, and Good to

us, yet theſe two muſt ſtand in ſubordination. And the ground of this is, becauſe our Love is to influence our Obedience. And the great Teſt of the ſincerity of our Obedience is, that we make his Glory our laſt End in all that we do; which we cannot do, unleſs we Love him for his own ſake. Beſides, it is a Rule, that Goodneſs is the Object of the cloſing Affections, the primitive whereof is Love. Now God is Goodneſs itſelf, whereas other things are only good by participation: and becauſe his Goodneſs is in himſelf, we cannot Love him, unleſs it be for himſelf.

II. *THE Love by which we are to love our Neighbour, is to be as our ſelves.* This Rule needs a little Explaining, becauſe many are miſtaken about it, and too often abuſe it. And here I ſhall firſt in general, obſerve ſomething about it, and then offer a more particular Account of it.

1. *IN General: It plainly indigitates an inferiour degree of Love to the former, in reſpect of the immediate Object.* There is no proportion between the Love we owe to our ſelves, and that which we owe to God. It is true, Chriſt ſaith, this Second Commandment is like the Firſt, *Mat.* 22. 39. For it agrees with it, 1. *In the Authority by which it is enjoyned.* God who requires us to love him, hath commanded us to love our Neighbour; and therefore as well to be obeyed. 2. *In the Genus, it is Love:* And ſo it muſt be as real, as ſincere, as truly without diſſimulation as that. 3. *In the Doctrine of Religion:* It doth not belong to an inferiour Art, or Science, but to Divinity, as well as the other, *Jam.* 1. 27. 4. *In inſeperable Conjunction.* We cannot have the one Love without the other. The abſence of one is a certain evidence that the other is not in us, 1 Joh. 4. 20. *If a man ſay, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God whom he hath not ſeen?* But as his Love terminates on the Creature, as its next and immediate Object, ſo it cannot require an equal degree with the former; for that would be to make the Creature equal with God, and pay it a divine Honour.

2. *IN Particular:* That we may rightly obſerve what is implied in *Loving our Neighbour as our ſelves*, let theſe few Particulars be obſerved,

1. *THAT every Man owes a Love to himſelf.* There is indeed a ſinful ſelf-love which the Word of God condemns, it being irregular, and tending to the Man's own hurt. But there is a Love which is due to a Man's ſelf, without which he cannot perform the duties of the Law which belong to himſelf. For ſo far as Duty reacheth, Love muſt extend; for without it, there is no Obedience. Love and Hatred are contraries, as we are told, *Eph.* 5. 29.

2. *THAT this ſelf-love may be regular, the Man muſt love himſelf in order unto God.* He is not his own laſt End, and therefore ought not to pay to himſelf the higheſt reſpect. He was not made for himſelf, but for God, and will loſe the end of his being, if he does not conſecrate himſelf to God, *Prov.* 16. 4.

And here obſerve,

(1.) *EVERY Man is to ſeek his own Good.* Hence that, Prov. 9. 12. *If thou be wiſe, thou ſhalt be wiſe for thy ſelf: but if thou ſcorneſt, thou alone ſhalt bear it.* He is to ſeek after his outward and bodily Comfort, his Health, his comfortable Support in this Life, his own good Name, &c. Above all he is to ſeek his own Salvation, and give all diligence to ſecure it, and work it out, *Phil.* 2. 12. No Man is to be willing to be damned, but ſhould uſe utmoſt endeavours to be ſaved. He ſhould be profitable to himſelf, *Job* 22. 2. Hence Godly Men have both Prayed and uſed Means on theſe accounts; and there are Precepts for this abundant in the Word of God.

(2.) *BUT this muſt be, with an entire reſpect to the Glory of God.* God hath in his infinite Wiſdom connected his own Glory and Man's Salvation, in an entire ſubordination; and therefore we may not ſeperate theſe: But in ſeeking our Bleſſedneſs, we muſt ſtudy how he may be glorifyed in it. We ought therefore willingly to part with all our temporary Intereſts when the Glory of God requires it; and we ought therefore inſatiably to purſue our Eternal Salvation; becauſe elſe, we ſhall not actually glorify him.

(3.) *HENCE we are to purſue our own Good in no other way but ſuch wherein God may be glorified.* In all our outward Concerns we muſt keep cloſe to the Rules of Righteouſneſs and Honeſty, and not part one hairs breadth from them, tho' it were to gain all the Wealth and Grandeur in the World, and count every thing ill gotten, in obtaining whereof, we give occaſion that the Name of God be evil-ſpoken of. And in ſeeking our own Salvation, we muſt comply with that Method which God hath in Infinite Wiſdom laid out for the advancement of the Glory of his Grace; and accordingly to renounce our own righteouſneſs, our own worthineſs, our own ſtrength of free-will, and come to him for the Waters of Life, without Money, without Price, *Iſai.* 55. 1. And be willing to be nothing in our ſelves, that he may be all in all.

3. *THIS regular ſelf-love, is the Rule of our loving our Neighbour.* As our Love ought not to center in our ſelves, but to extend to others, ſo in our application of it, we ought to take our meaſures from our ſelf-love, to regulate us in our love to others. And this ought ſpecially to extend to all that are capable of the ſame Rule & Happineſs with our ſelves. But for a more clear diſcovery of this Rule, let us obſerve,

1. *THERE are diverſe Degrees of Neighbourhood.* The Word Neighbour is very comprehenſive; it comprehends in it all Mankind, with whom we may have any civil Commerce; and ſo the greateſt Strangers, and the worſt of Men. And it involves all the ſeveral Relations, Natural, Civil and Religious that Men may

may bear each to other. So that in this respect, some may be our nearer Neighbours than others. A Brother is nearer than a Stranger, &c.

2. *THAT hence there do necessarily flow diverse degrees of this Love.* That we are to Love all equally alike, is in vain asserted by some, and flows from the ignorance of the Relations which God hath fixed among Men; unto which he hath annexed those special Duties, which are to be discharged by a special Love one to another. There are some to whom we owe only a love of Benevolence, which commands our Beneficence: but others deserve our love of Complacency. Hence that in Psal. 16. 3. *But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent in whom is all my delight.* There are some whom we ought to be more concerned for than others. Here,

(1.) *EVERY Man owes the first & principal of this Love to himself.* Every Man is his own next Neighbour. The Rule laid down doth not require a parity, but only a similitude. I owe Charity to others, but it must begin at home. I may not suffer my self to starve, to keep another alive. I ought to do all I can for the Salvation of others, but my first care is the Salvation of my own Soul, and if others will perish, I must see to save my self.

(2.) *YET it is the same Love for kind, that a Man owes to himself and to his Neighbour:* And that in all respects. Tho' there is a difference in the extensiveness, yet they are not two sorts of Love, but one. And here,

[1.] *HE ought to Love his Neighbour for God;* i.e. in Obedience to God, and that he may therein honour God. And therefore whatsoever unloveliness he may see in him, or provocation given to engage his hatred against him, yet Love to God and respect to his Glory should preponderate. Hence our Saviour urgeth his Exhortation, Mat. 5. 44, 45. *But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, & pray for them which despitefully use & persecute you: That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*

[2.] *HE ought to desire & endeavour the same good for his Neighbour, which he doth for himself.* He should seek his Neighbours outward Prosperity, and rejoyce in it, and mourn with him in his Adversity, Rom. 12. 15. *Rejoyce with them that do rejoyce, and weep with them that weep.* And he should long for and endeavour, as far as in him lies, in his station, the Spiritual Good and Salvation of his Neighbour, *Rom.* 10. 1. 9. 1, 2. He should be thankful to God for any tokens of his kindness to another, and not malign him for it.

[3.] *HE ought to do all this with the same Sincerity.* It is the direction given, Rom. 12. 9. *Let love be without dissimulation: abhor that which is evil.* His Love to his Neighbour must not be outside and Complemental, but inward and Cordial. For it is a duty that he firstly owes to God, who requires the Heart in all, and searcheth the Hearts of all, and cannot but be displeased if he sees us Hypocritical in any part of our Obedience.

Use. I. *WE may hence learn the Unreasonableness of Sin, in that it is contradictory to the Rule of Love.* God hath required nothing in his Law, but Love; and shall any be so bruitish as to reject such a Law, which is so suited to the natural inclination of the reasonable Creature? Let this thought then make Sin evil and hateful to us, in that it destroys the most noble Affection in us, and must needs in that very regard make us miserable.

Use. II. *LET this serve to commend the Law of God unto us for our Love.* And certainly that which hath nothing but Love in it deserves to be Loved by us. And well might *David* exclaim, Psal. 119. 97. *O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.* And let this encourage us in a cheerful Obedience to the Law, to consider the sweetness of it; for such is Love, and all that affords help to it. The Psalmist had such a resentment when he said, Psal. 19. 10. *More to be desired are they then gold, yea, then much fine gold: sweeter also than honey, and the honeycomb.* Here we are pointed to the best Objects of our Love, and to the best Rules both for the obtaining, exciting, and exercising of it, and let it encourage us to consider, that if we thus Love God and our Neighbour, it will render our present Life very pleasant, and bring us at length to dwell in the fulness of the Love of God for ever.

[April 8. 1701.]

SERMON *CLIII.*

Question XLIII.

WHAT is the Preface of the Ten Commandments?

Answer.

THE Preface of the Ten Commandments is in these Words, *I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, out of the House of Bondage.*

Question XLIV.

WHAT doth the Preface of the Ten Commandments teach us?

ANSWER.

THE Preface of the Ten Commandments, teacheth us, that becauſe God is the Lord, and our God, and Redeemer, therefore we are bound to keep all his Commandments.

WE before obſerved, that the Law Moral, which in the firſt Inſcription of it on Man's Heart, may properly in regard of that Inſcription be called the Law of Nature, being every way adapted to Man's Nature, as it was Sanctified, by the Image of God, which it was enſtamped withal, having that Inſcription very much blurred and defaced by Sin, was again revived by God, in his Covenant Tranſaction with his People Iſrael, partly by word of Mouth, in that ſolemn Tranſaction at Mount Sinai, partly by writing it on two Tables of Stone, in which Proclamation, as he appeared with terrible Majeſty, in fire and ſmoak, in lightnings and thunders, putting a Dread, not only on the People, but *Moſes* himſelf; as we are told, *Heb.* 12.18,19, 21. Thereby diſplaying his Holineſs, and righteous Severity, againſt all that ſhould be found guilty of the breach of that Law, that he might convince them of their miſerable State by Nature, and abſolute need of a Propitiation, ſo to prepare them to entertain the ceremonial Law, in which, under Shadows and Types, he diſcovered to them the way of their Reconciliation; ſo to prevent their Deſpair, and nouriſh Hope in them, he ſaw meet to introduce the Precepts themſelves, with a gracious Preface, thereby inſinuating what forceable and indiſſoluble Obligations they lay under, to yield Obedience to that Law, giving them to underſtand, that it was an Eternal Rule for Man, and that they were ſo far from being diſcharged from Duty in reference to it, by the introduction of a new Covenant, that there were new and potent Engagements laid on them thereby to ſtudy Conformity to it. This Preface therefore contains in it, the Arguments with which God ſaw meet to enforce his Commands on his People, that they might therein be convinced, that it was a reaſonable Service that he required of them, therein treating them according to the Nature he had put into them. And though the language of it is ſuited to the peculiar Concerns of that People, yet the nature of the Arguments themſelves, is ſuch as is accommodable to all univerſally, with whom God ſees meet to tranſact in the way of the new Covenant, as will appear in the particular inveſtigation of them; of which we may now take a brief & diſtinct account, that ſo we may ſee that it is not a blind Obedience which God requires of us, and be put upon the more ſerious ſtudy of the Law of God, in order to our careful Obſervance of it, and that we may know that it is not a vain thing, but that it is our Life, and to neglect it is worſe then brutiſh. The Reaſons then, which God here makes uſe of to urge our Obedience are three, which are very ſuitably expreſt in our Catechiſm. The firſt is taken from the Conſideration of what he is in himſelf, *I am the Lord.* The ſecond, From what he is to his People, in the Covenant of Grace, *Thy God.* The laſt is taken from what he hath done for his peculiarly, or thoſe diſtinguiſhing Favours, whereof he hath made them to partake, *Which have brought thee*, &c. Let us then conſider what force there is in each of theſe to bind us unto firm and free Obedience.

I. *HE puts them on conſidering what he is in himſelf; I am the Lord.* The word is Jehovah; a Name which God hath incommunicably aſſumed to himſelf, or which is not any where in the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, tropically attributed to any other Being. A Name which Divines obſerve to be uſed to expreſs his Divine Perfections, which are eſſential to him, comprehending under it, both his Being and his Attributes, which indeed are nothing elſe but his Being, though our Underſtandings are incapable of conceiving of them, but under diſtinct Notions. And the force of the Argument lies here, viz. That becauſe God is Jehovah, therefore we are indiſpenſably bound to yield him Obedience in all that he ſees meet to command us. And that every one of his glorious Attributes gives force to his Precepts. Now this Argument reſpects all Mankind in general, and carries in it a reaſon, which the very light of Nature muſt ſubſcribe unto, from the Conviction which there is on all Men's Conſciences, that there is a God. Though the light of Revelation in which we have a more clear and diſtinct Diſcovery made to us of this God, in his Being and Perfections, adds to the force of the Reaſon, and renders our neglect of Obedience, the more aggravated and inexcuſeable. And the force of this may be more particularly obſerved, in the Conſideration of ſome of thoſe Attributes of his, which flow from his being Jehovah, and do thereupon forceably call for our Homage.

1. *GOD as he is Jehovah, hath a ſupream right of Government over his Creatures.* He who is the abſolute firſt Being, and gives Being to all other Beings, muſt of neceſſity be acknowledged to have the full diſpoſal of them for his own Glory, according to the Counſel of his Will. Here is his Kingdom made indiſputable; and ſo ſome underſtand that, Pſal. 29. 10. *The Lord ſitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord ſitteth King forever.* Viz. of his giving all things their Being; and refer it to *Gen.* 1. 2. Now the right of Government, reſpecting reaſonable Creatures, is firſtly Legiſlative, or preſcribing Laws to them, which being ſtamped with his Authority, do therein make it their Duty to obey them; and hence, though there is a reaſon of all moral Duties, in the Nature of the things themſelves ſo required, yet it is enough to command our Conſciences, to conſider that

they

they are Divine Edicts, though we do not see into the Conveniency and Equitableness of the things themselves. And this makes all positive Precepts equally obliging with those that are entirely Moral. God therefore often gives that only Reason of many Precepts, *I am the Lord.*

2. *GOD, as he is Jehovah, is infinitely Wise.* And therefore all His Works are done in Wisdom, *Psal.* 104. 24. Hence that, Psal. 147. 5. *Great is our Lord, and of great power; his understanding is infinite.* His Laws therefore are the Product of his unsearchable Wisdom, and so must needs be every way suitable for the Creature to whom they are given. On this Account they are said to make them wise, who are favoured with them, *Psal.* 19. 7. And the keeping of them is that which will recommend us for wise to others, *Deut.* 4. 6. Wisdom mainly appears in suiting of Means to their End, and the greater aptitude there is in them for this, the more doth the Wisdom appear in the appointing them. Now Man's great End is to glorify God, and therein to obtain his Favour, which is his Happiness, and for this the Law is accommodated, as, *Job.* 28. 28.

3. *GOD, as he is Jehovah, is Good, yea, Goodness itself.* It is essential to him. Hence that, Mat. 19. 17. *There is none good but one, that is God.* And this essential Goodness of his, makes it necessary that all his Works of Efficiency be good; and this hath respect unto his Commands. Hence that Argument is used in, Psal. 119. 68. *Thou art good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes.* This therefore is one of the Titles ascribed to the Law, *Rom.* 7. 12. And how else should it ever be enacted by a good God? And this is enough to satisfy us of the Goodness of it, because it hath him for its Author. It is good in itself, and good for us, or else he would never have prescribed it to us. With this God encourageth his People to careful Obedience to it, as that which was most profitable to them, *Mic.* 6. 8.

4. *GOD, as he is Jehovah, is most Holy.* And on this Account all his Commands are so. Holiness is God bound for his own Glory as his last End. And as this Attribute is made to shine in all his Works of Providence, (*Psal.* 145. 17.) so he hath displayed it in his Law. Hence that belongs to its Encomium, Psal. 19. 8, 9. *The Statutes of the Lord are right, rejoycing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure enlightning the eyes: The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.* And, *Rom.* 7. 12. The whole therefore is calculated for the direction of the reasonable Creature in the best way wherein it may glorify him: the Consideration whereof must needs be of great Force, to oblige such as know and believe that they were made for the Glory of God.

5. *GOD, as Jehovah, is Just.* His essential Justice is the rectitude of his Nature; from whence it follows, that he can do nothing but what is right in his Administrations, Psal. 145. 17. *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.* And hence though his Laws are Acts of Sovereignty; yet they are all very Just. For such is his Nature that he cannot will any thing but what is Just, and nothing more is requisite to vindicate the Equity of his Commands, but to consider, that they are willed by him. Now Justice is either commutative or distributive. As to that which is commutative, there is no room for that between him and the Creature. According to that challenge, Rom. 11. 36. *Or whom hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again.* Distributive consists in administring Rewards and Punishments to Men according to the Sanctions of the Law; and because he is Just, he will unfailingly thus do to Men, according as they are found, *Rom.* 2. 6. And this must needs be a powerful Motive to Obedience.

6. *GOD, as Jehovah, is Omniscient.* And this carries matter of great Awe in it, to make us very careful of keeping his Commandments; because on account of this, none can escape his righteous Judgments; in this regard, none of our Actions can be hidden from him; he cannot be mistaken or imposed on. Hence that, Heb. 4. 13. *Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked, and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.* Especially when we consider, that he improves this Omniscience of his, in a curious Observation of all the Actions and Courses of Men. According to his acknowledgment, Job 31. 4. *Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps?* And 1 Sam. 2. 3. *The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.* And still more, when we add to think, that he sees and observes our very Hearts and Thoughts, and all the retired movings of them, and not one of them escapes him, *Psal.* 139. 2, 3, 4. And he is a Judge of all these, Jer. 17. 10. *I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give to every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.*

7. *AS Jehovah, he is Omnipotent.* And this added to the former, gives them yet the greater force. He is not only Holy and Righteous, and so hath a Will to remunerate Men according to their Actions; and All-seeing, and so cannot be ignorant of, or mistaken about them, but he is also able to recompence Men, nor can he be impeded in the Execution of his Law. He is able to protect his Servants that obey him, against all that would harm them; and he is able to punish all that disobey him; and there are no created Powers that can rescue them out of his Hand. Hence that warning given, Psal. 50. 22. *Now consider this, ye that forget God, least I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver.* And that advice, Mat. 10. 28. *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* And when all these

things are put together, it will appear to be our greateſt Wiſdom to obey him, and the greateſt folly and madneſs to provoke him.

II. *HE adviſeth them what he is to his own People, who are related to him in the Covenant of Grace; Thy God.* This word, *thy*, is a term of approbation, and when God aſſumes it to himſelf in reſpect to Men, it is to expreſs and intimate Relation between him & them, which refers to ſome Covenant in which it is made. It cannot be intended of the Relation which is made by Creation, in which he is their Creator, and they are his Creatures; for ſo he is the God of all Second Beings, which equally derive their Original from him: But it properly points to a Covenant in which he hath taken them to be his People, and engaged himſelf to be their God. Thus it is expreſt, Exod. 6. 7. *And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God.* And if it be here enquired, from what Covenant God fetcheth this Argument; whether it lead us back to the Covenant of Works, or calls us to the conſideration of the Covenant of Grace? I anſwer, The moral Law was firſt given to Man, immediately upon his Creation, and then ratifyed as a Rule of Government in that Covenant which God plighted with Mankind in their firſt Parents; and there was a forceable engagement laid upon Man, to pay Obedience to God by that Covenant. For, beſides that it required of Man no more than what was his natural Duty to his Creator, and he could not without horrible unreaſonableneſs with-hold himſelf from, God alſo endowed him with both ability & diſpoſition for that Obedience, by imprinting his own Image upon him, and made Promiſe of a glorious Reward in caſe of his Obedience, and threatned him with a miſerable Death if he ſhould diſobey. But altho' God thus became his God in Covenant, and would have been his Portion for ever, if he had not revolted from him, yet Man's Apoſtaſy violated the bond of Friendſhip therein made, loſt all claim to God as his Inheritance, and inſtead of being his God, he became his Enemy: Tho' therefore Man's Duty abides, yet there is no encouragement left in that Covenant, nor can he ever by that recover this Title to God again; being totally fallen out from the Promiſe of it. Hence the Argument here uſed in this Preface refers to the Covenant of Grace, which God was pleaſed to open to Man upon his failure in the former; and with reſpect to that People, then immediately concerned, it aimed at the Covenant which God had plighted with *Abraham*, and renewed with *Iſaac* and *Jacob*; and hath pleaſed to continue to his Spiritual Iſrael as an Everlaſting Covenant, in the Subſtance of it, tho' there were ſome particular & typical Promiſes made to them. God therefore, when in the Scriptures he ſpeaks to his People of being their God, and aſſumes that Title to himſelf, always deſigns a Covenant which he hath taken ſome into ſince *Adam's* Fall; which Fall had cut off the primitive tenure, that Man held by the firſt: nor could Man ever more have challenged an intereſt in God by that. That the Covenant made with *Abraham* was a Covenant of Grace, *Paul* frequently aſſerts and proves in his Epiſtles. And God was *Iſrael's* God, becauſe he was *Abraham's* God. And this is that Covenant which is continued & extended to us Gentiles; who are on that account called *Abraham's* Children, Gal. 3. 7. *Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith, the ſame are the children of Abraham.* Rom. 4. 16. *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promiſe might be ſure to all the ſeed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that alſo which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.* Now from this Covenant, there is a mighty inducement to Obedience on all thoſe who are concerned in it. We are here to carry in mind, what hath before been evidenced, viz. That God requires Obedience to the Command under the Covenant of Grace, the Law being a Rule adapted to regulate Man in his ſerving of God. Now there cannot be greater engagements laid upon Man to this Obedience, than what are exhibited in this Covenant: So far is it from opening a door to Sin, and encouraging Licentiouſneſs, as ſome would pretend. And this may be conſidered under two Particulars,

1. *THE wonderful Kindneſs of God herein appearing, in that he is willing to take fallen Man again into Covenant with himſelf.* Certainly, great Kindneſſes are great engagements to Gratitude, but never was there a greater heard of then this, nor can we ever ſufficiently teſtify our Thankfulneſs to him for it. The Breach of the firſt Covenant was an infinite Provocation, it was unreaſonably ingrateful, a riſing up in Rebellion againſt the Lord that made us, a deſpiſing his Government, a contempt of his Favour, a conſpiracy with his Enemies againſt his Throne. Man by his Fall was become unprofitable, having loſt all his power of Obedience. Rom. 3. 12. *They are all gone out of the way, they are altogether become unprofitable; there is none that doth good, no not one.* His ſtrength was gone, nor could he do any thing but Sin againſt God, and diſhonour him. God ſtood in no need of him, or his Service. It was his Benignity at firſt that he would accept and reward any thing of his. He is bettered by nothing that Angels or Men can do in Obedience to him. Job 35. 6, 7. *If thou ſinneſt, what doeſt thou againſt him? or if thy tranſgreſſions be multiplied, what doeſt thou unto him? If thou be righteous, what giveſt thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand?* And he could have glorified his Juſtice in his ruin. He needed not to have been a loſer by him: His declarative Glory was ſecured, let things fall which way they would. His Glory and Man's Salvation were not inſeparably connected, becauſe Juſtice will have its triumph Eternally, in thoſe who ſhall ſuffer under the execution of the Sentence of Wrath that is denounced for Sin. And that God ſhould look

look upon such a Creature as Man hath made himself by Sin, with such a kind respect as to open a Covenant of Grace with him. Eternity will be too short to celebrate the Gratitude for it. Well may we say as he, Job 7. 17. *What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?* And what is it wherein we are to testify our Gratitude, but in obeying & serving him; as, Deut. 10. 12. *And now Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.* And can we do too much of this? Especially if we add,

2. *THE wonderful Encouragement afforded to new Obedience by this Covenant.* The Old Covenant indeed, affords matter of dread to Sinners, to terrify them from Sin, but it gives no encouragement to Obedience; it discovers no help to it, it offers no reward of Life for it: it maketh known no acceptance of it with God. All these things are out of doors as to that. But in the New Covenant there is all that may serve to animate it. In this is discovered, the way for us to escape the misery fallen upon us by the Curse of the Law, by which we are detained as long as we are under that, *Gal.* 3. 10. In this is revealed to us the way of Salvation, and it offers us all direction to guide our Feet in the paths of Peace. It not only declares to us that there is Life to be had, but how we may obtain it, and opens to us a Treaty about it. This not only requires faithful Obedience of us, but also provides new Strength for us by which we may be enabled to run the way of God's Commands, *Isai.* 45. 24. This also hath provided for us the acceptance of our sincere, tho' imperfect Obedience, in and through Jesus Christ. It pities our Frailties, it covers our Infirmities, it accepts of our cordial Desires and Endeavours, and assures us, that God will not be strict to mark what is amiss in them, but affords forgiveness to us upon our renewed Repentance, *Psal.* 130. 3, 4. And it secures us a glorious Reward of our meanest Services done for God in uprightness, *Mat.* 10. 42. And can we withstand the force of such Engagements as these are?

III. *HE acquaints them with what he hath done for them, or those distinguishing Favours, which he had bestowed on them; Which brought thee out of the Land, &c.* It is taken from the consideration of those Benefits which God had bestowed on them: Which tho' in the Letter of them, they were appropriate to that People, yet in the Spiritual intendment of them, extend to all that stand related to God in the New Covenant. Here let us observe,

1. *THAT all the Good which God doth for Fallen Man, is an Obligation on him to Obedience.* God owes him none: He hath forfeited all Blessings, and pulled down all Miseries on himself. Hence the common Goodness of God leads Men to Repentance, Rom. 2. 4. *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, & forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.* Every Mercy that we receive from God, challengeth our Love to him, and if we do Love him, that will bind us to keep his Commandments. It will therefore be an Article against Sinners, to aggravate their Guilt, that they have abused these Blessings of God. Hence that, in Act. 14. 17. *Nevertheless he left not himself without a witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food & gladness.* Rom. 1. 21.

2. *BUT that which is more peculiarly intended in these expressions, is the Spiritual Benefit which God hath provided for his People, in and by the Redemption wrought out for them by Christ; and applied to them by the Holy Spirit.* That outward favour which God shewed to Israel, in freeing them from Egyptian Bondage, was not only a real benefit in itself, and laid them under engagement to serve him, who had so delivered them, but it was also Typical. There was something more shadowed in it, than the Mercy itself. The Egyptian Servitude was a Type of our Spiritual Captivity under Sin and Satan, and the Curse of the Law: And their miraculous rescue from thence was a figure of our Deliverance from Devils, Hell, and Curse. *Moses* was a Type of Christ, who leads his People from all these; who brings them out with a mighty Arm, and carries them through the Wilderness of this World, and gives them safe conduct to, and finally full possession of the Heavenly Canaan. This Argument therefore is levelled for the Children of God, to bring them under special Engagements to glorify God by new Obedience, from the consideration of the great Work of Christ in their Conversion, in which their actual Deliverance was wrought about: And this naturally and necessarily calls them to look back to that Work of Redemption by which way was made for this Delivery, by the Death and Obedience of Christ; which carries the most forcible and commanding engagement of all in it. Yea, there are manifold Threads of which this Cord is made, and by which it is made strong, viz.

1. *THE Consideration of the necessity of our perishing for ever, if Christ had not thus redeemed us.* We were all involved in the Curse, going to endless Perdition: There was no Eye to pity us, nor any Hand in the Creation able to save us; our Redemption had ceased for ever. We must have perished without the least hope, as the fallen Angels do, if He had not stept in for our relief. Here lies the reason, &c. Job 33. 24. *Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom.*

2. *THE great things which he did and suffered for us, to the end, that he might so redeem us* Our Redemption was precious, it cost the Son of God, his Blood, his Life, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18, 19. He was made a Curse, that the Blessing

Bleſſing of the New Covenant might derive to us, *Gal.*3.13. And if we would know what this was, let us read and meditate on, 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. *Iſai.* 53. 4, &c. Certainly, there never was ſuch a Love heard of, or could have a parallel with this.

3. *THE great things which he hath purchaſed for us by this Redemption.* Certainly, the greater the Benefit is, the more potent is the Obligation. Chriſt did not come to procure for us earthly favours only, which had been little things in compariſon, but a Crown and a Kingdom, a Title to Life Eternal, an Inheritance among thoſe that are Sanctifyed. We are therefore told, Joh. 10. 27, 28. *My ſheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of my hand.*

4. *THE conſideration of the great end of his Redeeming us.* It was not only to bring us to Heaven, but that he might have a People that ſhould ſerve him. We are therefore ſaid to be redeemed from our vain Converſation, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. And this deſign is very frequently recorded in the Word of God. See, *Pſal.* 22. 30. *Luk.* 1. 74, 75. *Eph.* 5. 26, 27. *Tit.* 2. 14. So that we can in no other way anſwer the end of our being ſo ranſomed. The Apoſtle therefore ſo argues, 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. *What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy Ghoſt, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your ſpirit, which are God's.*

5. IF *we conſider, that our dying Saviour, left this as a thing that he required to be a pledge or token of our Love to him, for all the Love which he hath ſhewn to us, in doing and dying for us.* This therefore is put into his laſt Charge given to his Diſciples when he was about to leave them, Joh. 14. 15. *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

Use. I. *LEARN hence, how much their Sin is aggravated who live under the Diſpenſation of the Covenant of Grace.* Becauſe theſe break the ſtrongeſt bonds of Love. Well might our Saviour ſay, as in, Joh. 15. 22. *If I had not come, and ſpoken unto them, they had not had ſin: but now they have no cloke for their ſin.* How directly then do they contradict the deſign of the New Covenant, who ſay, let us Sin, that Grace may abound?

Use. II. *LET this then inſtruct us, with what Arguments to quicken our ſelves to Duty, and to reſiſt the Temptations to Sin.* If we think to fetch them from the Covenant of Works, we delude our ſelves. There is no Promiſe there to relieve us; there is no Threatning there kindly to excite us, ſince the Menaces of that, tend directly to drive us to deſpair. But if we would be faithful to God, and chearfully ſerve him in new Obedience, let us ſecure an Intereſt in the New Covenant, and in God through it: And then let us be ever entertaining our Thoughts with the ſtupendous Benefits that we are made Owners of by it: Which will make the hardeſt Duty eaſy, and the moſt Self-denying Service for him delectable unto us.

[May 6. 1701.]

SERMON *CLIV.*

Question XLV.

WHICH is the Firſt Commandment?

Answer.

THE Firſt Commandment is, *Thou ſhalt have no other God's before Me.*

IT hath been formerly obſerved, that beſides the Diſtribution given of the Moral Law into Ten Commands, unto which, as to ſo many ſeveral and diſtinct Heads, all moral Duties are to be reduced; this Law was alſo written upon Two Tables, which leads us to a more narrow Diſtribution of theſe Duties, pointed to by God himſelf, in his ſo writing of them. And this alſo was taken notice of, to direct us to the next and immediate Objects of that Love which is required in the Law, and is to influence our whole Obedience to it, viz. God and our Neighbour; which our Saviour Chriſt manifeſtly directs us to, in *Mat.*22.37, 38. So that by the Conſideration of the matter contained in theſe Precepts, we are led by the hand to conclude, that the Four Firſt of theſe did conſtitute the Firſt Table, and the Six latter the Second. As to the *Popiſh* and *Lutheran* Diſtribution, allowing but Three to the Firſt Table, putting the Firſt & Second in one, and making Seven in the Second Table, by dividing the Tenth into two, that ſo they may retain the number of Ten, the vanity and ſinfulneſs of this will appear, in the after Conſideration of them. The former of theſe Tables preſcribes to us the Duties of Worſhip to God, and the latter thoſe of Charity to our Neighbour; and each of theſe Precepts contains a diſtinct Topick under it; as alſo may be made manifeſt.

NOW, in as much as God, is himſelf the beſt Object, and alſo the laſt End of all our Obedience, even of our Love to our Neighbour, whom we cannot Love aright, unleſs it be in order to God, and for his ſake. It is therefore fitting that thoſe Commands which reſpect the Worſhip of God, ſhould occupy the firſt Place, and conſtitute the Firſt Table. Which Worſhip alſo comes under diverſe Conſiderations,

Considerations, and accordingly affords matter for distinct Commands: Which God hath seen meet to rank under Four Heads; which we are to take a distinct Account of. The Logical Distribution of these is variously assigned by Divines, which I shall not here Inquire into, but may take up with one; which may help us in assigning to each of these its proper Subject.

IN the Worship of God then, there are two things to be observed, viz. the kinds of it, which are directed to in the First & Second Command: And the manner of performing it, which is regulated in the Third & Fourth. As to the kinds of Worship they are two, viz. Natural and Instituted; the one of which flows, and is to be argued from the very Being and Nature of God, and directed according to that Nature of his: The other depends on Revelation, and is regulated by positive Precepts. And accordingly, the one is perpetual and unchangeable, the other variable, and hath admitted of divers Changes since the beginning. The former lyeth in common, as a Duty incumbent on all Mankind; the other becomes a Duty only to such to whom God is pleased to make it known. The former of these is the thing aimed at in the First Command, the latter in the Second. And to make but one Command of these two, is to confound things together, that ought to be separated in our Consideration. And the shuffling of them together by some, was the better to hide their Idolatrous Worshipping of Pictures and Images. Natural Worship, here properly challengeth the first Place, because that which is Instituted depends upon it, and is argued and enforced from it. And indeed, this Natural Worship of God, hath in it the Foundation of all Obedience, and gives force to every Command in both Tables; and therefore upon the account of its universal Influence, it most Methodically comes here to be considered.

AND before we proceed further, let this be in general observed, that every Command is both Directive and Cautionary; it is both a Rule to direct unto Duty, and a Hedge to keep us within the compass of Duty, that we may not transgress. Hence, as we before took notice, there is in every Precept something Required, & something Prohibited; something Affirmative, and something Negative. And it is very useful, in laying open the Rules of Religion, which are more peculiarly Practical, to point out the Sands and Shelves, as well as the Land-marks: To shew Men, as what they ought to do, so what they ought to avoid. And because the primary End of every Command, is Directive, the Affirmative, or what is to be done, is first to be considered. Which leads us to,

Question XLVI.

WHAT is required in the First Commandment?

Answer.

THE First Commandment requireth us to know and acknowledge the only true God to be our God, and to Worship and Glorify him accordingly.

THIS is that which we call *Natural Worship*. And there are two Reasons for which more especially it may be called *Natural*, viz.

1. *BECAUSE the Natural Relation which there is between God and Man, plainly dictate it to us.* There are such Relations between God and the Reasonable Creatures, as speak it Man's indispensable Duty to Worship him after such a manner. As he is a Creature, he must needs owe all that he is and hath to the Service of God his Creator; for if God be the first Cause, he must be the last End of the Second Beings. This therefore is pressed as an Argument to invite all to serve him, Psal. 100. 3. *Know ye that the Lord he is God, it is he that hath made us, and not we our selves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.* As he is the Preserver of their Beings so made, and they owe the continuance of their Being, and all the Supplies which render it comfortable to them, to his Conservation, so they can owe their Service to no other but him; and it must needs be due to him. Hence that, Psal. 66. 8, 9. *O bless our God ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard. Which holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.* As he is the Lord and Governour of all his Creatures, and this his Right is founded in the former, so they must needs owe Subjection to him: And as Reasonable Creatures are in Subjection to his special Government, so they owe him a Reasonable Service, Rom. 12. 1. *I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.* In which they are to pay to him all the tribute of Glorifying him, in all his declared Perfections, in which this Worship is concerned; as will appear in the Sequel. Hence God himself so argues, Mal. 1. 6. *A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear?*

2. *BECAUSE the Light of Nature clearly teacheth Man this Worship.* That reason which God put into the Nature of Man at first, and which goes into his Definition, viz. that he is a Reasonable Creature, instructs him in this Duty, and all the Parts of it. This carries Conviction in it, both that there is a God, and that he is the Creator and Governour of all things; and therefore to be Worshipped. And this leaves all Men inexcusable, when they deny or with-hold from him this Worship, *Rom.* 1. 19, 20. And tho' Man's Apostasy hath greatly beclouded his Reason, and the exercise of it upon this account, yet those

Principles are rooted in him, and cannot be totally obliterated. This therefore is said to leave all Men without excuse, *Rom.* 1. 21.

NOW our Catechism sums up all *Natural Worship* under three Heads, viz. 1. *To Know God.* 2. *To Acknowledge him the only True God to be Our God.* 3. *To Worship and Glorify him accordingly.* In which we have both the Worship it self, and the Ground of it laid open to our Consideration. A brief distinct Explication of which may here suffice.

1. *THIS Command requires us to Know God.* And here is laid the Foundation of our right Worshipping of him as such. The Psalmist refers all true Worship hither, Psal 9. 10. *And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee.* For except we know him, it is impossible that we should Worship him. The Apostle taxeth the *Athenians* with Superstition in this regard, *Acts* 17. 22, 23. The Understanding, Will, Affections, and the whole Man are to be employed in Natural Worship; for we owe our all to God, and are to glorify him with all, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. And tho' the Word *Know*, be sometimes used in a more lax sense, to comprehend all, yet here I shall look upon it as restrained to the Understanding, which must necessarily be employed in all true Worship, Psal. 47. 7. *God is the king of all the earth, sing ye praises with understanding.* Now in this Knowledge there are two Things comprehended, and requisite for our Obedience to this Precept, viz. 1. *The Assent of the Understanding upon Conviction, to the Truth of a thing.* 2. *The Apprehension in the Understanding by which it understands the Nature of the thing.* For we can know a thing no further than we conceive of the Nature of it. Both these then are to be enquired after, as belonging to the duty of Natural Worship.

1. *WE must know that God is.* The Faith of this is declared to be absolutely needful to our coming to God in the way of Worship, *Heb.* 11. 6. This Principle is the Foundation and Corner Stone of all Religion. The very *Pagan* Religion was grounded on this Conclusion, viz. that if there be a God, there is a Worship due to him: And because they were perswaded of that, they engaged in this. And truly, all Theological Obedience is enforced on Men's Minds by this, that there is a Divine Command for it, that the Precept enjoining of it, derives from the Authority of God himself. Now his Authority cannot be confessed, if his Being be doubted of. These are therefore put together, in Heb. 11. 6. *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* Atheists must needs be Men of no Religion; they can acknowledge no Rule of Divinity, nor imbrace any Theological Principles. Knowing and serving of God must be inseparably connected so far, that without the former, there cannot be the latter. Now the first Principle in Religion must be, that there is a God; to which the Man is to give his rational Assent: And that must be from such Evidence as commands the credit of the Understanding. For an humane Understanding doth not assent to a thing that is true, meerly because it is in it self so, but because it is enlightened to discern the Truth of it; and therefore according to the force of this Evidence in it, proportionable is the Assent, which sometimes only amounts to an Opinion, sometimes to a certainly, which latter is here to be considered. Hence we must fortify our Understandings with all those Arguments, by which this Principle is established in the Hearts and Consciences of Men, and trample upon all those Sophisms that are brought by Men's corrupt Reasonings to enervate them: and the rather because of the addictedness of fallen Man's heart to Atheism, as Psal. 14. 1. *The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God: they are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doth good.*

2. *WE must know who this God is.* And indeed, the former cannot be without this; for these two are so inseperably connected in the notion of them, that the one cannot consist in the humane Understanding without the other. For, to the belief of the Being of a thing, I must needs have some Idea in my mind of the thing believed to be, or else I believe, I know not what, which is ridiculous. And for this reason it is not a little debated among Logicians, in what Order true method requires these Questions to be handled, viz. Whether the thing be; and what the thing is? Nor indeed, can a thing be really proved to be, without the consideration of the Nature and Properties of it. For it is not meerly the Name that is inquired about, but the thing indigitated by that Name. For Names are only used to express things. Here let us observe, that a thorough & perfect Knowledge of God, is too big for the grasp of a created Understanding; so Infinite and Incomprehensible is He in his Being & Perfections. Hence that in, Job 26. 14. *Lo, these are part of his ways, but how little a portion is heard of him?* And Chap 37. 23. *Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out.* Yet such a Knowledge of God as he hath been pleased to reveal of himself, in his Word and Works, is to be sought and imbraced, by all that would Worship him acceptably. And they that do not thus know him, are declared to be miserable, 2 *Thess.* 1. 9. For Men to profess themselves to believe that there is a God, and withal to take up such Conceptions of him, as are altogether improper to such a Being, is Ignorance, and the root of Idolatry and Atheism. And it is certain, that according to the Opinion that we entertain of God in our Thoughts, such will be the Worship that we offer to him. If we make an Idol of him, we shall treat him as such in all our Services. If we have mean and ignoble Conceptions about his Being and Attributes, our Carriage towards him will be irreverend, and no ways becoming his Majesty. Whereas, when we have suitable Apprehensions

prehenſion of his Glorious Attributes, this will fill us with an holy awe and reverence of him. Yea, the very reaſon of our Worſhipping him lieth in this Conſideration, of what a manner of God he is. Now, it is God in his back parts who is the Object of this Knowledge: Of which we took a diſtinct Account in the beginning of the Catechiſm. Summarily, theſe are made known to us in his Sufficiency, and in his Efficiency, in his Attributes, and in his Works, in which theſe do ſhine forth convincingly. We ſhould read his Word with Faith, and eye what a God he exhibits himſelf there to be. And we ſhould ponder the great Works of Creation and Providence, and read in theſe Effects what diſplays are therein made of the Cauſe of them, and from thence argue our ſelves into Satisfaction, what a God he muſt needs be, who is the Author of them. Rom. 1. 20. *For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.* We muſt thus ſee, and be able Satisfactorily to prove to our ſelves, that he is Almighty, Eternal, Infinite, Omnipreſent, moſt Wiſe, moſt Holy, moſt Juſt, &c. For in theſe lies the reaſon of our Worſhipping him; and no little part of our Worſhip conſiſts in our aſcribing of theſe to him. And from this we may conclude, that one great Duty appertaining to this Command, conſiſts in ſolemn and frequent Meditation of God: That by the Contemplation of his Glory, we may be the more raiſed to our Devotional Worſhipping of him. Hence that, Pſal. 104. 34. *My meditation of him ſhall be ſweet: I will be glad in the Lord.* Nor are we to reſt ſatisfyed in any meaſures of this Knowledge that we have already obtained, but preſs induſtriouſly after more, till we come to know as we are known.

II. *THIS Command requires us to acknowledge the only True God, to be our God.* The acknowledging a thing, contains ſomething more in it, than the bear knowing of it. This properly refers to the Underſtanding, and is very needful in order to that; but that reacheth to the Will and Affections and the whole Man. For ſuch is all Obedience. So that the former Knowledge is no farther to be referred to Obedience, than as it helps to this Acknowledgement; for the uſe of that was to enlighten the whole Man to this Acknowledgement, and this is manifeſtly contained in the Precept; for the Hebrew is, *there ſhall not be to thee other Gods.* Whereas ſuch Acknowledgement is eſſential to our having him a God to us. For the more diſtinct laying open of this, we may conſider both the Nature of this Acknowledgement, and the Things to be acknowledged.

1. *TOUCHING the Nature of this Acknowledgement:* There are Three Things contained in it, or there are Three ways in which God is to be acknowledged by us.

1. *WE are to acknowledge him in our Hearts.* This is the firſt and principal, and without it, any other is but vain and Hypocritical. This therefore is the great thing which God requires of us, Prov. 23. 26. *My ſon give me thine Heart, and let thine eyes obſerve my ways.* And indeed, this cordial Acknowledgment of him, is the root and ſpring of all true Obedience. This is the firſt Qualification of our Divine Love, *Mat.* 22. 37. Thus the Pſalmiſt engageth, Pſal. 9. 1. *I will praiſe thee, O Lord, with my whole heart.* And this principally points to the Will and Affections, which are to be employed in it; when theſe are entirely ſet upon God: Which how it is to be done will afterwards be conſidered.

2. *WE are to acknowledge him with our Tongues.* Though our Acknowledgement muſt begin at the Heart, yet it muſt not reſt there, but proceed further. The Heart and the Tongue muſt go together in this Affair; *Rom.* 10. 10. We are not to be aſhamed of our God, or ſuppreſs our Religion, but to make open Confeſſion of him, and his Service. This was one main end for which Man's Tongue was given him; and for that reaſon is *David* ſuppoſed to call it his glory, which he calls upon to its Works, when he had gotten his Heart fixed, *Pſal.* 57. 7, 8. And if the Heart be right, the Tongue will follow. *Pſal.* 45. 1.

3. *WE are to acknowledge him in our whole Lives.* There is a practical, as well as an Heart and Lip Acknowledgement due to God; by which we are to prove the Sincerity of the former. And this is when we live as becomes thoſe, who profeſs themſelves to be the Servants of this God. When we are holy as he is; 1 *Pet.* 1. 15, 16. By this we ſhew forth his Praiſes or Vertues, *Chap.* 2. 9. And there muſt be all theſe three going together to make up a thorough and compleat Acknowledgement of God, according to this Precept.

2. *AS to the Things that are to be acknowledged:* They may be reduced to Three Particulars.

1. *WE muſt acknowledge but One God.* And this is a main Article belonging to this Command; for in it God challengeth of us that we own him to be God and no other. The Unity of the Deity, is one differencing Note between the true and falſe Religion, as 1 Cor. 8. 5, 6. *For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many and lords many.) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him, and one Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom are all things, and we by him.* We are required to have but one ultimate Object of our religious Worſhip, in whom it is to terminate, *Deut.* 6. 4. There can be but one firſt Cauſe, and ſo but one laſt End, and conſequently, we cannot lawfully pay Divine Honour to any more than one. To confeſs a plurality of Deities is to diſhonour that One God by taking from his Glory, and giving it elſewhere; which he hath told us he will not bear, *Iſai.* 42. 8. And our Saviour hath aſſured

us, Mat. 6. 24. *No man can ſerve two maſters: for either he will hate the one & love the other; or elſe he will hold to the one & deſpiſe the other. Ye cannot ſerve God and mammon.* For, though there is a Plurality of Divine Perſons in the Godhead, to whom Divine Honour is due, yet are they not diverſe and diſtinct Beings, but One. 1 Joh. 5. 7. *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the holy Ghoſt: and theſe three are one.* And ſo the Worſhip that is paid to each of them, muſt terminate in that One undivided Being, *Mat.* 4. 10. We muſt acknowledge, that there is no Being like to him, nor to be compared with him, but that his Being and Perfections do ſurpaſs all other; *Pſal.* 86. 8. and 89. 6. *Exod.* 15. 11. On this Account, we are to aſcribe the Divine incommunicable Attributes, to no other but to him, and thoſe that are called communicable, muſt be aſcribed to him, after another and more tranſcendent manner than to any other. There are ſome Attributes which ſo belong to him, as in no reſpect to agree with any ſecond Being; ſuch is the Name Jehovah, which is therefore no where in Scripture predicated of any ſecond Being. *Iſai.* 41. 8. And ſuch are all thoſe Attributes which appear from his Being, conſidered as the moſt abſolute firſt Being, as Infiniteneſs, Eternity, Omnipreſence, &c. There are other Perfections which are in him eminently, and are to be found by way of Analogy in the Creature, and we muſt be ſure to make an immenſe Difference between theſe conſidered as in him, and as in other Beings. Holineſs, Wiſdom, Goodneſs, &c. are in their meaſure to be found and acknowledged in ſome of his Creatures, but they infinitely differ as they are in him, and in them. They are but Rays and Faint-Beams that are in them, but he is the Fountain of them. They can be aſcribed to the Creature but in the Concrete, whereas they belong to him in the Abſtract. There is Goodneſs in the Creature; and yet our Saviour ſaith, Mat. 19. 17. *There is none good but one, that is God.* For he is Goodneſs itſelf. The Wiſdom of the Creature is but a Drop, but his is an Ocean, *Prov.* 8. 14. And ſo of the reſt. To aſcribe therefore any of theſe to any other abſtractively, is a complemental Blaſphemy.

2. *WE muſt acknowledge the True God.* We muſt be ſure that we pay our Acknowledgement to no other. It is not enough that we reſtrain our Judgment to one, and maintain that he who is God can be but one, but we muſt take heed that we be not miſtaken in this one; for if we confeſs but one, yet if this be any other beſides Jehovah, it is as truly a Breach of this Command, as if we pleaded for many. The firſt Command is mainly concerned about the Object of Worſhip, and it is of infinite Concern that we be right here. The Nature of Worſhip is, to teſtify our Dependance entire upon the Object, for all good and Bleſſedneſs; and there is none but he who is God, can be ſuch to us. Though there is but One true God, yet there are many that are called Gods, 1 *Cor.* 8. 5. And it is of infinite moment that we do not miſtake one of theſe for the true God. And that we be not miſguided here, it concerns us, not only to entertain a general Notion of a God, but be ſure that all the Properties and Perfections of a Deity be in him whom we adore. *Paul* could ſay, 2 Tim. 1. 12. *For the which cauſe, I alſo ſuffer theſe things: nevertheleſs I am not aſhamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am perſwaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him againſt that day.* And let us be able to ſay after him; or with the Church, Pſal. 48. ult. *For this God is our God for ever and ever, he will be our guide even unto death.* We muſt not frame to our ſelves an Idea of a God ſuited to our own carnal imaginations, and aſcribe to him only ſuch Properties as pleaſe us, but be able to ſay that he is Incomparable, and challenge all the Idol Worſhippers in the World; and ſay as the Church, Deut. 32. 31. *For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themſelves being judges.* Thus the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 115. 3, 4, *&c.* For this end, we muſt take a ſtrict account of our ſelves, what manner of God it is whom we have choſen to be to us for a God: That he is Infinite and Eternal in Being, Almighty in Power; a God Omnipreſent, and Omniſcient; Glorious in Holineſs and Juſtice; who loves Righteouſneſs, and will Reward it, hates Iniquity, and puniſheth it: The God who made Heaven, Earth and Seas; who giveth unto all Life and Breath, and all things; Infinitely Wiſe, and Good; before whom all the Nations are as the light duſt in the Ballance, and are counted by him as nothing, and leſs than nothing and vanity: A ſufficient Portion to all that truſt in him; and Everlaſting Burnings to his Adverſaries: This God, and no other, muſt be acknowledged by us, in Obedience to this Command.

[JUNE 3. 1701.]

SERMON CLV.

III. *WE muſt Acknowledge him to be Our God.* It is not enough that we aſcribe to him thoſe Properties & Perfections which are Divine, but we ought to ſee and make ſure, that this God is our God: to acknowledge the Relation that there is betwixt him and us. The Command requires, that he be a God to us, or that we have him for a God. And that implies Property, & points us to a Covenant between him and us; for if he is a God to us, it ſignifies that we are to him a People, and that comprehends the whole of the Covenant, *Exod.* 6. 7. It is not enough, to acknowledge that he is ours by the right of Creation, but that he is ſo by the right

right of a Promiſe; the latter of theſe can never fail, but the former may. For Property denotes a Priviledge, but God may ſo far ceaſe to be our God, as to become our Enemy; and that is not our advantage, but our miſery. Iſai. 63. 10. *But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought againſt them.* Now this acknowledgment is the Foundation of all true Worſhip, and we can in no wiſe elſe pay it to him. They that do not believe & confeſs him to be their own God, will never pay to him cordial and ſincere Service. Hence that, Deut. 6. 13. *Thou ſhalt fear the Lord thy God, and ſerve him, and ſhalt ſwear by his name.* And Pſal. 118. 28. *Thou art my God, I will praiſe thee; thou art my God, I will exalt thee.* How, or after what manner this Acknowledgment is to be paid to him, will be conſidered in the next. Here only in general we may obſerve, that there are two Things in which it is ſummarily comprehended.

1. *WE muſt acknowledge him to be our Rightful Lord and Sovereign, to whom we owe our ſelves, and all that we have and are.* We muſt confeſs him to be our King and Lawgiver, *Iſai.* 33. 22. And conſequently, that we owe all Allegiance to him; and that we are to fear and ſerve him, freely and cheerfully: That his Commands are to be grateful, and not grievous to us. We are to bring our ſelves under the ſtrongeſt Obligations of Obeence to him, and purſue them with the greateſt reſolution, *Pſal.* 119. 106. We are to acknowledge his Authority over us to be juſt and rightful, and our Obedience to be every way due to him, and that upon our own voluntary choice. That all his Commands are juſt and good, *Rom.* 7. 12. And conſequently, that our Obedience to them, is but our reaſonable Service, *Chap.* 12. 1. And this lets us underſtand, that the great reaſon of all our Obedience to every Precept of God, is grounded in the Firſt Command, becauſe if he be our God, he is our Lord, and we are his Subjects. His Will ought to be our Rule, and we are not to diſpute, but to practice Duties, becauſe we have profeſſed him to be our God, and our ſelves to be his People. It alſo tells us, that no Obedience performed to God can be acceptable to him, but what is voluntary from us. Forced Obedience argues, that we look not upon him, as our Lord, but as a Tyrant over us. That therefore is Predicted of his Subjects, Pſal. 110. 3. *Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holineſs from the womb of the morning thou haſt the dew of thy youth.*

2. *WE muſt alſo acknowledge him to be our alone Portion and Happineſs.* As, when he promiſeth to any to be their God, he engageth to be unto them, all that which they either do or can ſtand in need of, ſo when they profeſs him to be their God, they therein declare that they accept of him to be their all. So doth the Church, *Lam.* 3. 24. And this they are to do excluſively of all other Beings in the World, *Pſal.* 73. 25. That all their preſent Safety, and Comfort, & future Bleſſedneſs depends upon him, *Pſal.* 84. 11. They are to acquieſce in him, and to count that he is Portion enough, and they need to go no whether elſe, but that they are happy in him, *Pſal.* 16. 5, 6. God therefore reckoned that enough to quiet his People in hours of greateſt Diſtreſs, *Iſai.* 41. 10. Now the Command being an unchangeable Rule of Obedience, our Obligation thus to acknowledge him, can never ceaſe, becauſe, whenſoever we fail of ſo doing, we tranſgreſs this Command; but ſtill, the true Acknowledgement of this Relation, ſuppoſeth the Being of it, elſe we ſhall profeſs to a Falſhood. Our firſt Care therefore is to ſee and make ſure, that this God is our God, *Pſal.* 48. *ult.* We muſt have him to be ſo. And hence all that is requiſite to our obtaining this Intereſt in him, is a Duty lying upon us by this Command. And without a right Underſtanding of this, we muſt needs be at a Loſs about our Duty in this regard. Here therefore let theſe Concluſions be obſerved.

1. *THAT when God gave to Man his Law at firſt, he became his God by Covenant.* That the Law was at firſt given in the way of a Covenant, is a Truth that hath its Foundation in the Word of God. God therefore not only delivered it to Man Preceptively, requiring Obedience of him as a natural Duty, but he indented with him in a Promiſe of Life, as the Reward of his Obedience. He was practically to acknowledge God to be his Lord and Sovereign, and God promiſed upon this to be his Portion and Happineſs. And thus God was his God upon a Covenant Contract, and would have been ſo forever, upon his Compliance with his Obligation. And this Conſideration was, as the Reaſon of his Obedience, ſo the Encouragement he had to it.

2. *THAT Man in his Apoſtaſy renounced this Relation, whereupon God ceaſed to be his God by Covenant.* It is true, God's Relation to him as his Creator and Governour could not ceaſe, nor could his Duty to acknowledge him as ſuch ceaſe, nor could his Relation to that Covenant be hereby cut off, inaſmuch as there was another Sanction belonging to it, which doomed him to die upon his Diſobedience, which holds him faſt under the Curſe, and that according to Covenant; but that Relation to him as his God and Portion was hereby made void, and he loſt all his Claim to him as ſuch. He renounced God's Authority, and rebelled againſt his Government, and put himſelf under another Yoke. He hearkened to Satan, and ran himſelf upon the very Swords point of the Threatning, by doing of that individual thing, of which God gave him all aſſurance that he ſhould dye if he did it, *Gen.* 2. 17. with 3. 6. And he renounced God from being his Portion, and choſe lying vanities in his room: For therein the very nature of Sin, in regard of Man's Object, is comprehended; as is expreſſed

preſſed in Jer. 2. 13. *For my people have committed two evils: they have forſaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out ciſterns, broken ciſterns that can hold no water.*

3. *HENCE till this Relation be recovered, Man is not capable of obeying this Command.* The acknowledging him to be his God, muſt ſuppoſe him to be ſo; but he is not ſo to fallen Man, as long as he abides under the Curſe which Sin hath brought upon him. All ungodly Men are on this account ſaid to be Strangers, afar off, Enemies; and while they continue to be ſuch, they cannot ſerve God according to the tenour of this Precept. The very frame of the natural Man's Heart is ſuch as incapacitates him for this Obedience. He hath a rebellious Heart, and cannot be ſubject to the Law, by reaſon of Enmity, *Rom* 8. 7. His Heart is ſet upon Idols, and truſts in lying Vanities. How then ſhould he take God for his Portion? And thus it will be, till the diſtance between them is removed, and they are reconciled.

4. *GOD becomes our God again, only in the way of the New Covenant, which is in & through Chriſt.* This Relation ceaſed according to the tenour of the Firſt Covenant, and there was no proviſion made in that for the reſtoring of it again; but God hath opened a New Covenant, in which he treats with fallen Man, and ſets a good Hope before him. And this is the great deſign of the whole Word of God, to open a way in which Man may be again reſtored to God's favour, and enjoy him as his God and Portion; and this was provided in and by Jeſus Chriſt, who hath pulled down the Wall of Partition which Sin had ſet up, and made our Peace with God, *Eph.* 2. 14. And now, the way to obtain him to be our Covenant God, is by Jeſus Chriſt, Joh. 14. 6. *Jeſus ſaith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life.* God out of Chriſt is a conſuming Fire, *Heb.* 12.29. There is no coming at him but by this Mediator; but he is ready to receive all ſuch as come to him by Chriſt.

5. *HENCE by this Command it becomes our duty to ſeek and ſecure an Intereſt in God, by Chriſt.* We formerly obſerved, that our Obedience being founded in God's rightful Sovereignty, we are therefore under a moral Obligation to obey him in whatſoever he ſhall at any time reveal to us to be his Will. As alſo, that whatſoever is requiſite for the performing of Obedience to any of his Commands, is required of us by that Command. Now the Firſt Command poſitively requires us to have God to be our God; nor can this on any terms be diſpenſed withal, but the want of it is a total violation of the Precept. When God treated with Man in the firſt Covenant, he had to do with him immediately. He was his God Jehovah; and there needed no more. But when he treats with him in the New Covenant, he looks upon Man in his lapſed ſtate, as at a diſtance from him; and he can have to do with him only by a middle Perſon, who is Chriſt. So that, till he is his through Chriſt, he cannot ſerve him as ſo: and without this, he is in no poſture to keep this Command. It is our Duty to come unto God, but it muſt be in this way and no other, *Eph.* 1. 6. 3. 12.

6. *HENCE all the Duties required in the Goſpel in order to this, are inforced by the Authority of this Precept.* That the Goſpel is not delivered only in the way of an Offer, but by the Authority of God we are aſſured. For we are told, Joh. 1. 23. *He ſaid, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderneſs, Make ſtraight the way of the Lord, as ſaid the Prophet Eſaias.* Acts 17. 30. *And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men every where to repent.* And hence the Goſpel Covenant hath its Sanctions, as well as the firſt had. There are both Promiſes to compliance therewith, & Threatnings againſt the refuſal of compliance. And whence have theſe their Authority in the Moral Law, but from this Firſt Command? For they all center in our having God for our God. The deſign of the Goſpel is to tell us how we may come to have him ſo by Chriſt, and hath opened thoſe Terms upon which it is to be obtained: Which if we refuſe our Conformity unto, we therein manifeſtly declare that we diſclaim him, and will none of him. They therefore betray their ignorance, that cannot tell where to find a place for Faith in Chriſt, in the whole Duty of Man. But this may be particularly conſidered afterwards.

III. *THEY ought to Worſhip and Glorify Him accordingly.* i. e. We muſt accommodate all our Worſhip of him to his Nature as he is God, and to the Relation he ſtands in to us as our God. The light of Nature ſaith, that if there be a God, he is to be ſerved & glorifyed; and that no Service can be offered to him acceptably, but what is agreable to his Nature and Perfections. And doubtleſs, ſuch Conceptions as Men have of God, ſuch a manner of Worſhip they will pay to him. Thus our Saviour Chriſt argues from his being a Spirit, to ſpiritual and ſincere Worſhip, Joh. 4. 24. *God is a Spirit, and they that worſhip him, muſt worſhip him in ſpirit and in truth.* Thus *Paul* argueth from ſome of his Attributes, to his Worſhip, as to the kind or manner of it, Acts 17. 24, 25. *God that made the world, and all things that are therein, ſeeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, Neither is worſhipped with mens hands, as tho' he needeth any thing, ſeeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.* And there is great reaſon for it; for in our Worſhipping him, we are to pay him Divine Honour: And if we pay him any thing ſhort of that, let our pretences be never ſo ſpecious, we do not indeed Worſhip God, but diſhonour him. And from this Conſideration we may be led to take an Account of theſe more principal Things, wherein this Natural Worſhip conſiſts, and ought to be paid to him. In order to our right taking up whereof, let theſe Two general Rules be obſerved,

1. *THAT*

1. *THAT in our Worshipping of God, we can give nothing to him, but what is his own already.* We can contribute nothing to his Essential Glory, by all the Respects which we pay to him, or Service we do for him. He enjoys himself in the fulness of Infinite & Everlasting Perfection, to which nothing can be added by all the Worship of Angels or Men. Hence we find such Challenges made, Job 22. 2, 3, *Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him that thou makest thy ways perfect?* Rom. 11. 35. *Or who hath first given him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?* Nay all the Acknowledgment that we can give to him, is infinitely defective; for we cannot have a perfect knowledge of his innate Glory, *Job* 11. 7, *&c.* How then should we ascribe it to him? And it is admirable condescendency in the Great God, that he will accept of such a mutilous Service as our best is. It is then his declaritive Glory that we are concerned with, in which we are to ascribe to him, all those Perfections of his, which he hath made himself known to us by in his Word, and in his Works. We are therefore to take a view of these, and ascribe them unto him as his own, and properly belonging to him. So, Psal. 29. 1,2. *Give unto the Lord (O ye mighty) give unto the Lord glory & strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.* Where by giving, we are not to understand a giving any thing to him that was not his own before, but only an ascribing of these to him, as his right and due. *Deut.* 32.3. *Psal.* 68.34.

2. *THAT we owe unto God this Worship, with our whole Man.* Man consists of two essential constituant Parts, Soul and Body. We owe both of these unto God, and both are to be employed in our Worshipping of him. And tho' the Soul be firstly and principally concerned; According to Prov. 23. 26. *My son, give me thine heart.* Yet the other is not excluded; for he made both, and the Body was appointed to be the Soul's Organ, or Instrument in serving of him. God is to be Worshipped with our Hearts, and with our Lips, and with our Bodily Services: And as Bodily exercise profiteth little if alone, it is a dead Sacrifice without the Heart; whereas we owe to him a living one: So Heart Service alone, when the outward Man is concerned to take its part, is imperfect, & short of what God requires of us. We are therefore advised, 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20. *What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are Gods.* Accordingly, we find *David* engaging of his whole Man in this affair, *Psal.* 103. 1. 57. 7, 8. To this purpose is that laid down by the Apostle, in Rom. 10. 10. *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.* We are therefore bound to be ever in a readiness to confess him, in times that are most perillous, 1 *Pet.* 3. 15. These things premised, we may descend to take a more particular Account, of those Duties there required. And here I shall not go about to make a critical Distinction, between that Worship which is due to him under the consideration of his being God, and that which belongs to him considered as our God; in as much as these are inseparable in Practice. Particularly then,

I. *WE are to Worship God, by placing & exercising our Faith in him.* Faith is the first great Grace that belongs to Natural Worship, and it must run through all, and enliven it, else it will be vain. There is a general truth contained in that assertion, Heb. 11. 6. *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* It is not only true since the Apostasy, but it was so when Man stood in his Integrity. Faith considered as it hath God for its Object, and is accordingly called a Divine Faith, may be generally described, a Confidence grounded on Knowledge, whereby God is trusted in for Life. And with such a Faith Man was to Worship God before the Fall, and it is his Duty to do so still. Though there is a great difference in the way and manner of the exercise of it then and now. The ground whereof we may observe in two or three Things,

1. *THAT God alone is the ultimate Object of a Divine Faith.* It flows from his very Nature that he should be so, nor can any other be such an Object, but he who is God: for no other can do that for us, which such a Faith hath a Dependance upon. And that is given as the Reason why we should not trust in Idols, *Jer.* 10. 5. And why we ought to trust in God, *Isai.* 26. 4. The Expectation of this Faith from its Object is Life, that is all Good and Blessedness, and this is in God to confer upon us, *Psal.* 36. 9.

2. *THAT God was the next and immediate Object of Man's Faith, in his State of Integrity.* Not only was Man's Faith then to terminate on God, for so is ours also now, but it was to ascend directly unto him. Man then stood next to God, God was his in Covenant, held familiar fellowship with him, he needed none to bring him into his Presence. There was nothing then to obstruct his Trust in God, or discourage him from placing his entire Reliance upon him. God and he were Friends, and God had promised him Life, if he obeyed, *Rom.* 10. 5.

3. *THAT Sin hath cut Man off from this immediate Communion with God, and now there is no coming at him but by a Mediator.* And that there is one, is the great Consolation afforded us in the Gospel, 1 Tim. 2. 5. *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.* And we are to come to God by him, *Heb.* 7. 25. That therefore was

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the Complaint of him in his Diſtreſs, *Job.* 9. 32, 33. If it had not been for this Mediator, our Caſe had been deſperate, nor would it have been leſs than Deſtruction for us Sinners, to have truſted in God for Life.

4. *THAT hence Chriſt is the next and immediate Object of fallen Man's Faith.* God is the ultimate ſtill, but there is to be a Faith in him intermediate, in order to our truſting in God for Life and Good. And the Reaſon is, becauſe God comes to be our God again, only in this way. Hence Chriſt gave that direction to them, Joh. 14. 1. *Ye believe in God, believe alſo in me.* It is true, if Chriſt were not God, we might not believe in him. But Chriſt as God-Man-Mediator, is a middle Perſon, who interpoſeth between an Offended God, and Sinning Man, who hath ſatisfyed Juſtice, and purchaſed Life for us. And God hath required of us to believe on his Son, that we may live, becauſe the Diſpenſation of all is in his Hand, and he muſt be truſted in for it. And thus God will have the Perſon of Chriſt, who is his own Son, to have a Divine Honour paid unto him; according to *Joh.* 5. 22, 23. And on the account of this difference, the former is by way of diſtinction called Faith in God, & this latter Faith in Chriſt; not becauſe it is not Faith in God, but becauſe it nexily goes to Chriſt, & through him unto God. Now there are two Things to be conſidered in this Faith, viz. 1. *That we firmly believe God to be ſuch an Object as is thus to be truſted in and relied on.* 2. *That hereupon we place our whole recumbency on him as ſuch an one, for all the Good that we ſtand in need of, and practically make it appear that we ſo do.* The former of theſe was conſidered under our Acknowledging him as God; and this latter is the Application of that, in our Worſhipping and Glorifying of him accordingly. And here we conſider two Things, viz. 1. *How God was to be Worſhipped by the exerciſe of this Faith at firſt?* 2. *How fallen Man is to exerciſe this Faith in his Worſhipping of God?*

1. *HOW God was to be Worſhipped by the exerciſe of this Faith at the firſt?*

Anſ. IN General, *By a filucial Dependance on him for all Good.* And this follows from the Nature of God, and the Nature of Man compared together. It is a ſtanding Truth, which can never alter, that God is infinitely Good: He is Goodneſs itſelf, and the Fountain of all Good to the Creature. So that all Good is in him Originally, and muſt derive from him unto other Beings. And it is with reſpect to this, that Chriſt ſo ſaid, in Mat. 19. 17. *There is none good but one, that is God.* And it is no leſs true, that Man is by Nature a denegerate Creature: Nor hath Sin only made him to be ſo, tho' that hath increaſed his want, but he was ſo in his Creation, and ſtate of Integrity. Independency is a Divine Prerogative, and God cannot make an Independent Creature, it being a Contradiction. All that goodneſs which was in him, he received from God, and all that good whereby he may be made happy, muſt come from the ſame Hand. It was therefore Man's Duty from the firſt to acknowledge this Dependance, and accordingly to fetch in all the ſupply of this good from God, by the exerciſe of his Faith. *Pſal.* 62. 5, 6. And here it is ſuppoſed, that Man did believe that God is the Fountain of all Good, and the Creature can want nothing, but what there is an infinite Fulneſs of in him, able to outdo all our wants and cravings, *Eph.* 3. 20. And that this Goodneſs of his is Communicable: That he is not only All-ſufficient in himſelf, but alſo that he is the Efficient of all to his Creature; and there is a way of participation in this Good, according to the tenour of the Covenant into which Man was received. Accordingly this Faith was to apply itſelf nextly in two Things,

(1.) *IN an abſolute Choice of God, to be his alone Portion, and a compleat acquieſcence in him as ſuch.* He was to take God as his Inheritance, and account it enough for his compleat Bleſſedneſs to enjoy him. And this neceſſarily includes in it, an utter renouncing & rejecting all affiance in any other Object whatſoever, as being utterly inconſiſtent with ſuch a Choice. According to that, Pſal. 73. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I deſire beſides thee.* And this declares the difference between God's People and other Men, Pſal. 20. 7. *Some truſt in chariots; and ſome in horſes: but we will remember the Name of the Lord our God.* And in nothing more could Man at firſt have glorified God, than in making ſuch an abſolute, fixed, and firm choice of him: And this muſt be for all Good that we can need. And that comprehended in it, all that Man could poſſibly want, both for Soul and Body, for Time and Eternity; all Bodily Good, and all Spiritual Good; all Supplies and all Protection. This is comprehenſively expreſt, Pſal. 84. 11. *For the Lord God is a ſun & ſhield: the Lord will give grace & glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.*

(2.) *IN an entire Confidence in him, by reſting on his Promiſe, for the Enjoyment of this Good.* The ground of that Faith of recumbency is the Promiſe. For though Faith hath the power and ſufficiency of God, as the Foundation of its truſt in him, yet the immediate reaſon of its truſting in God, is the Promiſe which he hath made to Man to be his God; and according to the tenour of that Promiſe, ſo it is to act. Faith takes God at his Word. And God at firſt engaged to Man to be his Portion, if he kept cloſe to his Obedience to him: and it was his Duty to have believed in the Power, Goodneſs, Truth, and Fidelity of God to his Word, and accordingly to have kept cloſe to his Duty, confiding that he would be to him, as good as his Word. And doubtleſs it was a wound in this Faith of his, that was the firſt ſtep of his Apoſtaſy & Departure from God at the firſt. He doubted of God's Veracity, and ſo adventured to tranſgreſs his Command.

SERMON CLVI.

2. *HOW fallen Man is to exercise this Faith in his Worshipping of God?*

Ans. THAT God is the ultimate Object of our Faith still, hath been before observed; but that because Sin hath made a distance between him and us, *we cannot now Worship him acceptably, but by and through a Mediator, and therefore our Faith must derive its strength and activity in this way.* And here,

1. *WE are to exercise our Faith in Acknowledging the way in which he comes to be our God again*, viz. *of Free Grace.* And this is the Foundation of right Evangelical Worship. Except we believe him to be our God, we cannot rightly Worship him. Now we have no other ground for this Faith, but the Grace that is revealed in the New-Covenant. Herein only can sinful Men glorify God aright, when they ascribe to him the Glory of those Perfections, which shine forth in their recovery, from the misery under which they were fallen. And that which here peculiarly shines forth, is his rich Grace, Eph. 2. 8. *For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of your selves: it is the gift of God.* And if we do not resolve our Faith and Hope into this, we do not Worship him aright. For all the contrivance of the way in which we are saved, was to this design, Eph. 1. 6. *To the praise & glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*

2. *WE are to perform all Worship of him, in the way of the New Covenant*, i.e. *in and by a Mediator.* Our Faith must lay its hold on him, and by him we are to come unto God. We are therefore told, Eph. 3. 12. *And the law is not of faith: but, the man that doth them, shall live in them.* And here,

(1.) *WE are to exercise our Faith on Christ for all the Assistance by which we may perform acceptable Service to him.* We must come to him for all our Strength to do Duty aright. *Paul* tells us, Phil. 4. 13. *I can do all things through Christ which strengthneth me.* And Christ himself hath assured us, in Joh. 15. 5. *Without me ye can do nothing.* And that we may have his aid to carry us thro' our Duty, we must look up to him with an eye of Faith. For which reason he is set before us, as an Object for our trust on this account, *Isai.* 26. 3. *Ch.* 45. 24. And we are assured, in Chap. 40. ult. *But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint.*

(2.) *AND by this Faith we must depend on him for our Acceptance with God in our service.* As he must help us to do aright, so he must procure for us the entertainment of what we do, else it will not be of a sweet savour with God. Eph. 1. 6. *Wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.* There is great imperfection cleaving to all, even the best that we do, for which we must be rejected, were it not for him; but he covers all under his perfect Obedience. Our Prayers must be offered with his Incense, *Rev.* 8. 3.

(3.) IN sum, *Our whole Worship, in every part of it is to be done in his Name.* There are other Duties besides Faith belong to this Command, as will be presently considered: But if we would do them aright, we must have an eye and respect to Christ in them all, *Col.* 3. 17. And the reason is, because our Salvation, which we are, in subordination to God's Glory, to seek in all our serving of him, intirely depends on him, Act. 4. 12. *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*

II. *WE are to Worship God by an holy Fear of him.* So essential is this to Natural Worship, that the whole of it is frequently stiled by it, and called the *Fear of God*, because there is no Duty in it, that can be performed as it ought without the influence of it. There is indeed a slavish fear of God to which fallen Man is subjected, which is not so properly a Duty, as a Misery, which derives from the relation, which Sin hath contracted between God, and Sinners, viz. *Enemies.* And it is a great duty to seek a deliverance from this Spirit of Bondage, by seeking the removal of the Curse, which hath occasioned it, Rom. 8. 15. *For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear: but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.* But there is a natural fear of God, which is raised by an apprehension of his Glory and Greatness, and the vast distance that there is between him and us; which Fear was put into Man at first, and was sanctifyed in him; whereby he was fitted to pay a due subjection to God, as his Sovereign Lord and Lawgiver. This is that which is commonly called a Reverential Fear, because it procures an holy Reverence of God in our Hearts and Lives; and is abundantly pressed on us in the Word of God, Psal. 2. 11. *Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling.* Deut. 10. 12. *And now Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God.* *Psal.* 5. 7. On this account God is called the Fear of his People, *Gen.* 31. 53. *Psal.* 76. 11. Man lost the due reverence of God by Sin, and it degenerated into that which is Servile: He obliterated true Fear out of him, *Psal.* 36. 1. But it is put into us again by the Grace of God in Conversion. Hence that, Prov. 1. 7. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom & instruction.* And it is one of the Promises of the New Covenant, Jer. 32. 40. *And I will make an everlasting covenant with them,—I will put my fear in their hearts.*— This is that which we usually call a Filial or Child-like Fear, and it flows from the Spirit of Adoption, which teacheth us to carry it towards God as our Father. And the want of this is the cause of all the Atheism, Irreligion, and Wicked-

neſs among Men. See *Gen.* 20. 11. And there are two Things wherein this Fear of God doth eſpecially diſcover it ſelf.

1. *IN a Revcrential Reſpect which we bear toward him.* And it hath a double reſpect,

(1.) *TO his Glorious Majeſty.* When we view his Greatneſs, and our own littleneſs; when we contemplate his Infinite Perfections, his Incomprehenſible Immenſity, his Wonderful Omnipreſence, his Almighty Power, his Admirable Holineſs and Juſtice, his Supream Sovereignty, and Dominion over all Second Beings; it fills us with an holy Awe of him. Hence that, Exod. 15. 11. *Who is like unto thee, O Lord, amongſt the gods? who is like unto thee, glorious in holineſs, fearful in praiſes, doing wonders?* Jer. 10. 7. *Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain.* And God himſelf thus argues with Men, Jer. 5. 22. *Fear ye not me ſaith the Lord? will ye not tremble at my preſence?* This is that which ſhould make us to proſtrate our ſelves before him, lay our Crowns at his Feet, and pay him all ſubmiſſive deference in our Words and Carriages at all times.

(2.) *TO the Authority of all his Commands.* We are by this Fear to acknowledge him to be our Maſter, Mal. 1. 6. *If I be a maſter, where is my fear? ſaith the Lord of hoſts.* God hath laid us under the Obligation of Duty; and we are to look upon his Precepts, as coming from him with Sovereign Authority, and yield our ſelves voluntarily to the Authority of them; not daring to reſiſt it, or ſo much as call it in queſtion, or contend with him about the equity of them: much leſs may we dare to refuſe our Obedience, or ſay they are unjuſt. Hence Fearing him, and keeping his Commands are inſeparable, *Eccl.* 12. 13.

2. *IN an awful Dread of Offending him in any thing.* For tho' there is a deſperate fear of God's Judgments, ariſing from an impreſſion on Men's Conſciences, making them apprehenſive that they are under the Curſe and Condemnation of the Law, and putting them in a fearful expectation of the Execution, which drives them to horror and deſpair; which God's Children ought not to entertain, becauſe Chriſt hath delivered them from that danger: Yet there is an holy Fear of God's Judgments, which keeps his Children in awe in this World, and they cannot Worſhip him aright without it. Of this *David* ſpeaks, Pſal. 119. 120. *My fleſh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.* And *Job*, Chap. 31. 23. *For deſtruction from God was a terror to me, and by reaſon of his highneſs I could not endure.* And tho' there was more of terror attending it in the times of the Law, yet it is to be exerciſed with Faith and Love under the Goſpel. This ſtimulated *Paul* to his work, 2 Cor. 5. 11. *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we perſwade men.* And indeed if we Love God as a Father, it will make us afraid of offending him, leaſt we incur his Fatherly Diſpleaſure. And what other uſe have we to make of Evangelical Threatnings, but to make us fearful not to offend God in any thing, leaſt we expoſe our ſelves to his juſt diſpleaſure, and accordingly to be very careful of our ways. As he, Pſal. 39. 1. *I ſaid I will take heed to my ways, that I ſin not with my tongue.* And whenſoever we draw near to him to keep our diſtance.

III. *WE are to Worſhip him by Praying to him.* Not only is Prayer a Duty required of us by Divine Precept, but it truly belongs to Natural Worſhip, and is required of us by this Firſt Command. And the very light of Nature teacheth Men this Duty, Jonah 1. 5. *Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man to his god.* And the neglect of it is a Sin, which procures God's diſpleaſure againſt ſuch as are guilty of it. According to that, Jer. 10. 25. *Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not upon thy name.*

A diſtinct Conſideration of the Nature and Kinds of Prayer, belong to another Place, which follows afterwards, to which it may be Adjourned. Only here in general, it will appear to belong to Natural Worſhip, if we conſider the reaſon on which it is founded, which is our Natural Dependance upon God, as his Creatures. That Prayer is a Duty of Worſhip, and belongs to the Firſt Table, none can deny; becauſe in it we apply our ſelves to God in Chriſt, and therein pay our Acknowledgments to him as God, and expreſs our whole reliance upon him for all good. And that we ſhould thus depend on him, & addreſs our ſelves to him, his Glory, & our Neceſſity call for. As will appear if we conſider,

1. *THAT our Being, Preſervation, and whole Supply, intirely depends upon him.* So we are told, Act. 17. 28. *For in him we live, & move, and have our being.* ver. 25. *He giveth to all life, & breath, & all things.* Our both Natural and Spiritual Life are at his diſpoſe, *Pſal.* 84. 11. Whatever help we have by Second Cauſes, yet all are ordered by him, and no further avail, than as he pleaſeth.

2. *THAT hence we can have nothing but what he Beſtows upon us.* There is indeed an order of Means appointed to be uſed by us in Obedience to his Command, but the Succeſs is governed and determined by him, *Pſal.* 104. 27, *&c.* And without his Bleſſing upon our Endeavours, our greateſt Prudence and Diligence are in vain, *Pſal.* 127. *begin.*

3. *THAT he hath the Sovereign Liberty to Diſpoſe of all his Gifts and Bleſſings.* He is not bound to the Creature, but is a free giver. He oweth us nothing, but may do with his own as he ſees good. The beſt of Men cannot oblige him by any thing, *Rom.* 11. 35. And ſinful Man hath provoked him.

4. *GOD expects to be Called upon by us in order to our obtaining theſe Favours.* This is a way of Communion between him & them, Ezek. 36. 37. *Thus ſaith the Lord thy God, I will yet for this be inquired of by the houſe of Iſrael to do it for them.* And reaſon it ſelf calls for it, nor can we in any other way better

better declare our Dependance on him for all. Now to this right Worſhipping of God in Prayer, it is requiſite,

(1.) *THAT we profeſs our intire Dependance upon him.* That we have no where elſe to go, 2 *Chron.* 20. 12. Hereby we give him the Glory of his All-Efficiency. This therefore the Church profeſſeth, *Pſal.* 44. 3, *&c.*

(2.) *THAT we deny our own Worthineſs of any favour from him.* That all muſt flow from his free benignity. Yea, that we acknowledge our demerit of the contrary, and that we have nothing to rely upon, but his meer Mercy. Thus it becomes ſinful Men to addreſs him, Dan. 9. 8, 9. *O Lord, to us belongeth confuſion of face: to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, becauſe we have ſinned againſt thee. To the Lord our God belong mercies & forgiveneſſes, though we have rebelled againſt him.*

(3.) *THAT we ask all of him in the Name of Chriſt, and for his ſake.* Our Saviour directs his Diſciples to this way, as that which was like only to ſpeed, *Joh.* 14. 24, 26. We are to come to God through him, *Heb.* 7. 25.

(4.) *WE muſt reſolve to Knock at no other Door.* We muſt ſeek our help no where elſe. We muſt acknowledge all other Succours to be vain, *Pſal.* 60. 11. And accordingly reſolve that, let others do what they will, we will fix our entire reliance here, *Pſal.* 20. 7.

IV. *WE are to Worſhip God, by placing our Love wholly upon him, and hating of every thing that is contrary to him.* We owe all our Affections unto God, by the Obligation of the firſt Command. This Love indeed is to be exerted in our Obedience to all the reſt, but here is the root & riſe of it. The very light of Nature challengeth our beſt Love to be ſet upon God. For it is certain, that Goodneſs in the Object, is that which attracts our cloſing Affections after it; and hence the more Goodneſs there is in it, the more intenſely ought they to be let out upon it; whereas God is the chief Good, he is Goodneſs itſelf, there is none Good as he is, Mat. 19. 17. *There is none good but one, that is God.* We therefore then glorify him, when we love him above all; and to love any thing more than him, or in Co-ordination with him, is to diſhonour him; but when we uſe all proper Courſes to expreſs and teſtify our endeared Reſpect to him, as the moſt amiable Being, we then Worſhip him. His Goodneſs therefore is offered as an Argument to excite us, *Pſal.* 107. 1. And 136. 1. *O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever.* And becauſe Love to the Object, infers naturally an Hatred of whatſoever is contrary unto it, this alſo is a neceſſary ingredient of this Worſhip. Hence we have that Direction, Pſal. 97. 10. *Ye that love the Lord, hate evil.* And that Profeſſion, Pſal. 139. 21, 22. *Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with thoſe that riſe up againſt thee? I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies.*

NOW there are diverſe things wherein we are to ſhew forth this Love of him, that we may ſo glorify him.

1. *WE are to Love his Name.* It is promiſed, Pſal. 69. 36. *The ſeed alſo of his ſervants ſhall inherit it; and they that love his name ſhall dwell therein.* Now God's Name is ſometimes taken more largely, for all that whereby he diſcovers himſelf to us, and ſo it contains every particular now to be mentioned. Sometimes more limitedly, it points to his Divine Attributes, by which he declares who, or what manner of God he is. We ought then to contemplate theſe, ſuch as are mentioned in, Exod. 34. 6, 7. *And the Lord paſſed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs and truth, keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity, and tranſgreſſion and ſin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.* And the Conſideration of every one of them, ſhould engage our Hearts to him, and we ſhould take delight, in giving him the Honour of them. And God's Children may well thus love him for them, becauſe he is all this to them; which is their Happineſs, *Pſal.* 18. 1, 2.

2. *WE are to Love his Word and Ordinances.* And this is a genuine improvement of the former, becauſe in them he diſplays ſo much of his Perfection. By this the Pſalmiſt proves his Sincerity or Uprightneſs in his Appeal to God, Pſal. 26. 8. *Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy houſe, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.* And by his Preference of them before all other things; *Pſal.* 27. 4. In nothing doth God ſo communicate himſelf to his own, as in theſe Appointments of his; and if we love him, we ſhall love his Company, and ſo the means of having it.

3. *WE are to Love his Law.* By this *David* approved his ſincere Love of God, Pſal. 119. 97. *O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.* And what a Value he had for it, Pſal. 19. 10. *More to be deſired are they then gold, yea, then much fine gold: ſweeter alſo then honey, and the honey-comb.* And indeed, the Law is a diſcovery of God's Holineſs and Juſtice, ſo that if we love him, we muſt love that, *Rom.* 7. 12. And we have *David's* Reſolution, Pſal. 56. 10. *In God will I praiſe his word: in the Lord will I praiſe his word.* Now there are three things to be conſidered in the Law, for all of which we are to love it: The Precepts enjoining Duty and forbidding Sin. And we are to expreſs our Love by freely acknowledging the Goodneſs and Equity of them, *Pſal.* 19. 8. 33. 4. 119. 128. The Promiſes made to Obedience, which are great and precious, to which ſome apply but now cited *Pſal.* 56. 10. And in this regard he ſaith, Pſal. 19. 11. *In keeping of them there is great reward.* And the Threatnings againſt Diſobedience; theſe prejudice ungodly Men againſt his Law, but we are to love it for them too, becauſe therein he manifeſts his Holineſs, *Pſal.* 119. 119.

4. *WE are to Love his Providences.* By theſe God diſcovers himſelf to us, and in every of

them he is to be admired & adored. We are told, Psal. 145. 10. *All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints shall bless thee.* And 9. 16. And when we ascribe to him the Honour that is his due, from the Observation of all his doings in the World, we then Worship him. Thus we are exhorted, Psal. 66. 2, 3. *Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious. Say unto God, how terrible art thou in thy works?* Hence that, Psal. 86. 9, 10. *All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord, and shall glorify thy name. For thou art great and doest wondrous things; thou art God alone.* And 77. 13, 14.

V. *WE are to Worship God by placing our whole Hope on him.* And indeed, if our Faith trust in him, our Hope will wait upon him. This belongs to natural Worship. If we acknowledge him to be our God, we shall shew it by a dependance on him for all, which necessarily infers an Expectation of all from him. Hence we have the Psalmist chiding himself for the contrary, and calling upon his Soul to the Exercise of this, *Psal.* 42. 5. And again, *Psal.* 62. 5, 6. And there are three things in which this Hope is mainly concerned to glorify God.

1. *THAT we heartily recommend the whole disposal of all our Affairs into his Hands.* Thus in, *Psal.* 10. 14. 31. 5. We can trust him with them; we believe that he is our God, and that he knows what is best for us, and thereupon we make all over to him, assuring our selves that we shall be no losers by it. And this is from the Activity of Hope, but for which, we could never so do. And herein God is greatly glorified by us.

2. *THAT we expect all the good we want from him, and quiet our Souls in that Expectation.* We not only depend upon him, as the fountain of all Mercy and Good to us, but it silenceth all disquieting Turmoils in our Minds about it: we commend it to him, and now we are still, as, 1 *Sam.* 1. 18. Let what will come, we believe that this God is our God, and we are confident in it, *Psal.* 27. *begin.*

3. *IN this Expectation we comfort ourselves in waiting for him.* Let what Changes will come, be the face of Providence what God sees meet, let things look as black and dismal as may be supposed, yet we resolve we will look out and rejoyce in our Hope, *Hab.* 3. 17, 18. This *David* tells us that he did, *Psal.* 40. 1. And the Church concluded upon it to be good for any so to do, *Lam.* 3. 26. And this belongs to natural Worship, for it flows from our acknowledging him, to be our God. And it is established upon,

1. *HIS Almighty Power, or his All-sufficiency.* *Gen.* 17. 1. We look upon God as able to do for us beyond our Conceptions, *Eph.* 3. 20. That there is nothing too hard for him to do for us, nor any Powers that are able to withstand and hinder him in so doing; and hence this prevents our being discouraged by any thing that lies in the way, *Zech.* 4. 7.

2. *HIS all Working Providence.* This established the Churches Hope, *Psal.* 115. 3. And it is confirmed by the Observation of the mighty Works which he hath already done, beyond which, there can be nothing needed, for our help and succour; all of which are food to Faith, by which Hope is strengthned and established, *Psal.* 74. 12, *&c.*

3. *HIS Promise.* And here this Hope nourisheth it self; altho' it is satisfied by the Consideration of his Power and Providence. Faith takes God at his Word, and Hope hereupon grows confident, that having such a God freely engaged, he hath no need to fear or doubt, but that certainly he will be as good as his Word, Psal. 116. 10. *I believed, therefore have I spoken.*

4. *HIS Fidelity.* Though his Power helps us to rely upon him as our God, yet his Truth establisheth us on the Promise. If he had not purposed, he would not have engaged himself, and he cannot repent, or alter his Word, 1 *Thes.* 5. 24.

5. *HIS Wisdom.* Here also Hope is not a little confirmed. We acknowledge him the only wise God. Hence we believe, that he doth all by Counsel, and that satisfies us, Psal. 73. 24. *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel.* This satisfies us, that his way is the best way, and that he knows it tho' we are in the dark about it, and that his time is the best time; and this stops our precipitancy, *Isai.* 28. 16.

VI. *WE are to Worship him, by Patience under all his Afflictive Dispensations towards us.* There is not only active, but also passive Obedience, due to God from his People, in the right carriage of themselves towards him, when they meet with Trials in this Life, of one kind or other, in which no small part of our Worship due to him, is to be discovered. It is recorded concerning *Job*, Chap. 1. 20. *Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped.* Now we cannot better glorify God under such Providences, than by a due exercise of Patience, 1 *Pet.* 4. 14. Now this Patience consists in a steady and cheerful holding on in the Service of God, notwithstanding the Trials which we encounter, which would discourage us. We neither murmur at God, nor tire in our Minds, but can say concerning our Afflictions, as the Church, Psal. 44. 17. *All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsly in thy covenant.* This also belongs to Natural Worship, and hath its Reason and Motive,

1. *FROM the Divine All-Efficiency.* We see and acknowledge God's Hand in all, and that satisfies us. *Psal.* 39. 6. We tarry not at Instruments, but look on them as no more, and in his Hand; which Hand we adore, and answer all Temptations to impatience with that, Job. 2. 10. *What, shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?*

2. *FROM the Sovereignty of God in his Governing of the World.* We not only confess his Efficiency, but also his Supremacy; not only

only that he doth it, but that he hath all Right and Authority to do as he ſees good; that he can do no wrong; there is no injuſtice with him, Job 42. 2. *I know that thou canſt do every thing.* And if he doth us no injury, we can have no reaſon to find fault with him.

3. *FROM his End or Deſign in Afflicting his People.* There is his Counſel in it, *Pſal.* 73. 24. He hath promiſed that he will bring good to them out of all, *Rom.* 8. 28. They are no other but what he ſees them to ſtand in need of, 1 *Pet.* 1. 6. They are Chaſtiſements of Sin, and therefore there is no reaſon to find fault with him for them, *Lam.* 3. 39 And they are not for our hurt but advantage, by taking away our Sin, *Iſai.* 27. 9. And to produce in us happy fruits, *Heb* 12, 11. And the Operation of them ſhall be very glorious, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17.

USE. *LET this ſerve to Convince us of, and Humble us for our ſhort comings in our Obedience.* We need look no further than this Firſt Command, and conſider the ſeveral Duties required of us by it, to lay us in the duſt before God, and make us aſhamed of our ſelves, and tell us, how unable we are to hold up our Heads in the Judgment, or plead, not Guilty. Let us not juſtify our ſelves then, but be driven to ſeek his Mercy and Forgiveneſs, through the Merits & Obedience of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; to ſay as he, Pſal. 130. 3, 4. *If thou, Lord, ſhouldeſt mark iniquities: O Lord, who ſhall ſtand? But there is forgiveneſs with thee that thou mayeſt be feared.* This ſhould riv eus to daily Repentance, and to ſeek of him his Grace, to ſtrengthen and help us in our Work, that we may in Sincerity and Uprightneſs glorify him: And that knowing him to be both God and our God, we may Worſhip and Serve him as ſuch, all the days of our Lives, and find our Acceptance, in and through his own Son.

[JULY 29. 1701.]

SERMON *CLVII.*

QUESTION XLVII.

WHAT is Forbidden in the Firſt Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Firſt Commandment Forbiddeth the denying, or not worſhipping and glorifying the true God, as God, and our God; or giving that Worſhip and Glory to any other, which is due to him alone.

THE right ſtating of a Truth, is the way to have the beſt diſcovery of Falſehood. And if we are well informed what is Duty, we have therein a good Rule, by which to determine what is Sin. Having therefore obſerved what is required in the Firſt Command, we need but conſider what is contrary to this, and ſafely conclude it to be Sin. However, becauſe a Chriſtians whole Life is concerned with the Law, the Holy Scriptures which are our Directory, are accommodated to our Warning, as well as Direction, by telling us this is Duty, and that is Sin, and our ſpiritual dulneſs ſtands in need of it. This Method is therefore purſued in our Catechiſm, which I ſhall endeavour to follow: Though having ſtated the Precept, the Prohibition may be more briefly laid open.

WE have been formerly put in mind, that there are two ways in which Men may ſin againſt every Command of God, either by *Omiſſion* or *Commiſſion*; either by *neglecting* to do the thing *required*, or by *doing* that which is *forbidden*. And the reaſon of this is, becauſe in every Precept, there is either expreſt, or neceſſarily implied, ſomething *Poſitive* and ſomething *Negative*. We have heard what are the Duties required in the Firſt Command, it now follows that we obſerve how it may be violated, either by *Neglect* or *Tranſgreſſion*. Now the Sins mentioned in this Anſwer, are to be reduced to three Heads, as they ſtand in Oppoſition to the three Duties, in which the former was ſummed up. Accordingly, all the Breaches of this Command may be conſidered, as they refer to one of theſe three Heads, viz. *Atheiſm*, *Contempt*, and *Idolatry*. And we may take a ſhort account, of the more remarkable things that belong to either of theſe.

I. *ATHEISM*, which is expreſſed by the denying of God: And this is oppoſed to our knowing and acknowledging of God, which is the Duty of all Men, and he that doth not thus know and acknowledge him, doth *interpretatively* or *conſequentially* deny him. Now there are diverſe ſorts and degrees of this Atheiſm, and the things wherein it is expreſſed are almoſt uncountable; and there are ſome remains of it, in the beſt of God's People in this Life, by reaſon of remaining Original Sin in them. The firſt general Diſtribution of Atheiſm is into that which is *Profeſſed*, and that which is *Practical*, and we have the ground for this in, Tit. 1. 16. *They profeſs that they know God, but in works they deny him.*

1. *AS to profeſſed Atheiſm*, it may come under a double Conſideration, viz. either when Men do in *terms* deny the Being of a God, or when they *maintain ſuch Principles* as neceſſarily infer ſuch a Denial. And here,

(1.) WHETHER there be any thorough profeſt Atheiſt in the World, who doth abſolutely deny the Being of a God, is queſtioned by many, and may ſo be with a great deal of Reaſon:

Reaſon: and if there have any ſuch been, who were ſo left to a reprobate ſenſe, they have juſtly been accounted *Prodigies*. And indeed, there are ſo many Demonſtrations of a Deity, in the very light of Nature, and legibly written in the Works of Creation and Providence, and ſo accommodated to the Conviction of a natural Conſcience, that Men muſt wilfully ſhut their Eyes, nay be judicially blinded, if they do not reſign themſelves up to the evidences of it; as hath formerly been diſcovered. Hence the Apoſtle tells us, Rom. 1. 19, 20. *Becauſe that which may be known of God, is manifeſt in them, for God hath ſhewed it unto them. For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.* And the Philoſopher could obſerve, that there is no Nation ſo barbarous or brutiſh, but which have the notices or diſcoveries of a Deity among them: The Impreſſions whereof enforce them to profeſs and practice ſome ſort of Divine Worſhip.

(2.) THAT there are too many that *maintain ſuch Principles, as carry in them Atheiſtical Inferences or Concluſions*, is too notorious to be denied, and may therefore be here enquired after.

2. *PRACTICAL Atheiſm is when Men live as if they did not believe that there is a God.* And this Carriage of theirs hath a convincing Language in it, and thoſe that obſerve it may ſafely conclude upon it, as Pſal. 36. 1. *The tranſgreſſion of the wicked ſaith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before their eyes.* And let it be *obſerved*, that to this *practical Atheiſm* I refer, not only what Men *Do*, which contradicts any point of *Natural Worſhip*, but alſo what they *Neglect* to do according to the directions of it. But becauſe the moſt of theſe things will fall under the Second Head propoſed, I ſhall here only obſerve the Things wherein the Atheiſm it ſelf here forbidden, is to be diſcovered; viz.

(1.) *IGNORANCE of God.* This belongs to the Character of an Atheiſt, *Pſal.* 14. 2. It is true the Infinite Perfections of the Divine Nature are incomprehenſible by a Creature. Hence that, Job 11. 7, &c. *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? canſt thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?* There is therefore an *Ignorance* which is not a *Sin*, but only argues the *finite Capacity* of a *created being*. For it is ſaid of God, 1 Tim. 6. 16. *Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath ſeen, nor can ſee.* But then there was a concreated Knowledge of God, beſtowed on Man at firſt, by vertue of the Divine Image imprinted on his mind, which he loſt by the Fall, and therewith contracted a ſinful Ignorance, the remains whereof are in the beſt of Men here. Whence his Complaint of himſelf, Prov. 30. 2, 3. *Surely I am more brutiſh then any man, and have not the underſtanding of a man. I have neither learned wiſdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy.* But this wofully prevails in unregenerate Men, who, as they know him not, ſo neither do they ſeek to know him, but content themſelves in their ignorance of him, Job 22. 17. *Which ſaid unto God, Depart from us?* And this renders them altogether incapable, of paying him that Natural Worſhip which is his due.

(2.) *THE denying to God of his Divine Perfections.* God hath made himſelf known to the Creature in his back Parts, i. e. by the diſplay of his Attributes, which are to be read in his Word and Works. Now theſe Attributes of his are, in him, his own abſolute Being, tho' our manner of Conception entertains them diſtinctly; ſo that to deny any one of theſe unto him, is to attempt the robbing him of his Deity. To confeſs a God, and yet to queſtion or diſ-believe his Infinity, Eternity, Omniſcience, Omnipreſence, &c. is a contradiction unto ſuch an Acknowledgment: for theſe Perfections are inſeparable from his Being. They therefore were guilty of Atheiſm, Pſal. 94. 7. *Yet they ſay, the Lord ſhall not ſee, neither ſhall the God of Jacob regard it.* And they with whom he ſo expoſtulates, Jer. 23. 23. *Am I a God at hand, ſaith the Lord, and not a God afar off?* And they, Pſal. 78. 19. *Yea, they ſpake againſt God; they ſaid, Can God furniſh a table in the wilderneſs?*

(3.) *SUCH as call in queſtion his Providence.* Epicureiſm is Atheiſm. To acknowledge a God, but to deny him to be any whit concerned in the Management of the Affairs of the Creation, an idle God, who looks after nothing, but letteth every thing go as it will, while he takes his eaſe and pleaſure in the Heavens; a God that is neither *Holy* nor *Juſt*, neither Rewards Righteouſneſs, nor Puniſheth Sin, is Atheiſm in a prodigious degree, and contradicts all the true reſentments of a Diety. The very *Heathen* accounted thoſe for Atheiſts, who diſcharged God from the care of the World, as a thing too mean for him, and about which he would not concern himſelf. Such were they, *Ezek.* 8. 12. *Pſal.* 10. 11.

(4.) *SUCH as diſown the Divine Subſiſtences.* How far the *Light of Nature* did at *firſt* acquaint Men, with the *Doctrine* of a *Trinity* of *Perſons*, in the *Unity* of *Eſſence*, is not eaſy for us to determine; but that God hath in his Word revealed this Truth to fallen Man is certain; and for one that profeſſeth the *revealed Religion*, yet to confeſs one God, but deny that this One God, is Father, Son, and Spirit, every one of them true God, and yet all One & the ſame God, is to incur the Guilt of Atheiſm. And therefore to deny the *Divinity* of the Son and Spirit, and ſo make the one a *Created God*, and the other a *meer quality*, is a branch of this Sin. Nor can Men Worſhip God aright, except they pay their Worſhip to each of theſe Perſons as God. Hence that, Joh. 5. 23. *That all men ſhould honour the Son, as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath*

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ſent him. Deiſm therefore, which removes all revelation from Religion, naturally iſſues in Atheiſm.

(5.) *SUCH as Attribute to God, things inconſiſtent with his Being and Perfections.* For Men to ſay, that they believe there is a God, and withal to fancy him to be ſuch, as would make him as bad as the vileſt of Creatures, is horrible Atheiſm. For Sinners to frame an Idea of God, after their own imagination, and ſuitable to their mind, is to make him no God. Such were they, Pſal. 50. 21. *Thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch an one as thy ſelf.* When Men think that he approves of Sin, and likes all that they like, they do in effect deny him to be God. Now all this Atheiſm is directly forbidden us in the Firſt Command, as that which is directly contrary to Natural Worſhip.

II. *CONTEMPT.* This is expreſt in not Worſhipping and Glorifying him as God, and our God. This we obſerved contains in it the ſubſtance of Natural Worſhip: The neglect therefore of it muſt needs be a deſpiſing of God; which is directly contrary to that Glorifying of him, which this Precept requires. Sinners are therefore charged with deſpiſing of God, which is the fruit and diſcovery of Atheiſm in them. And there are diverſe things here alſo, which are the Effects of this Sin, as flowing from Contempt, viz.

1. *WHEN Men neglect the Duties of Natural Worſhip that God requires of them.* And the very Conſideration of his being God, carries Conviction with it of theſe Duties: What theſe Duties are, hath been formerly taken notice of, and how the Light of Nature, offers Conviction of their being Duties. Now voluntarily or careleſly to neglect theſe Duties, is to deſpiſe the Authority of God, and the Voice of Conſcience ſpeaking to us in his Name: and in nothing more is this diſcovered, than in a living in the neglect of Prayer to God. There is no Duty of Worſhip which the natural Conſcience, doth more fully convince Men of, than this. And for Men, who muſt acknowledge their whole dependance to be upon God, to omit ſeeking to him, and preſenting their requeſts before him, for thoſe things of which they ſtand in need, it ſaith that they deſpiſe him. Hence that, Job 21. 15. *What is the Almighty, that we ſhould ſerve him? and what profit ſhould we have if we pray unto him.* On this account natural Men are awfully threatned for their neglect of thus calling on his Name, *Jer.* 10. 25.

2. *WHEN Men Renounce their Dependance on God for all Good.* This alſo is to deſpiſe him. As he is glorifyed by our accounting him our All, ſo he is contemned when we have our reliance any where elſe, and not on him alone. And there are *many ways* in which this *Contempt* is *practiſed. Partly*, by the forecited Neglect of Praying to God. For therein we ſignify, that we think we can do well enough without him, which derogates from his due Glory. *Partly*, when Men rely upon other things for good, and not upon God. We read of ſuch, Pſal. 20. 7. *Some truſt in chariots, and ſome in horſes.* Theſe contemn God, when they truſt to their own Wiſdom and Induſtry, and do not refer themſelves to the Supream Goverment of God, when they go to Second Cauſes, and not to the Firſt; when they pay their Acknowledgments of what they have Succeſs in, not to God, but to themſelves or other Creatures, *Hab.* 1. 16. They who can place their reliance, any where elſe but on God, for any thing; or whoſe returns for Good received, reach no higher than Second Cauſes, do therein deſpiſe God, *Iſai.* 22. 10, 11.

3. *WHEN Men put the Fear of God away from them.* There is a reverential Fear, which all owe to God, and without the exerciſe of it, they cannot Worſhip him aright, nor yet maintain a due reſpect of him, in them. It is the demand, Jer. 10. 7. *Who would not fear thee, O king of nations? for to thee doth it appertain.* Here alſo there are diverſe ways, in which this irreverence and want of fear is manifeſted: When Men are not awed, with the due conſideration of his glorious Majeſty, ſo as to acknowledge the infinite diſtance there is between him and them, and thereupon to carry it with all ſubmiſſiveneſs to him; when his Authority is not ſufficient Obligation upon their Conſciences, to engage them to conſtant Obedience to him, and reſolutely to withſtand all Temptations that are offered to us, to draw us from our Duty: When Men dare to break his Laws, & tranſgreſs his Commands, and are unconcerned about his holy diſpleaſure, but can boldly run the adventure of it, as if they did not expect it, or not regard it: When after they have ſinned, they lie quietly under the guilt of it, and do not make it their buſineſs to ſeek to be reconciled again. All theſe, and whatſoever elſe is of this Nature, flow from Mens undervaluing thoughts of God, *Pſal.* 36. 1.

4. *WHEN Men do not Love God above all.* That there is a love of other things, not only lawful, but a Duty, is certain; but in nothing do we more glorify God, than in placing our beſt Love upon him, and ſo ſubordinating our Love of every thing elſe hereto, as to hate them comparatively with our loving of him, as, *Luk.* 14. 26. When therefore other things, are not only loved equally with God, but are advanced above him in our Affections, and have more of our Hearts than he hath, we do therein really diſpiſe him. This was their Sin, Rom. 1. 25. *Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worſhipped and ſerved the creature more than the Creator, who is bleſſed for ever. Amen.* When Men can adventure to diſpleaſe God to gratify Men; when the Command of God, hath not that influence upon us, which the Authority of a Man hath, and we can do more for him, than for God, it proves that we do not love him as God. In a word, when they can take more content in any thing elſe than in him, he is diſpiſed.

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5. *WHEN Men nouriſh in themſelves deſpair of God's Mercy, and dare not place their whole truſt and reliance upon him.* When Men ſit under the Goſpel Diſcoveries of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, and yet under Convictions of Sin, put away Hope, and refuſe to receive the Encouragements, given to Sinners to come to him, for Peace and Pardon; and reſolve as they, Ezek. 37. 11. *Behold, they ſay, Our bones are dried, & our hope is loſt, we are cut off for our parts.* They caſt the greateſt Contempt upon him. God is then glorifyed by Men, when they hope in his Grace. When they believe the reports that are made of it to them in his Word, they therein glorify him. Whereas deſpair is a fruit of the moſt horrible Pride, and Men by it, do reject the whole Goſpel of Salvation. God hath ſaid, in Iſai. 1. 18. *Come now and let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord: though your ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be as white as ſnow; though they be red like crimſon, they ſhall be as wool.* And Chap. 55. 7. *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* But they ſay there is no ſuch thing; and what is this but to undervalue him, and make him a liar.

6. *WHEN Men Fret and Repine at the Providences of God.* He is then honoured by us, when we adore him in all his Diſpenſations of himſelf to us: When we can cordially profeſs, as Pſal. 145. 17. *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.* And can ſay under the darkeſt, and moſt diſtreſſing of them, as Pſal. 22. 3. *But thou art holy, O thou that inhabiteſt the praiſes of Iſrael.* Whereas, when what he doth, diſpleaſeth us, and we endeavour to pick holes in what he doth, and if he do not do in all things as we would have him, we charge him with wrong, injuſtice, unkindneſs, unfaithfulneſs, or imprudence, we herein caſt reproach upon his Name. This was the fault and folly of the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 73. 13. *Verily, I have cleanſed my heart in vain.* And he taxeth himſelf ſeverely for it, ver. 22. *So fooliſh was I and ignorant: I was as a beaſt before thee.* There are ſome that find fault with the whole courſe of Providence, and think they could govern the World themſelves, better than God doth. And this is an Atheiſtical reflection of diſhonour upon him. Yea, all fretting of this Nature, is for that reaſon univerſally forbidden, Pſal. 37. 8 *Ceaſe from anger, and forſake wrath: fret not thy ſelf in any wiſe to do evil.*

7. *WHEN Men Neglect the ſettling & ſecuring of an Intereſt in God as their God.* There is no Worſhipping of him aright, under any other Conſideration. Now all Men by Nature are ſtrangers to God, they cannot challenge him as theirs; they are far from him. But God hath in the New Covenant, diſcovered a way, in which Men may come thus to be related to him, and makes offers of it to them in the Goſpel Invitation: But Sinners that live under the Goſpel, and are treated with about this Affair, do not regard it, but they live content in their Natural ſtate, they ſeek not to be reconciled to God, they refuſe to accept of Salvation offered, are prejudiced at the Terms of the Covenant, will not part with their Luſts, for a part in Chriſt; theſe are guilty of prodigious Contempt, *Jer.* 2. 8. This is charged on them, *Pſal.* 81. 10, 11. In all theſe ways Men live in the breach of this Command, and with-hold from God the Glory which is his due.

III. *IDOLATRY.* This is declared in thoſe words; *giving that Worſhip and Glory to any other God, which is due to Him alone.* This is not to be underſtood, as if there were indeed any other God, but it intends an eſteem given to any, or a reſpect that is ſhewn them, which cannot be paid but to him whom Men take to be their God. Now there are *two* ſorts of *Idolatry* which are prohibited by this Precept; *Groſs*, and *Covert*.

1. *THERE is a more Groſs Idolatry*; which Conſiſts in an *open* profeſſion or practice, of Worſhipping any other Object as God, beſides the true God, by aſcribing that to them, which is proper only to the Deity. And there are ſeveral Things here to be conſidered as *Groſs Idolatry*, viz.

(1.) *POLITHEISM.* He that Worſhips more Gods than one, is an Idolater; and the reaſon is manifeſt, becauſe whatſoever hath Divine Worſhip paid to it, and is not the true God, is an Idol. Whereas it is certain that there is, that there can be, but One God. So that a multiplicity of Gods, neceſſarily involves this Sin. If a Man have many Gods, all but one muſt neceſſarily be Idols. And herein is one difference between *Pagan*, and *true* Worſhippers, 1 *Cor.* 8. 4, 5, 6. Hence that, Iſai. 42. 8. *I am the Lord, that is my Name, and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praiſe to graven images.*

(2.) *HETEROTHEISM.* A Man may pretend to Worſhip but one God, and yet be an Idolater. For if the God whom he offers his Service to, be not the true God, it is an Idol. And that not only when it is an Image, made with Men's hands, or ſome Creature of God, as the Sun, &c. but when Men have ſhaped a falſe Idea of God, in their imaginations, and Worſhip it: both theſe Sins the Heathen were guilty of, they had their Pantheon, their Jupiter, Saturn, and an innumerable Rabble, and none of them the true, except him whom they ignorantly devoted an Altar to, *Act.* 17. 23. And of the Idolatrous Jew it is ſaid, Jer. 2. 28. *According to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah.*

(3.) *SAMARITANISM.* Which is, when Men will join other fictitious Gods with the true God. They pretend to be for the true God, but will join falſe God's with him. This is uſually called *Samaritaniſm*, becauſe it was notoriouſly practiſed in *Samaria*, after the Captivity. See 2 *Kin.* 17. 41. Tho' it had been before that practiſed in *Iſrael.* This was *Solomon's*

Solomon's Idolatry, who maintained Temple-Worſhip, but it is ſaid, in 1 Kin. 11. 5. *For Solomon went after Aſhtaroth the goddeſs of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.* And afterwards in the times of *Joſiah*, *Zeph.* 1. 5.

(4.) *PAPISM.* So call'd becauſe it is wofully practiſed under the *Papacy*. And it is when Men pay any part of that Worſhip to a Creature, which is due to God alone. And this is moſt notorious in their Prayers to Angels and Saints departed, for help; and the moſt groſs of all is their Prayers to the Virgin *Mary*, to whom they aſcribe more Power than to Chriſt himſelf; and place more reliance on her than him. And to this may be added, *Socinianiſm*, in which we are told that Chriſt is a mere Creature, and yet that Divine Worſhip is to be paid unto him.

(5.) *WITCHCRAFT.* It is certain that all falſe Worſhip *Objective*, is by God accounted Devil-Worſhip, Deut. 32. 17. *They ſacrificed unto devils, not to God.* 2 Chron. 11. 15. *And he ordained him Prieſts for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made.* And when Men go to the Devil for Counſel & Help; when they make explicit Covenants with him; or when they ſeek to Fortune-tellers, or Conjurers, to tell them what ſhall befall them; as *Saul* did, 1 *Sam.* 28. Or to diſcover to them things Loſt or Stollen: They herein commit groſs Idolatry, and are juſtly chargeable with it.

2. *THERE is a more Covert Idolatry*: Which tho' ſecret, yet God ſees it, and will charge it on Men, whatſoever open pretences they make of the true Religion. And it hath theſe things,

(1.) *WHEN Men, in baſe flattery, give thoſe Titles to Men that are due only to God.* This ſort of Adulation, hath been too much practiſed among pretended Chriſtians. Thus when the *Incommunicable Attributes* of God are aſcribed to Men; as he who made his Dedication to his Prince, under the ſtile of, *Your Eternity*: Or, when the *Communicable Attributes* are attributed in the *Abſtract*, which belongs only to God, and cannot without Idolatry be given to any ſecond Being, but in the *Concrete*: as not to be content to ſay, ſuch an one is wiſe, but Wiſdom itſelf, &c. Hence that, Job 32. 21,22. *Let me not, I pray you, accept any mans perſon, neither let me give flattering titles unto man, For I know not to give flattering titles, in ſo doing my maker would ſoon take me away.*

(2.) *WHEN Men ſeek their own honour more than God's Honour.* They will exalt themſelves, tho' it be to the reproach of him. They care not what becomes of his Name, ſo they may but have a Name. This was *Herod's* Sin, for which God ſmote him; who would be a God, and was ſoon convinced, that he was a Mortal, *Act.* 12. 22,23.

(3.) *WHEN Men put their truſt in any Creature.* That which a Man leans his reliance ultimately upon, is his God. And if it be a Creature, it is an Idol. Some Men truſt in their Eſtates, *Pſal.* 99.6. And we read, Prov. 10. 15. *The rich mans wealth is his ſtrong city.* Theſe are their God. Some Men truſt in Men, and all their confidence is in their favour; by which they make Idols of them, *Pſal.* 146.3.

(4.) *WHEN Men are carried with an over-eager, and inſatiable purſuit after the things of this World.* Such as thoſe make Mammon their God. And for this reaſon, Coveteouſneſs is more than once branded with the title of *Idolatry* in the Goſpel, *Col.* 3. 5. *Eph.* 5. 5.

(5.) *WHEN Men give themſelves up to Carnal Pleaſures.* When they devote themſelves to the things of this Life, and count it their only Felicity, to Eat, Drink, and make Merry. And hence ſuch are ſaid to make their Belly their God, *Phil.* 3. 19. And it is evident, becauſe on this account they renounce him that is the true God, *Job* 21. 13,14.

USE. *LET this call upon us all, to be exceeding wary to our ſelves, leſt we incur the Guilt of breaking this Great Command.* We ſee here, how many ways it may be violated, both by *Atheiſm*, *Contempt*, and *Idolatry*. What need then is there, that we look to our ways, leſt we Sin on this account. And what humbling Conviction would this lay us under of our *folly*, and need of *pity* and *pardon*, did we throughly Examine our ſelves by theſe things. Nor is it a *light matter, or to be deſpiſed by us.* This Sin is enough to *Condemn* us, and expoſe us to the Wrath of God, and nothing but the *Blood of Chriſt is able* to cleanſe us from the Guilt of it.

[AUGUST 26. 1701.]

SERMON *CLVIII.*

QUESTION XLVIII.

WHAT are we eſpecially taught, by theſe Words, [before Me,] *in the Firſt Commandment?*

ANSWER.

THESE Words, [*before Me,*] in the Firſt Commandment, teach us, that GOD, who ſeeth all things, taketh notice of, and is much diſpleaſed at the Sin, of having any other God.

BESIDES the Arguments uſed in the Preface, to enforce the *whole Decalogue*, by which God offers us matter of Conviction, that Obedience to his Law is our Reaſonable Ser-

vice, God hath ſeen meet to add particular Arguments to the *Five firſt Commands ſeverally*: Some whereof are appropriated to the Command, with which they are connected, and others are of a more general Conſideration, and applicable to every of the Precepts. Why God hath added Reaſons to *ſome*, and not to *others*; and why to theſe, and not thoſe, is not for us curiouſly to inquire, but to reſt ſatisfied in his holy Pleaſure. It is his Condeſcendency that he will give us a reaſon of any of his Commands, beſides his holy Pleaſure, that we ſhould thus obey him. For him to ſay, *I am the Lord*, is reaſon ſufficient, to oblige us to receive and obſerve, all and every of his Commands. The words, *Before me*, or before my Face; are well obſerved by our Divines, to carry the force of a reaſon in them. Our *Catechiſm* reduceth the matter of Argument contained in it, to three Heads, viz. 1. *God's Omniſcience*; He ſeeth all things. 2. *His curious Obſervation of Men in this regard.* And theſe two are of force in every other Precept. 3. *The infinite Diſpleaſure which God conceives at this Sin peculiarly.* All of which are comprehended in it. We may therefore briefly here take a more particular account of this matter, in the following Remarks,

1. *THAT God, as he is the Supream Judge, will reward Men's Obedience or Diſobedience.* As God hath given Men a Law, by which they are to regulate themſelves, ſo he hath added Sanctions to it, in which he hath promiſed Bleſſedneſs, to all ſuch as cordially obey it, and denounced miſery, againſt all ſuch as refuſe their Obedience to it. And that Men may be encouraged by the one, and duly awed by the other, he hath declared himſelf to be the Judge to whom all muſt give an Account, and from whom they ſhall receive their Reward; and becauſe he is ſo, he will do that which is right: and gives Men thus to know, what they are to expect. We are therefore told, in Rom. 2. 6. *Who will render to every man according to his deeds.*

2. *THAT becauſe God is Omniſcient, it is therefore vain for Men to hope to Sin out of his ſight.* When he ſaith *before Me*, it doth not intend only a forbidding of open and profeſſed Atheiſm, or Idolatry, or Contempt, but contrary it intends, that Men cannot practice theſe Sins ſo ſecretly, but that they always ſtand in the open light to him. They can do nothing behind his back, but are always before his face. Sinners think they can act their Sin ſo privately, that it ſhall never be known; and confide in their ſecreſy. And if they were concerned only with Men like themſelves, they might have ſome pretext for it; but when they preſume this of God, it is their folly, and indeed no ſmall indication of their Atheiſm; as was before obſerved. God therefore hath given Men warning of this, that they might beware, *Jer.* 23. 24. *Heb.* 4. 13. *Pſal.* 139. 11, 12. *David* therefore tells us, Pſal. 16. 8, *I have ſet the Lord always before me.*

3. *THAT becauſe God curiouſly obſerves all Men how they carry themſelves with reſpect to his Law, it will be to no purpoſe, either to deny the fact, or excuſe themſelves.* That he doth thus obſerve all Men we are aſſured. *David* aſſerts it concerning him, Pſal. 139. 1, 2. *O Lord, thou haſt ſearched me, and known me. Thou haſt known my down ſitting, and mine up-riſing, thou underſtandeſt my thought afar off.* And *Job* made it an Article of his Creed, Job 31. 4. *Doth not he ſee my ways, and count all my ſteps.* And *Solomon* Remarks it, Prov. 15. 3. *The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.* And Chap. 5. 21. *For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondreth all his goings.* And becauſe his knowledge is Infinite, he cannot be miſtaken in his Obſervation, and therefore when he chargeth it upon them, it will be full conviction, and no way availing them to deny. Nor needs there any other proof. God therefore aſſerts himſelf to be a *Witneſs*, intimating that to be ſufficient, Jer. 29. 23. *Even I know, and am a witneſs, ſaith the Lord.* It is true, Mens own Conſciences are enough, and theſe are under God's Government, and it is vain for Men to flatter or to bribe them, for, when God ſummons them to give their evidence, they will ſpeak out, *Rom* 2. 15. But, tho' the Conſcience is as a Thouſand Witneſſes, yet God is more than Ten Thouſand Conſciences, 1 Joh. 3 20 *For if our heart condemn us, God is greater then our heart, & knoweth all things.* Nor will any excuſe be profitable, for he *knows*, not only the *Actions*, but the *deſigns*, & *intents* of the Heart.

4. *THAT becauſe all things are open and manifeſt to God, it is a deſperate impudence in any to have any other God.* Affronts that are offered to any openly, and to their face, are look'd upon as a diſcovery of the greateſt Contempt and Scorn: yea, when Men dare to commit any lewdneſs in the ſight of the Sun, it argueth that they are grown ſhameleſs, eſpecially when they dare to do it in the preſence of wiſe and good Men. And can it be leſs ſo, if Men know, and they cannot but know, unleſs they wilfully ſhut their Eyes, that God ſtands by and looks on; that he is intimately preſent with them; and yet give his Glory to another, and exalt a ſtranger upon his Throne, and without remorſe do thoſe things, that are dergoatory to his Glory. Yea, what greater diſhonour can Men do to him, than to do thoſe things under his Eye, which they would not dare to do, if they thought any ſober Man obſerved them? It argues, either that they believe not that there is a God, or that he is like themſelves, *Pſal.* 50. 21.

5. *IT is therefore folly, yea madneſs, for ſuch to nouriſh hope in themſelves, that for all they ſhall eſcape his Vengeance.* Carnal ſecurity, nouriſhed in the Hearts of Men that fear not God, argues that they do not know him to be holy and juſt; and not to believe & acknowledge that, is as much as to deny that he is God. If God ſees, he will certainly puniſh

ſuch

such Sinners; he stands upon his Honour, and will not part with it, *Isa.* 42. 8. What hope then can they have to escape his righteous Judgment? His Holiness makes him to hate Sin, his Justice engageth him to punish it; his Power enableth him to do so; and there is none that can deliver them out of his Hand. And his eyes that run to and fro through the Earth, will espy them; so that there is no darkness nor shadow of Death, that can hide them out of his sight.

6. *THAT because God sees and observes to Reward, therefore all that truly fear him, have abundant Encouragement.* There is a glorious Recompence of Reward, secured in the Promise of the New Covenant, to those that know and acknowledge God aright, and accordingly glorify him. Now it is agreeable to the Nature of a reasonable Creature, to pursue a work cheerfully, when he considers that it will be profitable for him. This therefore is used as an Argument, to animate Christians in their business, 1 *Cor.* 15. *ult.* And herein is a Child of God assured that he shall not miss of it, because not only is he faithful that hath promised, and will perform, but also he looks on and observes, and keeps a Record of all the faithful Service done for him; nor are the most secret Duties done by him overlook'd by God, or lie out of his sight. Hence Christ said to *Nathaniel*, Joh. 1. 48. *Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the figtree, I saw thee.* And he hath assured us, Mat. 10. 42. *And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise loose his reward.* And there is a time coming, when all the secret Duties of God's People, shall be published before the World, and their Judge shall say to them, *well done*, and declare them Blessed, *Mat.* 25. 34,35,36.

7. *THIS also affords matter of Caution to the People of God to make them very circumspect in their whole Life.* Eye-service, done to Men, is indeed condemned in the Word of God for Hypocrisy. But Eye-service performed to God, is there both commended and required. It is a Duty required of us, Eph. 5. 15. *See then, that ye walk circumspectly.* And what can more cogently, engage us to the practice of it, than ever to have this Thought in our mind, *I am before God; His Eye is upon me, He who is my Judge views and weighs all my Actions.* The best of us have remaining Concupiscence in us, which is ready to prompt us to Sin, and in nothing doth it more impose on us, than by perswading us, that we may Sin out of sight, and so escape shame and punishment. Whereas, now to consider and believe, there is a God who looks on, and cannot be mocked, what an impression must this make upon our Hearts? And how careful will it cause us to be at all times? Yea, not only to watch our outward Actions, but our very Hearts & Thoughts, to see that they be right?

WOULD we then worship God as God, and pay all that Service to him, which we owe him, as our God? Labour we to have the Impression of this Consideration always fresh in our Minds; and let it influence all our Thoughts, Words, and Actions. This will maintain an holy Awe and Reverence of God in our Hearts, and powerfully influence our whole Lives. Whereas the Forgetfulness of this, will expose us to Temptations, and give Lust and Satan advantage against us, to draw us into Sin. But I pass to,

QUESTION XLIX.

WHICH is the Second Commandment?

ANSWER

THE Second Commandment is, *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in Heaven above, or that is in the Earth beneath, or that is in the Water under the Earth, Thou shalt not bow down thy self to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me: and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my Commandments.*

WE have before observed, that all the four Commands in the first Table, do properly respect the Worship of God; and that in the two former we are directed unto, and instructed about the kinds of Worship, which are ranked under two Heads, viz. *Natural* and *Instituted.* Of the *Natural Worship*, and the several Duties comprehended under it, and the diverse Ways wherein we may be guilty of sinning against it, we have taken a brief Account, under the first Command; it follows that we now pass over to the second, in which we are instructed about *Instituted Worship.* And because there is a very great difference between these two, and they come under a far diverse Consideration, this and the former Command, ought not to be confounded, and made but one, which is done by the Papists and Lutherans, hoping thereby the better to defend, or excuse their Image Worship. Now the main difference between these two lies in this, viz. *Natural Worship is that which the very Light of Nature will teach Men,* inasmuch as, the Duties of it, and the Obligation laid on us to perform these Duties, derive from the *Nature* and *Being* of God, and the Relation which he stands in to us; whereas *the Duties of Instituted Worship, depends upon God's revealed Will.* And the Obligation lying upon us to perform these Duties, flows from the Sovereignty of God, and our absolute Subjection to him. This Command is, as the

former, declared *negatively*; as indeed, all the reſt are, except the Fourth, which is laid down both *negatively* and *affirmatively*, and the Fifth which is expreſt only *affirmatively*. But it hath been laid down as a Rule from the Word of God, and right Reaſon, that there are both theſe Parts to be obſerved in every of them. So that here alſo, we are to *conſider* what is *Duty*, and what is *Sin*, according as they *relate* to this *Precept*. Only let me in the firſt place remove out of the way, or at leaſt clear our Diſtribution of theſe two Commands from another, which ſome uſe, and looks fair, viz. that the Firſt Command directs us to the *Object* of Worſhip, and the Second to the *Medium* of it, which doth not truly lay out the proper bounds between the one and the other. For, beſides that God is the Object of Worſhip directed to in both, ſo there are the *Media* of Worſhip, which properly belong to the *Firſt* as well as to the *Second* Commandment. Such are all the Duties therein required of us, of which we have formerly taken the Account, but we ſhall have a further diſcovery of the difference between theſe two, in laying open the Command it ſelf. And here, let us *begin* with the *Affirmative Part*. Hence,

QUESTION L.

WHAT is Required in the Second Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Second Commandment Requireth the receiving, obſerving, and keeping pure and entire, all ſuch Religious Worſhip and Ordinances, as GOD hath appointed in his Word.

IN this Anſwer we may obſerve two Things, under which is comprized all that belongs to this Head of Inſtituted Worſhip, viz. 1. Here is the *Subject-Matter* about which our Obedience is here to be employed. *All ſuch Religious Worſhip and Ordinances, as God hath appointed in his Word.* 2. The *Things wherein* this Worſhip is to be performed, *in receiving, obſerving, and keeping them pure and entire.* Each of theſe may be briefly laid open.

I. *HERE is the Subject-Matter about which our Obedience is here to be employed*, viz. *All ſuch Religious Worſhip and Ordinances, as God hath appointed in his Word.* In the laying out of this, *two* Things may come under our *Inquiry*, viz. Firſt, We may in *general* take an Account of the *Nature*, *Reaſon*, and *Bounds* of Inſtituted Worſhip. Secondly, We may in *particular*, take Notice of the more *ſpecial Duties* which belong to this kind of Worſhip. Of theſe in Order,

1. LET us in *general* take an Account, of the *Nature*, *Reaſon*, and *Bounds* of Inſtituted Worſhip. For which let me offer theſe Concluſions.

Conclu. 1. *THAT the End of Inſtituted Worſhip is to help us in the Exerciſe of the Natural.* The Second Command is in this reſpect ſubſervient to the Firſt. This will appear if we conſider,

(1.) THAT the direct deſign of all Worſhip is, that we love and glorify God, as our *laſt End* and *chief Good*. God hath diſcovered himſelf to be *ſuch* to the Creature, and requires our practical Acknowledgement of him as *ſuch*, in our Worſhipping of him. When therefore our Saviour Chriſt would give us the Sum of the whole firſt Table, which reſpects our Worſhip, he thus expreſſeth it, Mat. 22. 37. *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy mind.* Hence all theſe Commands, points us to one and the ſame Object, which is God, and no other, Mat. 4. 10. *It is written, Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve.* And the Reaſon why we are ſo to Worſhip him, is becauſe he is the laſt End of all Things, all being made for his Glory, *Prov.* 16. 4. And becauſe we are to expect our whole Happineſs entirely from him. And this dependance we do practically profeſs, by our ſo Worſhipping of him.

(2.) THAT our thus knowing, acknowledging, and glorifying of God, *is the proper Scope of the Firſt Command.* The whole Object in Religious Worſhip is recommended to us in this Precept, and the other three refer to it, as thus preſcribed to us. And in this reſpect every other Command in the firſt Table hath a neceſſary Reference to the firſt, and that this is the proper Aim of this Precept, we have already obſerved, and made to appear, in the opening of it.

(3.) *THAT all the Ordinances or Inſtitutions of God are given and intended to guide us to and in our right cloſing with God as our laſt End, and objective Happineſs.* This is ſufficiently evident, from the Conſideration, that they belong to Worſhip, and that this is the very deſign of all Worſhip; as hath already been made to appear, and will be further plain to us, if we obſerve, that God himſelf hath declared this to be the Reaſon, of the Laws and Ordinances which he gave to his People Iſrael. Thus we have it repreſented in, *Deut.* 10 12, 13. They are to ſhew us how we are to ſerve our God, and therein to pay him the Honour and Homage that is his due; theſe therefore are given as a teſt to try their Obedience, and their acknowledging of him therein, and themſelves to be an holy People devoted to his Glory, *Deut.* 26. 17, 18, 19.

Conclu. 2. *THE Morality of the Second Command, doth not properly conſiſt in the things Inſtituted, but in the Authority of the Inſtituter, and the Reaſon of the Inſtitution.* That we may take this up right, let us obſerve,

1. THERE are two ſorts of Duties which come under this Commandment, viz. Firſt, Such as are *in themſelves purely Moral* and Natural. Such are Prayer, and Praiſing of him, hearkening to his Voice, and endeavouring

ing to acquaint ourſelves with his Will. Secondly, Such as are in themſelves meerly *Poſitive and Arbitrary*. Such were all the Rites, Ceremonies, and Sacrifices of the Old Law Ceremonial, and many of the Statutes of the Judicial Law. Such alſo are the Sacraments of the New Teſtament which are ordained by Chriſt, in his Goſpel Church.

2. THERE is a diverſe Conſideration to be had of theſe with reſpect unto this Precept, their Relation to it is different, as will be evident. For,

1. CONCERNING *ſuch Precepts* as are of themſelves *purely Moral* and *Natural*, *two* Things are to be conſidered.

(1.) *THAT as they are ſo, they belong not to the Second, but to the Firſt Command.* And it is a Rule, that though a Duty may belong to ſeveral of the Commands, yet in the ſame reſpect, it can belong to but one Now whatſoever belongs to natural Worſhip as ſuch, is appropriated to the firſt, and muſt be enquired after there. Prayer therefore, and Praiſing, and Hearing, as they are enjoyned on all Men by the Law of Nature, do only refer hither; for the Reaſon of them, naturally reſults from our knowing and acknowledging God to be our God.

(2) BUT *as they are appointed by God*, to be obſerved in this or that Ordinance, ſo they *belong to Inſtituted Worſhip*. There are the Ordinances, which God hath appointed, to be attended by his profeſſing People, which he hath given them according to his Wiſdom and Pleaſure. In theſe Ordinances he hath commanded theſe and thoſe moral Duties of Natural Worſhip to be attended, as Praying in Aſſemblies of his People, the Preaching of the Word, &c. Now under this Conſideration of their being ſo performed, they belong to Inſtituted Worſhip, and ſo to this Second Command.

2. CONCERNING *thoſe Precepts which are meerly Poſitive and Arbitrary*, *Four* Obſervations may be made,

(1.) THAT *they do not as ſuch belong to the Firſt Command.* Tho' as they are means and helps to promove Natural Worſhip, they may ſo have a reſpect to that; yet in their own Nature they do not, and the reaſon is in their Nature, viz. becauſe they are Poſitive, and the light of Nature could never have diſcovered them; and tho' they are made ſerviceable to our glorifying of God, yet this Serviceableneſs and Uſefulneſs, is not in the things themſelves, but in the Arbitrement of God, who appointed them for this end, which is evident in all Ceremonies and Sacraments.

(2.) *HENCE they had never been Duties, if God had not thus Inſtituted them.* It is true, the revealed Will of God, is the Supream Cauſe of all moral Duty. But ſome Duties God revealed in Man, at firſt, by writing his Law on their Hearts, and thoſe Duties are perpetual, and belonged to Mankind, as ſoon as made with the Image of God upon him. But thoſe Duties had their firſt riſe from God's Poſitive appointing them, and for that reaſon took their riſe from that Appointment. Thus, Circumciſion was no Duty, till God gave *Abraham* a poſitive Law for it.

(3.) HENCE *none are under the Obligation of them, but ſuch to whom they are revealed.* For Men who *enjoy* the Oracles of God, wherein his Statutes and Judgments are ſhewn them, and yet *neglect* their Attendance on them, will be charged as Sin on them; but they to whom they were never diſcovered, will not be thus Guilty. As for the Heathen therefore, their want of theſe Inſtitutions is their miſery, but if they never heard of them, nor had the Offer of them, it is not their Sin, as it is for them to neglect Duties of Natural Worſhip, *Jer.* 10. 25.

(4) HENCE *they are Arbitrary and Mutable in their own Nature.* The Duties of Natural Worſhip continue the ſame unalterably from the beginning, whereas Inſtituted Worſhip hath been changed. God made known his mind to his Church of Old by degrees; the Law of Sacrifices ſoon after the Fall, Circumciſion to *Abraham*, the Paſſover after the coming out of Egypt, &c. And after Chriſt's coming he put an end to the Moſaical Pædagogy, and introduced the Evangelical; which is therefore to abide, becauſe he intended it to be the laſt. Heb. 12. 28. *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us &c.*

3. THERE are *two Things wherein the Morality of the Second Command doth conſiſt*,

(1.) *IN regard of the Authority, by which all the Precepts of it are enjoyned: which is Divine.* It is a moral Truth, and written in the Law of Nature, that God is Supream, and for that reaſon, that he hath an indiſputable right to Command his Creature, according to his holy Pleaſure; and that when he doth ſo Command it, it owes him a free Obedience, and rebels againſt his lawful Government, if it refuſe or neglect to comply therewithal, Deut. 12. 32. *What thing ſoever I command you, obſerve to do it: thou ſhalt not add thereto, nor diminiſh from it.* And this is grounded in the relation we bear to God, as we are his Creatures, *Pſal.* 100. 2, 3. And on this account he is our Lord and Lawgiver, *Iſai.* 33. 22. On this account is God pleaſed often to give no other reaſon for theſe Commands, but, *I am the Lord.*

(2.) *IN regard of the reaſon and end of their Inſtitution.* Although God is Sovereign, yet he is infinitely Wiſe, and ſuits his Inſtitutions, as for his own Glory, ſo for our Good. He hath therefore appointed them to be the *Media* for the advancing of this deſign. So that they are the way, in which we may glorify him, and enjoy Communion with him, which is our *Happineſs*, which is the laſt end of the Reaſonable Creature, to which he is, by the Law of Nature bound to ſerve, Deut. 10. 13. *To keep the commandments of the Lord, and his ſtatutes which I command thee this day for thy good.*

[SEPTEMBER 23. 1701.]

SER-

SERMON *CLIX.*

Conclu. 3. THAT *it is the Divine Prerogative, to make or appoint Inſtitutions in Worſhip.* This Power belongs to God alone, and to no other, neither Angel nor Man. It is true, theſe may be the Inſtruments of diſcovering to us the Will of God in this regard. But to appoint any Ordinance of Worſhip, is beyond their Liberty. The Reaſon whereof may be afterwards conſidered, under the Negative part of this Command. Here only I ſhall offer a few Aſſertions for the Demonſtration of this Concluſion, viz.

1. *THAT God alone is the Immediate Object of all Worſhip.* The Object of Obedience in general, it either *Immediate* or *Ultimate.* That God is the Ultimate Object of all Obedience is certain. We are to do all with acknowledging him to be the firſt Cauſe of all things, and conſequently to eye his Command in it, and with ſeeking his Glory as our laſt end, in all that we do. And except we thus perform all Duty, it will not amount to Obedience to God, let it be never ſo conformable to the Rule, as to the matter of it. But ſtill, there are Two Tables in the moral Law, the Second whereof contains Duty to Man, or Love to our Neighbour, and in theſe, the *Creature is the immediate Object* of our Duty; whereas, the Firſt Table enjoyns us, in Duties which have God for the next Object, as well as the laſt End of them: So that we are to be carried forth in them, directly to God. Such are all the Duties of Worſhip. According to, Mat. 4. 10. *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve.* So that we may not pay any Worſhip, to any other but God, ſo much as intermediately. Hence that, Iſai. 42. 8. *I am the Lord, that is my Name, and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praiſe to graven images.*

2. THAT the *Inſtitutions in Worſhip*, are properly *Media* to help us in our Natural Worſhip. They are not ordained for their own ſake, but with a reſpect to the former. How far, and in what reſpect they are ſo, we obſerved under the firſt Concluſion. And it is here to be remarked again, to lead us in our preſent ſearch. What is contained in this Natural Worſhip, was conſidered under the former Command. *In ſum*, it is to Know God, to Acknowledge him to be God, and glorify him as God. Now Man, as a dependent Creature, ſtands in need of help in this Concern; much more fallen Man, who hath no natural Light left in him, to direct him how to Worſhip God acceptably. And therefore God hath pleaſed to ſhew him a way, wherein he may do it; and to this way belong all the Inſtitutions, appointed to Man ſince the Fall.

3. THAT all *Inſtitutions as ſuch*, are *Poſitive and Arbitrary.* I ſay, *as ſuch*, for we before obſerved, that there are Duties, which in themſelves belong to Natural Worſhip, that God hath appointed to be performed in Inſtituted Worſhip: But that this Duty is to be performed under this Inſtitution, and that under another, is an Arbitrary thing, and depends on the will of the Inſtituter. But beſides, there are Inſtitutions, which wholly and intirely are Poſitive. There is no Natural Connection between the Duties themſelves, and the End for which they were appointed. Such are all the Ceremonies appointed, either under the Old, or New Teſtament: And the ſupream reaſon that we can give of the Appointment of theſe is, that it was the pleaſure of him that ordained them, to enjoyn them. They did not proceed from his Nature, nor were they in themſelves neceſſary for the due honouring him, by the reaſonable Creature, but only he ſaw good to appoint them. Though ſtill it muſt be acknowledged, that he had a deſign in them, which was his own Glory, and our Benefit. However, the Seal of them is only this, *I am the Lord.* And he might have appointed others, as well as theſe, had he ſo pleaſed.

4. THAT the *Uſefulneſs* and *Efficacy* of all Inſtitutions in Worſhip, *depends* on the *Pleaſure* of the Inſtituter. Their uſefulneſs conſiſts in their ſerviceableneſs to the end for which they were appointed. For we obſerved, that they themſelves are not an end, but a *Medium* to it; and in this reſpect are they a *Medium*, viz. as they may advantage us to promove the great End of all Worſhip, which is to glorify God, and enjoy Communion with him, which is our true Bleſſedneſs: and if they miſs of this end in us, they do eventually become vain Oblations, and in no reſpect profitable to us. And this is their uſefulneſs, when they help forward the Graces of Holineſs in us, and ſo lead us to Eternal Life. Now this Efficacy depends upon the Inſtituter. We cannot give it to them, nor make them thus powerful to us, it muſt therefore come from him who ordains them; nor can our dependence for it be rationally placed on any other. And it hence neceſſarily follows, that none elſe can, with any reaſon, pretend to make ſuch Inſtitutions, but he who can put vertue into them, to cauſe them to advance this deſign. For any to appoint a Religious Ordinance, who cannot command a Bleſſing to accompany the uſing of it, it is both egregious folly & arrogance, and the very light of Nature condemns it.

5. THAT *God*, and *he only can give a Bleſſing and Succeſs* to any Inſtitution. He can do it, let the *Medium* be what it will, and to an eye of humane reaſon never ſo improbable, as having no natural Connexion with the end for which it is ordained; yet if he Commands it, he is able to make it certainly to attain its end. He therefore often chuſeth ſuch *Media* as Men count fooliſhneſs, that therein he may illuſtrate the glory of his Wiſdom & Power. The Preaching of Chriſt Crucified was ſo eſteemed, by the *Jew* and *Greek*, 1 Cor. 1. 23.

But

But we preach Chriſt crucified, unto the Jews a ſtumbling block, and unto the Greeks fooliſhneſs. And yet he tells us, ver. 24. *But unto them which are called, both Jews & Greeks, Chriſt, the power of God, and the wiſdom of God.* And further declares, ver. 26,27. *Not many wiſe men after the fleſh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God hath choſen the fooliſh things of the world, to confound the wiſe, and God hath choſen the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty.* And he challengeth this to himſelf, Iſai. 48. 17. *Thus ſaith the Lord thy redeemer, the holy one of Iſrael, I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit.* And that no other but he can do, is equally certain. And there needs nothing more to demonſtrate this, than to conſider, that the moſt able & faithful Miniſters, whom he makes uſe of in the diſpenſation of his Inſtitutions, do utterly diſclaim any Ability in them, to make any one of theſe Ordinances, effectual to the ſaving good of thoſe to whom they diſpenſe them; but refer that entirely to him. Which Argument *Paul* uſeth, to beat off his *Corinthians*, from placing an over-value upon the beſt of Miniſters, 1 *Cor.* 3. 5,6,7.

6. THAT God hath *engaged* his *Bleſſing* to *no other* Inſtitutions, but thoſe of his own Appointment. He hath encouraged his People, to attend upon his own, by promiſing his preſence and bleſſing with them, in their due attendance on them, Exod. 20. 24. *In all places where I record my Name, I will come unto thee, and I will bleſs thee.* But he hath not ſo done, in regard of any other. He threatned them with his Anger, as will afterwards appear; and for this reaſon, they that attend them, are ſaid to Worſhip him in vain, Mat. 15. 9. *But in vain they do worſhip me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.* If Men could oblige God, to ſucceed all their Inventions, which they pretend to be for his Glory, they might have a Plea for them; but it is not ſo, but the contrary, and the reaſon of it may be conſidered in its proper Place. Here only let it be obſerved, that if no Inſtitutions are of uſe or benefit, but ſuch as are under Heaven's approbation and bleſſing, it muſt needs follow, that it is an abuſe to Mankind for any to lay ſuch an Injunction on Men, when they can ſecure no Benefit to their attendance on them.

7. THAT all Inſtitutions of Worſhip *bind the Conſcience, which is ſubject to God only.* All Worſhip that is lawful is due to God, for he is the only Object of it, and all the Service which is due to him, muſt have a Divine Law for it; for no leſs an Authority can warrant it. And all Divine Laws *as ſuch*, bind the Conſcience, for he is the Lord of it, and he himſelf hath aſſured us, that he will puniſh them that violate his Ordinances, tho' ſecretly. Now he that pays Conſcientious Obedience to any Inſtitutions, doth therein own, that his Conſcience is ſubject to that Authority, by which they are enjoyned; and becauſe God only knows, and can judge the Conſcience, it muſt either have that God hath himſelf appointed, or Authorized another to appoint in his Name; but God hath reſerved this to himſelf, and hath limited us to this Rule, in Deut. 12. 32. *What thing ſoever I command you, obſerve to do it: thou ſhalt not add thereto, nor diminiſh from it.*

Conclu. 4. THAT the *Word of God is the only Rule*, by which we are to inform our ſelves, what are the Ordinances of Divine Inſtitution. If we would know what are thoſe Poſitive Precepts of his, which concern this Affair, and not be miſtaken about them, we muſt repair to this Oracle for our information. And that we may rightly take up this *Concluſion*, and the *reaſon* of it, let theſe things be obſerved,

1. THAT the *light of Nature cannot of it ſelf diſcover to us*, what is a Divine Inſtitution. It may ſometimes be able, to give us a convincing reaſon of the equity and ſuitableneſs of the Inſtitution, yet, that this or that is an Ordinance, it can give us no information. And the reaſon of this is evident, becauſe, as was before intimated, they are the Arbitrary Declarations of his Sovereign Will. They therefore who allow ſuch a Power to humane Reaſon, or the light of Nature, in ſome things, have taken up a more lax and large Notion of an Inſtitution, than I intend, and *confound* things which ought to be *diſtinguiſhed*. For indeed, that which derives immediately from the Sovereignty of God, and hath no foundation neceſſary in the nature of the thing, cannot be inferred and concluded from our way of reaſoning. And in regard of this, may that demand be well made, Rom. 11. 24. *For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counſeller.*

2. HENCE we muſt *receive this diſcovery from God by a particular Revelation.* The light of Nature in a more large ſenſe may be called a Revelation; but that which is more ſtrictly ſo called, is that which God hath made known of his mind after an extraordinary manner, in the firſt diſcovery of it to Men, tho' it hath afterwards been diſcovered to others by thoſe to whom it was firſt ſo communicated. And if it had not firſtly been ſo manifeſted, Mankind muſt forever have remained ignorant of it. Now there are but theſe two ways, in which Men are capable of coming by the knowledge of any thing, viz. by Reaſon and Revelation. If therefore the former is defective in this regard, we muſt be beholden to the latter for it. Hence we have our Saviour Chriſt making ſuch a disjunction, in his animadverſion upon *Peter*'s Confeſſion, Math. 16. 17. *Fleſh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.*

3. *THAT God hath pleaſed to reveal his Will, to ſome extraordinarily, in the giving of theſe Inſtitutions.* As theſe Ordinances have been given to the Church, not all at once, but ſucceſſively, and with additions & alterations, ſo all theſe things were by Men inſpired, and

who

who did all as commanded by God. And this they had, ſometimes by Dreams and Viſions, ſometimes by Meſſages received from Angels, and frequently by the Son of God, who is called the Angel of the Covenant: but ſtill, it was from God, that they had the injunction; they came not on their own heads. And they had thoſe infallible tokens, by which they knew that it was a Divine Revelation, that was made to them, that enabled them without hælitancy to prefix it with, *Thus ſaith the Lord.* And thus *Paul* introduceth the Inſtitution of the Lord's Supper, 1 Cor. 11. 23. *For I have received of the Lord, that which alſo I delivered unto you.*

4. *THAT God hath ordered theſe Statutes of his to be recorded in the Holy Scriptures.* True, theſe were for a long time, handed from one Generation to another, and received from Fathers to Children, by Tradition; but it was God's Pleaſure, when He ſaw meet, to command the Writing of theſe things, that ſo they might be preſerved, for the help & direction of his People at all times. Thus we find, that when *Moſes* had received the Ordinances in the Mount, he recorded them, Exod. 24. 4. *And Moſes wrote all the words of the Lord, and roſe up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Iſrael.* And we are told of ſuch a Command, Exod. 34. 27. *Write thou theſe words.* And *Moſes* wrote the whole Law in a Book, *Deut.* 31. 24. We are therefore told, both how the Scriptures were written, and for what end and uſefulneſs they were ſo, 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. *All ſcripture is given by inſpiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furniſhed unto every good work.* And God's People were directed to regulate themſelves by this, when Deceivers were ready to impoſe upon them, Iſai. 8. 20. *To the law and to the teſtimony: if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no truth in them.*

5. THAT there are *no new Inſtitutions ordained*, and conſequently no new Revelation of any to be expected, *ſince the Canon of the Scriptures was perfected.* What extraordinary diſcoveries of the mind of God may be made to Men, in the day of Reformation, and Reſtitution of all things in the Church of God, which is hoped and waited for, I ſhall not inquire. That the Spirit ſhall then be poured forth abundantly, we are to believe, according to the Scriptures. Doubtleſs, God will then communicate a great deal of Light to his Choſen, whereby they ſhall have abundant ſatisfaction in thoſe great Truths of his Word, about which, Chriſtendom is at this Day, involved in endleſs Diſputes. For we are told, Hab. 2. 14. *For the earth ſhall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the ſea.* But this is certain, that there will be no new Ordinances appointed. It pleaſed God to ſet up a legal Adminiſtration, to be and continue, till Chriſt had come in the fleſh: And He being the Subſtance of thoſe ſhadows, gave being to the things therein prefigured, and ſo put an end to them; till when, they were to be of force; according to *Cant.* 4. 6. *Heb.* 9. 10. But when Chriſt had accompliſhed his Work on Earth, & took poſſeſſion of his Kingdom, he gave a new Diſpenſation of Ordinances to his Church, which is to continue till the Conſummation of all things. And for this reaſon, it is ſaid to be a Kingdom, that cannot be moved, *Heb.* 12. 28. When therefore the Apoſtle *John* had written his Book of Revelation, which is the laſt of Canonical Scripture, he ſet ſuch a Seal as that to it, Rev. 22. 18, 19. *For I teſtify unto every one that heareth the words of the propheſie of this book, If any man ſhall add unto theſe things, God ſhall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man ſhall take away from the words of the book of this propheſie, God ſhall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*

6. HENCE *it follows, that if we would know what are the Goſpel Inſtitutions, we muſt apply our ſelves to the Word of God for them.* This is the only unerring Rule for our direction. Chriſt is the only Lawgiver of his Church, and his Miniſters are to limit themſelves, to teach Men no other injunctions, but ſuch as he hath preſcribed, *Mat.* 28. 20. And how ſhall they know them, but by his Word, wherein he hath given his whole Counſel in this reſpect? And it is ſufficient for them to reject any Ordinance of Worſhip, which is impoſed on them, if it hath not his Warrant for it. God therefore thought that to be enough for their Conviction, *Jer.* 7. 31.

Conclu. 5. *THAT all the Inſtitutions of Divine Appointment, are equally our Duty, with the Duties of Natural Worſhip.* This muſt be underſtood with reſpect to ſuch as have the revelation of theſe Ordinances made unto them by the Word of God. For we before obſerved, that none are under the Obligation of them, but thoſe to whom they are revealed. But Men greatly miſtake themſelves, who think that altho' they are under indiſpenſible Duty, to perform Duties of Natural Worſhip to God, yet they may neglect thoſe which are of Inſtitution without danger; but this is a great error, and the occaſion of a great deal of Sin. Not that every Inſtitution is to be run upon without the Qualifications required, but it is a Sin in Men to live unqualified, and think to plead that for their excuſe or juſtification in their neglect; as if one Sin would excuſe us from another. The Truth then of this Concluſion, may be demonſtrated in a few Things,

1 THEY are *enjoyned by the ſame Authority.* God is the Author of the Law of Nature, as well as of the Poſitive Law, and of this as well as that. Now the firſt Obligation lying upon any to obey a Law, is from the Conſideration of the Power or Authority of the Lawgiver. If it be his Prerogative to make ſuch

a Statute, and bind it upon us, it must indispitably be our Duty to submit to it; and whatsoever difference there may be in the things themselves, as without question there is a difference, yet in point of Obedience it amounts to one: the same Authority is despised in the neglect of the one, as of the other, and there is as much Contempt cast upon him by this as by that. That therefore is a Preface to all the Commands, *Exod.* 20. 2.

2. THEY are *directed to the same End*, and to be performed to the *same Object*. They are both of them Worship, though diversified by the distinction of Natural and Instituted. They are both for the same Design, viz. the carrying on of the Religion wherein God is to be acknowledged and glorifyed by the Reasonable Creature. God is therefore to be served in them both. And as it is our great Business to serve him, so we are to take our directions from him, how to do it; and in these he hath told it us. And because these Institutions are the *Media* found out by God's Wisdom, and prefixed by his holy Will, to help us in our moral Worship, we cannot neglect these, without hindring our selves in the other. They that will omit their attendance upon the Ordinances, will soon grow remiss in Natural Duties.

3. THEY *are by the Precept made a necessary Means to the great end of Worship.* What that end is, we have already observed. Now a thing may be said to be necessary, either in its own Nature, or by vertue of some Law or Precept; the former Necessity is, when the thing cannot be without it; the latter is, when it is the Will of God, that we shall obtain his Blessing in no other way. In the former respect, no particular Ordinance, is absolutely necessary; tho' in general, the Nature of Man, and of Worship, require that there be some Ordinances about it. Though it be at God's liberty, what he will enjoyn. But in the latter respect, these are necessary to be observed and obeyed by us, because God hath said, that this is the way in which he will be Worshipped by us, and accordingly will communicate himself to us. Hence the enjoyment of these is said to be the special Priviledge of a People, *Psal.* 147. 19, 20.

4. *THAT they are a Test, by which God proves our Obedience to him.* God's Sovereign Prerogative, is in nothing more asserted, than in the Second Command; as will afterwards be considered. Now God hath from the beginning used such a Test. He did so with *Adam* in his Integrity by the Tree of Knowledge. He did so with his Ancient People, in the Laws of Ordinances given to them by *Moses*; and he hath done so by his Gospel Church, in the prescribed Appointments of it. On this tenure therefore the Promise runs, *Deut.* 5. 32. 6. 24. Now it is not what the thing is in it self, but what it is to us, that puts weight upon it. And nothing can discover our Hearts more, than a trial that is in a thing of it self small and easy, and yet laid on us to be a proof of our Sincerity: As *Adam*'s forbearing the fruit of one Tree; *Saul*'s tarrying seven Days: and many of like nature.

5. *THAT they are urged upon us, by Reasons fetched from the same Topicks.* Some have thought all those Duties to be in themselves Moral, which are inforced with Arguments that are so, but that is a mistake: for altho' the Precepts themselves are Positive, yet the Obligation to Obedience is Moral, and therefore the Motives may well be so too. Such as that, *Lev.* 10. 44. and many of like import. God would hereby give us to understand, that tho' the thing were not a Duty, but at Liberty, before he commanded it; yet when once it hath his Seal upon it, we as truly pollute our selves with Sin, by transgressing of it, as by the breach of any of the meerly moral Commands.

6. *THEY have equal Sanctions annexed to them.* The Sanctions that are added to any Laws, are to give a Solemnity to them, in or upon the Consciences of Men. Now God hath made the same Promises to Obedience, and declared the same Threatnings against Disobedience to his Institutions, as unto the Precepts of Natural Worship. When God had given the Law to Israel, what greater inforcement could be added than that, *Deut.* 32. 46, 47. And that in *Chap.* 30. 19. And we find what a fearful Commination is uttered against those that unworthily Communicate at the Lord's Table, 1 *Cor.* 11. 29. Yea, and let us remember, that all the misery that is fallen upon the whole race of Mankind, was introduced by the transgression of a Positive Precept or Ordinance, *Gen.* 3. Let us then fear God, and take heed that we neglect not nor despise any of his holy Ordinances.

[OCTOBER 21. 1701.]

SERMON *CLX.*

II. IT now follows *that we take an Account, of the more special Duties, that belong to this kind of Worship.* And here we must warily distinguish, between the Duties of Natural Worship, and those which are Instituted. And that more peculiarly for two Reasons. Partly because Natural Worship, in all the Parts of it is to be performed by all Christians; and there are none that can live in the neglect of them, without Sin, since the very light of Nature tells Men, that they are due to God from the Reasonable Creature, as was ordained under the first Command: Whereas divers of God's Institutions, do not only appoint Positive Duties of Worship, but also confine the discharge of them to such Offices, as are therein ordained of God; and if others should undertake them, they would be guilty of Usurpation. Such were the Priest's Office of old. Hence they so treated him, 2 Chron 26. 18. *And they withstood Uzziah the king, & said*

unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn incenſe unto the Lord, but to the prieſts, the ſons of Aaron, that are conſecrated to burn incenſe: go out of the ſanctuary, for thou haſt treſpaſſed, neither ſhall it be for thine honour from the Lord God. Partly, becauſe the Duties of natural Worſhip, are fixed and unalterable, and remain to the World's End, whereas Inſtitutions are alterable, though not by Men, yet by God who ordains them; and though they are of equal Force with the other, while they have the Seal of God's Authority upon them, yet when repealed, they ceaſe to bind the Conſcience, yea, they become rude and beggarly Elements, as *Paul* calls them, *Gal.* 4. 8. which hath alſo been manifeſted, under the Conſideration of the Nature, Reaſon, and Bounds of Inſtituted Worſhip.

WE are here alſo to remember, that there are Duties of Natural Worſhip, required to be performed, in the Exerciſe of inſtituted Worſhip. Though theſe are diſtinguiſhed in Doctrine, yet they are joined together in Practice; for we obſerved, that this is appointed to help us in exerciſing of that. But ſtill, it is not left to Man's Arbitrement, nor may every one at pleaſure undertake the Performance of theſe, in the way of an Ordinance, under the pretence, that it is natural Worſhip. For ſo would the diſtinct Offices, which Chriſt hath appointed in his Church, be confounded, Rom. 10. 15. *And how ſhall they preach, except they be ſent?*

Again, WE are to diſtinguiſh between an Inſtitution it ſelf, and the Circumſtances of it. There are ſome natural Circumſtances, neceſſarily required to all Actions, whether civil or religious; thus, every Ordinance muſt be performed, in ſome Time, and in ſome Place, becauſe Man's Nature requires it. Now if God hath fixed theſe, as he did of old, with reſpect to diverſe Services, this belongs to the Inſtitution, and binds the Conſcience to the Obſervation of it: But if there be no particular Precept for it, it belongs to the Prudentials of Chriſtians, and the Light of Nature is to direct, yea, and the Providence of God may vary it. There are alſo civil Circumſtances, ſuch as Garb and Geſture, in which Modeſty and Gravity are requiſite; but theſe are not in themſelves, any part of inſtituted Worſhip, nor hath God appointed any limited Ordinance about them; and how far the Practice of the Apoſtles amounted to an Inſtitution, in theſe and thoſe Particulars, is matter of Diſpute. There were ſome things they did extraordinarily; and ſuited to their Apoſtolical Function, and thoſe Gifts which are now ceaſed, the doing whereof is to ceaſe with them. Other things they did occaſionally, and according to the Rules of Prudence, which cannot be the Rule of a fixed Ordinance, in the Church of God.

In ſum, WE have obſerved, that an Inſtitution in Worſhip is, whatſoever God requires to be performed by his People in way of Worſhip, by a Poſitive Precept. And that we may be more particular in this, let us obſerve, That the Divine Inſtitutions may be conſidered, according to the Times of the Church of God. Theſe were ſuch as were given to Man in Innocency, or ſuch as were appointed to Man ſince the Apoſtaſy. God gave to Man in Integrity, the Tree of Life and Knowledge, for a Sacramental Uſe to him, by a Poſitive Law, which were added as Seals to the Sanctions of the moral Law. Since the Fall we may divide the Times into two Parts, viz. From *Adam* to *Chriſt*, and from *Chriſt* to the *End of the World*. From *Adam* to *Chriſt*, Chriſt treated with the World under a new Covenant, of which, there were more obſcure Diſpenſations, till Chriſt himſelf appeared to be the Light of the World. Hence he gave them diverſe Ordinances, for the help of their Faith, and directing of them in their Religious worſhipping of him. Theſe were fewer at the beginning, and grew more numerous in proceſs of Time, according to God's Pleaſure, and the ſuitableneſs of them, to the State of the Church then being. Before the Flood, the principal that we have intimation of, were Sacrifices, which are not without ſome reaſon ſuppoſed, to have been offered immediately upon the Fall, and our firſt Parents cloathed with the Skins of them, but expreſſed to have been offered by *Cain* and *Abel*, *Gen.* 4. *begin.* And the diſtinction of Beaſts, into Clean and Unclean, which difference therefore was obſerved, in *Noah*'s ſorting of them in the Ark, and after the Flood offering only of thoſe, *Gen.* 7. 2. And 8. 20. *And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beaſt, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar.* And the aſſembling of themſelves for publick Worſhip, Gen. 4. ult. *Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.* After the Flood, God added the Prohibition of eating Blood, by a Poſitive Law, there being no reaſon in the Law of Nature, why that ſhould not as well be eaten, as any other part of the Creature, *Gen.* 9. 4. And from thence till *Abraham*, we have no notice of any thing added to inſtituted Worſhip. But to him he gave Circumciſion, *Gen.* 17. 10. And thus they continued till *Moſes*, by whom God gave to the Children of Iſrael, a Syſtem of Inſtitutions, too numerous here to be related. The Paſſover appointed, with all the particular Ordinances of it, upon their coming out of Egypt, *Exod.* 12. But the reſt were given to *Moſes* in the Wilderneſs, upon Mount Sinai, upon the tenor whereof, God renewed Covenant with that People, and took them to be his People. Hitherto belonged the Tabernacle, and all the Utenſils of it. The giving the Prieſthood to *Aaron*, and his Poſterity. The putting Holineſs upon Times, and Places, and Things. All the Ceremonies of the ceremonial Law, which were very numerous; which things were to ſtand in Force, till the Times of Reformation, *Heb.* 9. 10. i. e. till Chriſt ſhould come and make a Change, in the

whole

whole frame of inſtituted Worſhip. Now, as Chriſt upon his coming, and accompliſhing the things that did prefigure him under the Law, did put an End to the Moſaical Pedagogy, and thereupon thoſe former Appointments now ceaſed to be Ordinances,& became beggarly Elements, as the Apoſtle aſſerts and proves in the Epiſtles to the *Galatians* and *Hebrews*: So he ordained new Inſtitutions in the Goſpel Church, to be obſerved by them, who profeſs themſelves Chriſtians; and ratified them, by the ſame Authority. On which Account we are told, Heb. 3.2. *Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as alſo Moſes was faithful in all his houſe.* And theſe are they which we are concerned withal. And hitherto more peculiarly do belong,

1. *THE Appointment of Goſpel Churches for the Publick Worſhip of God.* The Light of Nature indeed tells us, that as Man was made for God's Service, and conſequently owes a Worſhip to him, and being made a ſociable Creature, ought as there is Opportunity, to ſerve him in a ſocial Way. Nevertheleſs, the Appointment of the ſeveral Societies of Chriſtians, for the upholding and carrying on of this Worſhip, is Poſitive, and God hath uſed his ſovereign Wiſdom in the preſcribing and ordering of ſuch Societies, ſo as they may beſt obtain the End of their Ordination. It would here be endleſs to enquire into all the Diſputes, that have been managed about the Nature and Conſtitution of Goſpel Churches, but that there are ſuch inſtituted by Chriſt, is evident in the New Teſtament, which mentions Churches in the Plural, and tells us of the ſeveral Places, wherein they were planted, the Appointment and Regulation whereof, belongs to Chriſt's ſupream Authority, who is the King of his Church, from whom they are to receive their Injunctions, Mat. 28. 18, 19, 20. *All power is given unto me in heaven and earth, Go ye therefore &c.* Whoſe entire frame is manifeſtly diverſe from that of the Jewiſh Church State, being ſuited to the Service of Chriſt, already come in the Fleſh, and exalted on his Throne.

2. *THE Appointment of the ſtated Ordinances, which are to be adminiſtred in theſe Churches.* The Uſefulneſs of theſe Churches, was for the convenient performing of theſe Ordinances. Now it is notorious, that the Ordinances of the Jewiſh Church, were vaſtly diverſe from thoſe of the Goſpel Church; they are called carnal Ordinances, and theſe Spiritual; not from the *End* of them, for therein they agree, but for the *Nature* of them. Now theſe Ordinances principally are,

1. *PUBLICK Prayer.* For though Prayer itſelf is a part of natural Worſhip, yet the appointing of it in Church Aſſemblies, is an Ordinance. 1 Tim. 2. 8. *I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.* But of this there will be further occaſion, under the Conſideration of the Helps to Obedience, whereof this is one Principal.

2. *PREACHING of the Word.* That the Word of God is given us, for our help and direction in the Service of God, is certain, and the Law of Nature tells us, that if God afford his Word to us, we ought to acquaint ourſelves with it, and uſe ſuitable means to that End. But this particular way of preaching it, in the Congregations of God's People, which he hath appointed to be a *Medium*, for the Converſion and Edification of his Choſen, is Poſitive, 1 Cor. 1. 21. *For after that, in the wiſdom of God, the world by wiſdom knew not God, it pleaſed God by the fooliſhneſs of preaching to ſave them that believe.* This therefore is ſolemnly preſſed on *Timothy*, 2 Tim. 4. 1, 2. *I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing, and his kingdom: Preach the word.*

3. *BAPTISM and the Lord's Supper.* That theſe Sacraments are to be uſed in the Goſpel Church, is certain, becauſe there is a Precept for it. That they are no part of natural Worſhip, but purely Poſitive, is no leſs evident, and for that Reaſon they are acknowledged by all the Orthodox, to be ſacred Ceremonies; and that they are arbitrary and alterable is evident, becauſe they are brought into the Goſpel Worſhip, in the room of Circumciſion and the Paſſover, which are thereupon removed and ceaſe. The former being more ſuited to repreſent Chriſt to come, and theſe to commemorate the great Benefits, that he hath introduced by his coming. The Appointment of theſe we have the Account of, and the ſtanding of them for uſe in the Goſpel Church, till Ordinances will be of no further uſe. Of the former in, Mat. 28. 19, 20 *Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the holy Ghoſt: Teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world. Amen.* The latter, Luk. 22. 18. *For I ſay unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God ſhall come.* Compared with, 1 Cor. 11. 26. *For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do ſhew the Lord's death till he come.*

4. *THE Diſcipline, by which the Government of Chriſt in his Church, is to be upheld.* Every Church is a Society of ſuch, as are under Ordinances adapted to the preſervation of ſuch a Body, in due Order. And becauſe it conſiſts of ſinful Men, it is neceſſary for the preſervation of it, that there be a due Diſcipline exerciſed in it, for the reclaiming of the Scandalous, encouraging of the Penitent, and Warning of all. This the light of Nature teacheth: But the determining of the particular Rules of this in the Church, is Poſitive. And this is quite of another Nature from that of Civil Bodies, whoſe Weapons are Car-

nal, and applied only to the outward Man: whereas theſe are Spiritual, and concern the Conſcience, 2 *Cor.* 10. 13, *&c.* Hitherto belong Church Cenſures, of Admonition, and when need requires, Excommunication, in caſe of Contumacy; and the reſtoring of ſuch as are Penitent: which are called by the general terms of *binding* and *looſing*, Mat. 18. 18. *remitting* and *retaining*, *Joh.* 20. 23.

5. *RELIGIOUS Faſting.* Faſting it ſelf, as it is an outward abſtinence from the uſe of the Creature, is no part of Worſhip at all, and conſequently not of Natural Worſhip. That God hath appointed it, as a Duty to be practiſed in his Church, as well as by particular Perſons, on Occaſions, for Solemn Humiliation and Prayer, is abundantly confirmed in the times of the Law. Hence that, in Joel. 2. 15, 16. *Blow the trumpet in Zion, ſanctify a faſt, call a ſolemn aſſembly. Gather the people, &c.* And that it alſo belongs to Goſpel-times in the Worſhip of God, Act. 13. 2, 3. *As they miniſtred to the Lord, and faſted, the holy Ghoſt ſaid, Seperate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had faſted &c.* Of which Nature alſo are Days of Thanksgiving.

3. *THE Appointing of the Offices in the Church, for the diſpenſation of the Goſpel Ordinances.* Theſe Ordinances are to be diſpenſed in Chriſt's Name, and by his Authority. And hence there muſt be ſome Authorized by him for it, without which Commiſſion, none ought to take this Province upon him. It is ſaid of the High Prieſt of Old, Heb. 5. 4. *And no man taketh this honour unto himſelf, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.* And it is of like force in all the Offices in the Church. The Offices in the Goſpel Church, are not the ſame, under the New-Teſtament, which they were under the Old, which infer their being Poſitive. We are told what they are, and that they were Chriſt's Aſcenſion-Gifts, Eph. 4. 10, 11. *He that deſcended, is the ſame alſo that aſcended far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave ſome Apoſtles: and ſome, Prophets: and ſome, Evangeliſts: and ſome, paſtors and teachers.* And Chriſt himſelf grounds their Commiſſion, upon the Authority he had to give it, *Mat.* 28. 18. Hence that, Rom. 10. 15. *And how ſhall they preach, except they be ſent?* And theſe only have the promiſe of Chriſt's Preſence with them as ſuch, *ver.* 20.

4. *THE Maintenance of the Miniſtry.* For tho' the light of Nature ſaith in general, that ſuch as ſerve the Publick, ought to have a Publick Support: Yet, as the Miniſtry are an Ordinance, ſo their Maintenance is appointed by Chriſt, 1 Cor. 9. 14. *Even ſo hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the goſpel, ſhould live of the goſpel.* Gal. 6. 6. *Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.* Nor hath Chriſt left it, at Men's liberty, whether they will or no. Though poſſibly the way and manner of it under the Goſpel may be a Prudential; yet doubtleſs, every Hearer, hath a tye of Conſcience, to obſerve a ſuitable proportion, according as God bleſſeth his Labours. And this may ſuffice for the ſubject-matter, about which our Obedience to this Command, is to be imployed. Which was the firſt thing we obſerved in the Anſwer. It follows to Conſider,

II. *THE Things wherein this Worſhip is to be performed:* Which are *Three*, viz the *receiving*, *obſerving*, and *keeping pure & entire* theſe Ordinances. Which may briefly be ſpoken to.

1. *WE are to Receive theſe Ordinances.* Deut. 33. 3. *And they ſate down at thy feet: every one ſhall receive of thy words.* And this is the firſt ſtep to, as well as part of our Obedience, to the Second Commandment. Which receiving contains in it,

1. *AN Acknowledgment of the Divine Authority, in giving us theſe Inſtitutions.* Theſe Commands are Arbitrary, and we cannot always diſcern the particular Reaſon of them; but then it ought to ſuffice us, that the Authority by which they are enjoyned, is indiſputable. God in nothing more aſſerts his Sovereignty in his ſpecial Government, than in the Second Command; and therefore he gives that for the binding Reaſon, *I am the Lord.* And this muſt ſatisfy us, and ſilence all our Cavillings. If he Commands, our buſineſs is to obey him, Deut. 12. 32. *What thing ſoever I command you, obſerve to do it: thou ſhalt not add thereto, nor diminiſh from it.*

2. *A thorough Approbation of them in our Minds.* We then only receive God's Word aright, when we approve of it, and account it to be every way excellent, when we can put that encomium upon it, Pſal. 19 7, &c. *The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the ſoul: the teſtimony of the Lord is pure, enlightning the eyes.* And profeſs as he, Pſal. 119. 24. *Thy teſtimonies alſo are my delight, and my counſellers.* And this produceth in us, a love to the Ordinances of God, and a deſire after them; and we take content in them. For it is by theſe cloſing Affections, that we imbrace the ways of God, upon the free Election that our Will hath made of them, which proceeds from the preciouſneſs of them diſcovered to our Minds. And hereupon we do not entertain them as hard Injunctions, and grievous, but as an eaſy Yoke.

3. *An intire and cordial Subjection of our ſelves unto them.* A Law is then properly received, when they to whom it is given, ſubject themſelves to it, and reſolve to conform themſelves accordingly. They take it for their Rule, and acknowledge themſelves to be under the Obligation of Obedience, and willingly engage themſelves. They bind themſelves to it, with a full purpoſe of adhering to the directions of it. Thus we find that *David* did. Pſal. 119. 106. *I have ſworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.* And this muſt be, without any reſerve, either as to any particular Precepts of the Command, or as to any outward Circumſtances,

stances attending of our Obedience. This Subjection, must be full & absolute, *Psal.* 119.6.

2. *WE are not only to receive them, but also to Observe them.* And this is the end of the former, and that wherein alone it can be serviceable to our Obedience. And this Observation is to terminate in Practice, Deut 11.32. *And ye shall observe to do all the statutes and judgments which I set before you this day.* Now to a right Observation of these Statutes of Worship, there are these things requisite,

1. *A studious Endeavour to get a thorough Acquaintance with them.* Knowledge is necessary to Practice. We can never do the Duty, as it ought to be, unless we know it. And it is not there enough, that we know this or that to be a Divine Ordinance, but we must seek to know it, in the Parts & Circumstances of it; for a mistake in any of them, may render us guilty, and provoke God. As that about the Ark did them, on which *David* makes that remark, 1 Chron. 15.13. *The Lord our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not after the due order.* For this reason God injoyned his People of Old, to be very much in meditation on his Law, that they might have a very distinct knowledge of it. And herein *David* testifyed his respect to it, *Psal.* 119. 97. Hence that, Ezek. 43. 10, 11. —*And write it in their sight, that they may keep the whole form thereof, and all the ordinances thereof, and do them.*

2. *A careful and constant Attendance upon them.* Tho' the Promise supposeth Knowledge, yet it terminates on doing, *Joh.* 13. 17. We are not to satisfy our selves with the acts of Natural Worship, but we must faithfully comply with all God's Institutions. As we are not to add, so neither to diminish, *Deut.* 12.32. We are not to content our selves with private and secret Worship, but we are to wait upon publick Ordinances, and delight in them. To be able to say as he, Psal. 26. 8. *Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.* Hence we have that Precept, Heb. 10. 25. *Not forsaking the assembling of our selves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.* We ought to be diligent in our coming to the House of God, and not for trifling Excuses to absent our selves from it. Nor are we to rest content in the Preaching of the Word, but we must seek after an orderly enjoying Baptism, and the Table of the Lord; since the Precepts for these are instamped with the same Authority, which the other is. This therefore is given as the Character of those worthy Persons, Luk. 1.6. *And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless.*

3. *A Conscientious care to conform & confine our selves to the Prescriptions of them.* The Gospel doth not only tell us, what are these Ordinances in general, but it hath told us how they are to be performed; and we are to rest satisfyed, in the Wisdom and Pleasure of Christ about them, and be able to warrant all our Actions, in the discharge of the Duties of them, by the Command of Christ. That therefore is a Precept ever to be attended, Isai. 8. 20. *To the law and to the testimony.* We are not therefore to say, this or that looks as if it were suitable, in such an Ordinance; but terminate all in this, whether Christ hath commanded it, *Mat.* 28. 20.

4. *A Cordial Devoting of our selves to God, in all this.* It is a great mistake to think, that the Second Command only requireth External Worship. Christ hath assured us otherwise, *Joh* 4. 24. And that is an universal Precept, Prov. 23.26. *My son, give me thine heart.* The great design of all Ordinances is to promote Communion with God. We are to draw near unto him in all. There is therefore the exercise of all our Graces required in this Observance. And that Complaint had a reference to God's Institutions, Isai. 29. 13. *This people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me.*

3. *WE are to keep them Pure and Entire.* Which as it hath a respect to the former, so it includes in it these Things,

1. *THE Preserving them as God hath left them, without any mixture of our own Inventions.* One principal respect in which a thing is said to be pure, is when it is without any mixture of another matter, than what belongs to it. And more peculiarly, when it is not compounded, with any thing, that is more base than that is. Thus Metals are pure, when they are free from any dross, or baser Metal. Now the mixing of any thing of our own with the Ordinances of God, is to put Dross to Silver. This therefore we are to avoid. To do all things according to the Pattern. Nor introduce any thing for an Ordinance, which hath not the stamp of Divine Authority upon it. Of which God may demand of us, as of them, Isai. 1.12. *Who hath required this at your hand?*

2. *THAT we apply these Ordinances to the proper Subjects of them.* God hath not only told us, what are the Ordinances, which he hath sanctified for the Use of his Church, but also who are the Subjects who are to partake in these and those; and the Misapplication of them, is reckoned to be a defiling of them. It was therefore a blame which God laid upon them of old, for which he threatened them, Ezek 22. 26. *Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.* And it is an Advice given by our Saviour, Mat. 7. 6. *Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rent you.* And that the Lord's Table is a guarded Ordinance is acknowledged by all Sober Christians,

Chriſtians, and warranted by the Diſcipline which he hath eſtabliſhed in the Goſpel.

3. *THAT we lay aſide no Ordinance as uſeleſs, nor arrogate any under the pretence of the greater Perfection.* That it is our Duty to take heed to our ſelves in both of theſe reſpects, we have already obſerv'd; and by thus doing we keep them entire. That therefore is the Seal of the Goſpel, as it was once of the Law, *Rev.* 22, 18, 19. None are to be let drop, as if the Church could do as well without them; nor any to be taken up, as though it could not be ſafe without the addition of them. We muſt therefore renounce our own Wiſdom, and wholly take up with the Wiſdom of God in this reſpect.

USE. I. *LEARN hence their Sin, who caſt off the Ordinances, under a pretence of Spiritual Worſhip.* Such there are, and have been in the World; who have condemned all Inſtitutions for Carnal, and thought themſelves gotten above them, and thrown all the Contempt they could upon them, and deſpiſed thoſe that Conſcientiouſly attended them. But thoſe that are gotten above Ordinances, are fallen beneath Chriſtians, and take away the Second Command from the Decalogue. And that Text may well be applied to them, Prov. 30. 12. *There is a generation that are pure in there own eyes, and yet is not waſhed from their filthineſs.*

USE. II. *THIS alſo ſhews their folly, who live in the Neglect of Ordinances.* And indeed there is nothing in which God's Authority is more deſpiſed. This indeed, is directly to ſet themſelves to withſtand the Authority of God to Command them. And for ſuch as bear the Name of Chriſtians upon them, it is to violate their Allegiance to him, which, by the Goſpel-Covenant, whereof they are the Partakers, they are obliged unto. And indeed it is to neglect the Means in which they are pointed the way to obtain Salvation. Let us then thank God for his Inſtitutions, and be faithful in our obſerving of them, and take that encouragement ſo to do, which he gave to his People of old, Deut. 32. 47. *For it is not a vain thing for you: becauſe it is your life; and through this thing ye ſhall prolong your days in the land whither ye go over Jordan to poſſeſs it.*

[DECEMBER 16. 1701.]

SERMON *CLXI.*

QUESTION LI.

WHAT is forbidden in the Second Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Second Commandment forbiddeth, the Worſhipping of GOD by Images, or any other way not appointed in His Word.

THE right Conſideration of what is Required in any Precept, will give us light into thoſe things which are Prohibited by it, or Tranſgreſſions of it. And the beſt way to underſtand that diſtinctly, is to conſider the Subject about which the Precept is nexly concerned. And we have before obſerved, that there are two ways in which a Command may be broken, viz by Omiſſion & Commiſſion: Neglect of the Duties required, or doing the Things forbidden by it. And tho' the Anſwer only mentions the latter, yet both may here come under our Conſideration. The Subject-matter of the Second Commmand, is Inſtituted Worſhip, in which it is ſuppoſed, that there are Inſtitutions of Worſhip, and that GOD alone is the Author of them, and that Man is, by vertue of his Authority, under the Obligation of Obedience to them. And tho' the Command is delivered Negatively, yet there is ſomething Poſitive included in it. There is Duty to be actually done, as well as Sin to be avoided. And not to do thoſe Duties, is equally a Sin, as to do the things Prohibited. We may therefore take a brief account of each of theſe.

I. *THIS Command forbids the Neglect or Contempt of any of thoſe Ordinances, which God hath Inſtituted in his Church.* By ſuch Neglect or Contempt, God's Authority is deſpiſed, and thoſe Means which he hath by his Precept made neceſſary helps to Salvation, are diſregarded. And here,

1. *THEY Sin againſt this Command, who renounce all the Goſpel Inſtitutions, under pretence of Spiritual Worſhip.* There is a Generation of ſuch in the World, who caſt all the reproach they can upon the Goſpel Ordinances, and ſcornfully revile thoſe that maintain the Profeſſion and Obſervance of them: As if the Worſhipping of God in the Spirit, ſuperſeded and aboliſhed all outward Service and was to come in the room of it; whereas God requires the whole Man, 1 Cor. 6. 20. *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your ſpirit, which are God's.* And theſe Ordinances are Means appointed on purpoſe, to be helps in our Spiritual Worſhipping of God, and to promove that mediate Communion with him, which is the higheſt that is allowed us in this Life. When therefore Men do caſt off the Ordinances, they lay aſide the very form of Godlineſs, and put themſelves quite out of the way of ſerving God acceptably.

2. *THEY that content themſelves to live without any of them.* Hitherto belong ſuch Societies of People, as live without the ſettled Goſpel Ordinances among them, and can be content

content with a neglect of right Endeavours to obtain it; or, if they have the Word Preached to them, ſeek not further, but live without the Diſpenſation of the Seals of the Covenant. Such Perſons as do not in an orderly way, ſeek to participate in theſe Seals, but live, either without the initiating or confirming Sacrament, or if they are Baptized, they reſt here, and are ſatisfied without the Supper of the Lord. Not that Men are to run raſhly upon this, or are to be received without diſtinction, but when they think it no great matter whether they enjoy it or no, nor ſeek after a fitneſs for it, they practically declare it, to be vain or ſuperfluous, contrary to the Command of Chriſt, who ſaid, *Do this in remembrance of me.*

3. *SUCH as too frequently and eaſily neglect to attend upon theſe Ordinances.* The Apoſtle gives his *Hebrews* warning about this, *Heb.* 10. 25. When, tho' Men do acknowledge it to be their Duty, yet every little thing diverts them. They come when there is nothing to hinder, but every trifling excuſe is ſufficient to make an excuſe of, and poſſibly they are not ſorry to have one. Not but that God's Providence may often prevent them, and ſometimes God would have Mercy rather than Sacrifice. But one that hath a due regard to this Precept, will reckon it a rebuke in Providence, when he is thus taken off.

4. *WHEN they attend upon theſe Ordinances perfunctorily.* There is indeed a ſpecial Reverence due to the Ordinances, which belongs to, and may hereafter be treated of under the Third Command. But they miſtake, who think this Command to have reſpect only to the outward performance of theſe Services. It is certain, that every Command requires the Heart, without which, it cannot be performed acceptably to God, who expects it, Prov. 23. 26. *My ſon, give me thine heart.* It is therefore his Complaint of them, Iſai. 29. 13. *This people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men.* When Men think, that to preſent a Body at an Ordinance, is enough; and if they can but tarry out the time of it, they have done fairly; and mean while entertain themſelves with wandring Thoughts, and vain Objects, and never know what it is to have Communion with God in it, nor ſeek after it: Poſſibly are weary of it, and glad when they are diſmiſt from it: Theſe are here guilty, & offer an horrible ſlight, to thoſe Holy Appointments of God.

II. *THIS Command forbids all Poſitive Worſhip, which is not of Divine Inſtitution.* By Poſitive, I underſtand, that which by an Arbitrary Precept, is made a *Medium* of our Worſhipping of God; none of which can be Authentick, but ſuch as have the Seal of his Authority upon them: As hath already been evidenced under the Affirmative part of the Command. Our Catechiſm ranks theſe under two Heads: One particular, *the Worſhipping of God by Images*; the other general, *or any other way not appointed in his Word.* Whereupon ſome have ranked theſe under two Heads, viz. *Idolatry*, and *Superſtition.* But if this be allowed, we muſt take Idolatry in a reſtrained ſenſe. If we take Idolatry for the Worſhipping of a falſe Object, ſo it is equally forbidden in each Command of the Firſt Table; for God is alike the Object of Worſhip in every one of them: And to pay the Duties proper to any of them, to any elſe but the true GOD, is groſs Idolatry: Though it may be more directly aimed at in the Firſt Command, as it is a comprehenſion of them all; as the Fifth is of all in the ſecond Table. For which Reaſon we conſidered God as the only Object of Worſhip, under the former Command, and ranked Idolatry under it, as a Sin forbidden by it. But if we look upon Idolatry, as a worſhipping of God by Images, making this an *Invented Medium* of paying Divine Honour unto him, ſo it comes under the ſecond Command, and is forbidden by it. And on this Account, ſuch Worſhip is in the Scripture called Idolatry, though it hath been pretended to be paid to the true God. But I ſuppoſe, that becauſe the ſecond Command, doth properly reſpect inſtituted Worſhip, hence all exceſs in this ſort of Worſhip, is properly called Superſtition, and the former of theſe is only one ſpecialty in the Command; and becauſe it was a Sin, which fallen Man was exceeding prone to, it is only named in the Body of the Precept ſynechdochically comprehending all the reſt under it. We may then take a brief Account of each of theſe.

Firſt, *THIS Command forbids the Worſhipping of God by Images.* This is expreſly mentioned; and that in two Particulars.

1. *THE Making of them is prohibited. Thou ſhalt not make.* And under a graven Image and Similitude is comprehended, every manner of Repreſentation of God, whether in Statues or Pictures: For this general Prohibition, doth not reſpect things meerly Civil, but only a Repreſentation of the Deity, as we may gather from, Deut. 4. 15, 16. *Take ye therefore good heed unto yourſelves, (for ye ſaw no manner of ſimilitude on the day that the Lord ſpake unto you in Horeb, out of the midſt of the fire.) Leſt ye corrupt yourſelves, and make you a graven image, the ſimilitude of any figure, the likeneſs of male or female.* Iſai. 40. 18, 19. *To whom then will ye liken God, or what likeneſs will ye compare unto him? The workman melteth a graven image, &c.*

2. *THE offering of Divine Worſhip to them, or before them. Thou ſhalt not bow* &c. And the latter is *exegetical* to the former. God reckons any religious bowing to an Image or Repreſentation, to be a worſhipping it. For tho' Idolaters have been ſo brutiſh, as to direct their Worſhip nextly and immediately to the Image, yea, the wiſe Heathens themſelves were not ſo groſs, as to acknowledge

that

that they lookt upon their Idols, to be real Deities in themſelves, or terminate their Worſhip on them; but they conceived of a God, whom they repreſented by the Image, through which they ſuppoſed him to communicate himſelf to them, and in which they adored him, hoping for a better Acceptance. The Egyptians, when they found good or benefit by any Creature, they worſhippedGod in it, not ſuppoſing that the thing itſelf was God, but that God communicated himſelf to them, by and through the Creature, and that they ought to worſhip him in it, and the Creature no further, then they ſuppoſed God to be in it. For this End alſo they made Images, or Portraitures of theſe and thoſe Creatures, before which they paid their Devotions,and on which they impoſed theName of their God. And this is repreſented as ſinful and ſuperſtitious, Rom. 1. 21, 22, 23. *Becauſe when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their fooliſh heart was darkened. Profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they became fools: And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God, into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four footed beaſts, and creeping things.* Of this Nature was the Golden Calf, which Iſrael made in the Wilderneſs, in Imitation of the Egyptians, among whom they had lived and converſed. Nor did they ſuppoſe it to be God himſelf, but a Repreſentation of him, and put his Name upon it, as we do of a Perſon on his Statue or Picture. Hence they kept the Feaſt to Jehovah, Exod. 32. 5. *To morrow is a feaſt to the Lord.* Of the ſame Nature was *Jereboam*'s Calves, which were erected at *Dan* and *Bethel*, to facilitate the People's Worſhip, and was ſurrogated in the room of the Ark, at the Temple in *Jeruſalem.* Hence that Reaſon is given of the making of them, 1 Kin. 12. 28. *Whereupon the king took counſel, and made two calves of gold, and ſaid unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jeruſalem.* It is true, thoſe are called Gods,in the Word of God, and the worſhipping of them is called Idolatry, yea, they are named Devils, and their Service Devil-Worſhip. See, 2 Chron. 11. 15. *And he ordained him prieſts for the high places, and for the devils,and for the calves which he had made.* Pſal. 106. 36, 37. *And they ſerved their idols which were a ſnare unto them. Yea, they ſacrificed their ſons and their daughters unto devils.* Partly becauſe the ignorant among them, were become ſo brutiſh in their Imaginations, as to terminate their Service on the Idol. Hence that Complaint, Iſai. 44. 19, 20. *And none conſidereth in his heart, neither is their knowledge nor underſtanding to ſay, I have burnt part of it in the fire, yea alſo I have baked bread upon the coals thereof: I have roſted fleſh and eaten it, and ſhall I make the reſidue thereof an abomination?* Partly alſo, becauſe God doth not account himſelf to be acknowledged as God, if his Laws of Worſhip be neglected, and other Rules be invented in the room thereof, *Acts* 17. 24, 25. And by this, the horrible Idolatry of the Church of *Rome* is manifeſted. Nor will all their Evaſions, and copious Diſtinctions, excuſe them from the Guilt of it. Falſe Worſhip is ſuppoſed to be paid to a God that will accept of it, which muſt be a falſe God, for the true GOD abhors it.

Secondly, *THE Commandment forbids the Worſhipping of God, in any other Way, not appointed in his Word.* Not only is it broken by making Images for Adoration, and building and dedicating of Temples to them, but by making any thing to be a religious Ordinance, by any other Authority whatſoever,beſides the Appointment of God. It is not ſufficient for any Authority in the World, to enjoyn any thing as a Part of Divine Worſhip, becauſe the thing itſelf, is not expreſly forbidden in the Scripture, becauſe God hath in ſo many Words forbidden us, either to add to, or diminiſh from any of his Inſtitutions, *Deut.* 12. 32. There is therefore Emphaſis in that, Jer. 19. 5. *They have built alſo the high places of Baal, to burn their ſons with fire for burnt-offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor ſpake it, neither came it into my mind.* God indeed, hath a ſovereign Prerogative to make Ordinances, & to repeal them, yea, to change the whole frame of outward poſitive Worſhip, as he did after Chriſt's coming, in the ſettling & eſtabliſhing of the Goſpel Church. But he hath reſerved this as his Prerogative, and never did, nor will part with it to any Man, or order of Men in the World. And the pretending of ſuch a Power about things indifferent, is a meer begging of the Queſtion. For whatſoever indifferency may be allowed, to the things in themſelves, though all ſober Divines acknowledge, that there is nothing morally indifferent,yet God hath left nothing indifferent in the Eſſentials of Worſhip, but reſerved the Power of determining them to himſelf, and therefore, if he hath not commanded them, they are for that very reaſon forbidden. And the great Noiſe which ſome do make about that Text, 1 Cor. 14. 40. *Let all things be done decently, and in order:* Is but a Noiſe, and no more. There is indeed an Order and Decorum to be obſerved in the Worſhip of God, and there are the occaſional, and variable Circumſtances, which attend upon Worſhip, of which, there is nothing in particular determined in the Word of God, but the Light of Nature, and the general Rules of the Scripture, are to direct therein, and theſe things are to be varied as the Circumſtances vary, and the Edification of God's People is concerned therein. But to introduce new Ordinances, or Parts of Worſhip, under the notion of Circumſtances,is a ſtrain, ſo far beyond Religion, that the Rules of right Reaſon will not allow the Conſequence. It is ſinful and provoking to God, being ſubverſive of the Government of Chriſt in his Church, to call up any of the antiquated Ceremonies and Ordinances of the Levitical Law,

Law, though once the Glory of the Church of Israel, yet being revoked by God himself, they are now become rude and beggarly Elements. *Paul* therefore so deals with them, Gal. 4. 9. *But now after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?* And assures them, Chap. 5. 2. *Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.* And if that which was once glorious, when it had the Stamp of Divine Authority upon it, hath now lost its Glory, when the Seal is torn off from it, shall that which can pretend only to an humane Original, stand in Competition with God's Institutions? How unreasonable? If Christ may be believed, all such Worship is vain, *Mat.* 15. 9. And needs must it be so, because it wants that Approbation of God, whence alone Men can expect a Blessing upon it, without which, it can never reach to the End of an Ordinance. It would be endless to enumerate all the Particulars, wherein this Precept is on this Account transgressed, by making Additions to the Worship of God; so fertile have been the Inventions, and so arrogant the Attempts of vain Men upon this Account. Hitherto belong, the almost uncountable Forgeries and Fopperies of the mystical Babylon, or the Church of *Rome*, who have partly *expunged*, and partly *depraved*, the whole Order of Worship appointed by Christ in the Gospel Church, and introduced an Heſtrionecal and Idolatrous Worship instead of it. Nor are these only Guilty on this Account, but this Sin is to be found among those who have protested against this Mother of Harlots, and attempted towards a Reformation of these Abuses, who yet notwithstanding do retain among them, some Relicts of the Superstition, or have taken up others as truly forbidden by this Command, though possibly not so notoriously Scandalous and Idolatrous. And though some do practice more of it than others, yet probably, there is not that Church, this Day upon the Earth, which hath not more or less of the Guilt of this Sin upon it. Especially if we allow, as we ought to do, the pleading of meer Prudentials to be Institutions, and taking up of traditional Practices, upon no other Foundation, but because their Fathers practiced so before them, not enquiring whether they were ordained by Christ for such. Hitherto belong all those Ecclesiastical Offices, which are set up in the Church, with new Names, and new Powers, not only *circa sacra*, but *in sacris*, which Christ never gave Order about, nor were they his Ascension Gifts, *Eph.* 4 10. Hitherto also belong, all those significant Ceremonies, which are obtruded on the Church of God, besides such as Christ himself hath ordained. There are indeed two Sacraments given by Christ, which are mystical Ceremonies, to be used for spiritual Edification, in which, under outward Signs, spiritual Blessings are signified, and a Blessing is promised to the right using of them. And these Christ thought sufficient for Gospel Times, and hath given us no Licence to add any more to them. Furthermore, to this belong all uncommanded Terms of Communion, or Tests by which Men are to be received into Fellowship in the Ordinances, which are not commanded. Christ indeed hath declared, as that all ought not to be promiscuously received, so what are the Rules of Trial, under which Men are to pass, in order thereto; and whatsoever is more, is Sin, and a Snare to Men's Consciences. Hitherto likewise belongs a scrupulous Abstinence, from any of the Creatures of God, under a Pretence of Conscience, either altogether, or at these and those Seasons: And the Injunction of such Abstinence, under a Protext of Worship, or Imitation of Christ's Fast in the Wilderness. And many more things of a like Nature, might be instanced in, but these may suffice. Nor will all the Pleas brought to excuse these things, vindicate them, since that one thing stands against them all, God hath no where required, and therefore it is unlawful: Which Unlawfulness is not removed by any thing else but a Precept of God, making it a Duty. Not, that the things are in themselves indifferent, because as so, they are no fit *Media* of Worship, and if they become Expedient, they belong to Prudentials, and are so far a moral Duty to be used, but because that is mutable, they may not be fixed. Not because there is a Decency supposed to be in them, or because they are thought to be orderly, for those things may be so in Men's esteem, which are lightly accounted of by God. Besides, these things, under this Notion, belong not to the Ordinances of the Church, but the Prudentials. Not because they have been practised by these and those eminent Persons, or famous Churches, for they also have had their Errors and Mistakes; and when they have at first come out of Apostasy, they have neither seen every wrong thing, nor been able to reform all that are seen, at once. Not because Men suppose they may have a rational Tendency to Edification, as being apt to move Affections in Men, or on Supposition, that Men have received Edification by them; for all that moves the Affections doth not truly promove Piety in Men, which is the only right Edification, but rather stirs up a superstitious Devotion, which is indeed destructive to true Godliness. As also because the Blessing and good Success of Ordinances depends on God, and our using of them in Faith, must derive from a Promise made to be with us, and bless us in them. Whereas God hath made this Promise to no other Ordinances, but such as he himself hath appointed. Not a Pretence hereby to win Unbelievers, to have a good Opinion of the Christian Religion, who are apt to take Prejudice, and despise the Gospel Way, because of the plainness of

it. For God hath no need of ſuch Tricks to inveigle Men withal, but can, and doth when he ſees meet bleſs the deſpiſed Goſpel to the Converſion of Sinners, 1 Cor. 1. 21, 23, 24. *For after that, in the wiſdom of God, the world by wiſdom knew not God, it pleaſed God by the fooliſhneſs of preaching to ſave them that believe. But we preach Chriſt crucified, unto the Jews a ſtumbling-block, and unto the Greeks fooliſhneſs: But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Chriſt, the power of God, and the wiſdom of God.* As for other things they are but a pompous ſhew at the beſt. Not finally, a Love to preſerve the Purity of the Church, and preſerve the Worſhip of God from Pollution. For beſides that all Additions to the Divine Ordinances, are in themſelves a Pollution of God's Houſe, and a Depravation of his Worſhip, this is to impeach Chriſt himſelf, for want, either of Wiſdom or Fidelity, as if he knew not what was ſufficient for the guarding of his Worſhip, but needed the Wiſdom and Counſel of Men to help him; or that he had not Care for his Church, which belonged to the great Shepherd & Biſhop of Souls; than which, nothing can be more diſhonourable to him, who is the Head of his Church: And of whom we have that Aſſurance given us, Heb. 3. 2. *Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as alſo Moſes was faithful in all his houſe.*

Use. I. *SEE here the Danger of taking up Ordinances upon Truſt.* It is not a Matter of light Concern, whether we keep God's Commands or no. If then this Precept hath limited us in the Ordinances with which we are required to ſerve God; and either to neglect them, or to join others with them, be a Tranſgreſſion of it; it muſt needs reprove the Careleſſneſs of thoſe, who do not enquire what footing every ſuch Practice hath in the Word of God. For, not only are we to do the things, but to do them in Faith, which requires our Conviction that God hath ordained them.

Use. II. *WE hence learn, what is the only Rule, by which to reform the Abuſes, which at any Time creep into the Church of God, with reſpect to the Ordinances, and the Adminiſtration of them.* If we would do this aright, and to Purpoſe, we muſt reduce all to the Pattern given by Chriſt. We muſt ſearch the Scriptures, to ſee whether thoſe things do agree to the Command of Chriſt, and reduce all exactly hither. When there was an Abuſe crept into the Church of *Corinth*, about the Adminiſtration of the Lord's Supper, *Paul* uſeth no other Rule to reduce them, but only by telling them, what he had received of Chriſt, 1 Cor. 11. 23. *For I have received of the Lord, that which alſo I delivered unto you.* And if this be not laid in the bottom, all other Attempts will but tend to a greater Depravation.

Use III. *THIS may exhort us to be very careful to ourſelves how we carry ourſelves, with reſpect to the poſitive Worſhip.* In a Word, let us take heed that we be not Careleſs, or Slighty about our attending on the Ordinances, and take Care that we keep cloſe and entire to thoſe which are commended to us by Chriſt's own Authority; elſe we ſhall bring on ourſelves the Guilt of breaking this Command. And of how great Moment this is, will be conſidered under the next.

required to ſerve God; and either to neglect them, or to join others with them, be a Tranſ- [JANUARY 13. 1701.]

SERMON *CLXII.*

QUESTION LII.

WHAT are the Reaſons annexed to the Second Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Reaſons annexed to the Second Commandment are, GOD's Sovereignty over us, His Propriety in us, and the Zeal he hath for his own Worſhip.

ALL the Commands of God, are highly rational; and becauſe he treats with Men as Reaſonable Creatures, he lays matter of Conviction before them, of the Reaſonableneſs of their Obedience. It is true, he hath not ſubjoyned particular Reaſons to every of the Precepts, but only the firſt Five, viz. all the Four of the Firſt Table, and only the firſt of the Second; the reaſon whereof, is to be carried to all that follow. Now theſe Reaſons are, partly from the Authority of him that Commands, partly from the Conſequents of Obedience or Diſobedience. As to the Rationality of the Duties themſelves which are Commanded, the Precepts themſelves do carry it in them, either in *general*, or *particular*, they being accommodated to the Nature of Man; and therefore Witneſſed unto in the Conſciences of Men by the light of Nature. For the Decalogue given on Mount *Sinai*, was in the Preceptive part of it, a ſummary of the Law of Nature. It is true, there are Poſitive Precepts of Inſtituted Worſhip, which are to be reduced to the Second Command, which Man's Conſcience would never have diſcovered to be Duties, if God had not ſo Commanded them, nor indeed, had they otherwiſe been Duties at all. But yet, the Command it ſelf, which requires us to obey in all theſe Commands, and to receive Inſtitutions of Worſhip from none elſe but him, is Moral, and Natural. The limiting alſo of the Sabbath to the revolution of ſuch a number of Days, and to this or that Day in particular, is Poſitive, in the Fourth Command, elſe

elſe there could not be a Change of the Day, as there is in Goſpel-times; but the keeping of ſome Time Holy, for Religious Worſhip, is Moral, and taught by the Light of Nature, and hath in all Ages been practiced by the Heathen, not meerly by Tradition, but rational Conviction.

THE Reaſons ſubjoyned to this Command before us, are fetch'd from both theſe Topicks, the firſt from the former, and the other from the latter; and are in our Catechiſm gathered up under Three Particulars: Of which we may treat particularly.

1. *HIS Sovereignty over us*; *I am the Lord, Jehovah.* And how often do we find this to be the only Reaſon given for particular Precepts in the Levitical Law. And what force there is in the Conſideration of the Divine Supremacy, to make us very careful in keeping cloſe to the Duties of this Command, will be evident from theſe Conſiderations,

1. *THAT God hath a Supream Right of Government over all his Creatures.* This Supremacy of his, is indiſputable. The Creatures are all his, every way. They are his by the right of Creation: They had their Being intirely from him, and therein they owe themſelves wholly to him, Pſal. 100. 3. *Know ye that the Lord he is God, it is he that hath made us, and not we our ſelves; we are his people, and the ſheep of his paſture.* Hence that, in Pſal. 95. 5, 6. *The ſea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land. O come, let us worſhip and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker.* He who gave the Creature its Being, may well challenge its Homage. He who is their Creator, muſt neceſſarily be acknowledged to be their Governour. He hath the right of Preſervation: all Beings are maintained and ſuſtained by him, Heb. 1. 3. *Upholding all things by the word of his power.* They live upon his Beneficence; they have nothing but what he gives them. Surely then he may Command them. Act. 17. 25,28. *He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things. For in him we live, and move, and have our being.* And in reſpect of his own People, he hath the right of Redemption. The great Price that was laid down to Purchaſe them, was that they might ſerve him; and it carries potent Obligation in it, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19,20. In a word, He hath the right of the firſt Cauſe, whence he muſt needs be the laſt End of all things, Rom. 11. 36. *For of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory forever.*

2. *GOD aſſerts this Sovereignty of his, in giving Laws to his Reaſonable Creatures.* There is a twofold Government of God, in which he manifeſts his Supream Juriſdiction over Second Beings: The one is common, in diſpoſing of them according to his Pleaſure, for his holy ends or purpoſes, Pſal. 115. 3. *But our God is in the heavens, he hath done whatſoever he pleaſeth.* The other is ſpecial, in which he rules them by Laws and Precepts, to which he requires their active Obedience, with promiſing them Rewards if they obey, and menacing them with Threatnings, in caſe of their diſobedience. Now the right, of giving Laws to them, belongs to him, as he is their Sovereign. Hence Lord and Lawgiver are put together, *Iſai.* 33. 22. And that this is his ſole Prerogative, we are told, Jam. 4. 12. *There is one law-giver, who is able to ſave, and to deſtroy.*

3. *THAT the Divine Will is the Supream reaſon of our Obedience.* The diſtinction which ſome uſe, that ſome things are willed by God becauſe they are juſt, and other things are juſt becauſe he wills them, ſound harſh: For tho' it be true, that God hath accommodated the moral Law to Man's Nature, and yet reſerved to himſelf a liberty of adding Poſitive Precepts as he ſees meet, to let Men know that he hath a Lordſhip over them; yet both the Nature that he put into Man, and the Law by which he governs them, are the reſultancy of his Infinite Wiſdom and Will. And for this reaſon, the whole Rule is called his Will, 1 *Pet.* 4. 2. For tho' he be Holy and Wiſe, and therefore will not Command any thing but what is juſt and good; yet he expects that becauſe He Commands, therefore We ſhould Obey.

4. *THAT hence God's Will muſt be known by us, in order to our right ſerving him.* Knowledge is neceſſarily requiſite to the Obedience of a Reaſonable Creature. For God is ſerved in nothing by Man as ſuch, but in comformity to the Precept; for which it is neceſſary that he underſtand it. That therefore is ſuppoſed, Joh. 13. 17. *If ye know theſe things, happy are ye if ye do them.* If we do not do his Will, we do not pleaſe him, nor honour, but diſhonour him; and if we know it not, we cannot do it.

5. *THAT God hath in his Word declared his Will to be, that we attend his Inſtitutions, and conform to no other but his.* This hath already been proved; and the Scripture is abundant in the Teſtimony of it. God herein proves his People's Fidelity: And whatſoever ſubterfuges and pretences Men may uſe, to put off the dint of theſe Precepts, yet it will ſtand a Truth impregnable to the end of the World, that the appointing of, or conforming to any Ordinances of Worſhip, beſides thoſe which God himſelf hath appointed, is a direct breach of this Command, and violation of the Authority of it.

6. *HENCE every Tranſgreſſion in this kind, is a proper withſtanding of the Sovereignty of God.* His Prerogative is here not only diſputed, but denied. God ſaith, I am the Lord, and require that you acknowledge Me to be ſo; and for that end, I command you to do theſe things & to avoid thoſe, I reſerve to my ſelf the Power of making Ordinances of Worſhip; and if you acknowledge Me your King, do not dare to make or obſerve any other. So that when Men tranſgreſs here, upon any pretence, they reflect upon God's Crown, and go about to pluck the moſt Orient Gem out of it: They caſt off his Authority, and ſay that

he ſhall not reign over them. And if it be thus, ſurely then there is the higheſt reaſon, that we be very circumſpect to our ſelves in this Affair.

II. *His Propriety in us.* This is the ſecond Reaſon given for the Eſtabliſhment of this Command. This is expreſt in that Word, *thy God*. And this properly reſpects the Covenant into which God hath taken them. And in the renovation of the Law to Iſrael, it points to the New-Covenant, which is opened to fallen Man. For altho' it had its force upon Man in Innocency, while he ſtood nearly related to God in the Covenant of Works, yet by the Apoſtaſy, there was a ſeperation made; and now God was not his God, but his Enemy. And tho' an indiſſoluble Duty of Obedience lay upon him, as he was a Creature under the Law, yet the motive from God being his Portion, which is intimated in this expreſſion, now ceaſed; nor did the Covenant give him any hope, or ſhew him any way of recovering that Priviledge again. And tho' God had a Propriety in all Creatures, as they intirely derive from, & depend upon him, yet it is another manner of Propriety which is here intended, and is mutual. He is their God, and they are his People. Now the New Covenant may be conſidered, either as to the External, or Internal Diſpenſation of it, in both whereof there is an Obligation lying upon Men, to obſerve and keep this Command: As will appear by the following Conſiderations,

1. *THAT God hath opened a New Covenant to fallen Man, in which he offers to reſtore to Life and Happineſs, upon Terms.* Man was become every way miſerable by Sin. The Covenant under which he had his ſtanding, could not relieve him, but left him to deſpair; for it ſpake nothing but Curſes to him. But the New Covenant brought in a better hope. God in it tells Man, that he hath found out a way, how to ſalve the honour of the Juſtice of the Law, and yet extend Mercy, to the ſaving thoſe who ſtood condemned to die by it, Rom. 3. 26. *To declare, I ſay, at this time his righteouſneſs: that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him which believeth in Jeſus.* But this Covenant partakes in the nature of all Covenants, viz. it hath its Terms, on which the Benefits of it are to be come at. And it is ſo, not only in the External Diſpenſation of it, but alſo in the Nature of it. For the Benefits engaged in it are conveyed in no other way to any, but by their being conformed to theſe Terms; nor doth God ſave any of the Children of *Adam* in any other way. The notion of an abſolute Covenant, is neither ſenſe in it ſelf, nor agreable to the whole tenure of the Goſpel. For God hath therein aſſured us, that we ſhall ſtand or fall, according to theſe. Hence we read, Mat. 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not, ſhall be damned.* Rom. 8. 13. *For if ye live after the fleſh, ye ſhall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live.*

2. *THAT in theſe Terms, God requires of Men Obedience to his revealed Will.* True, he doth not require this Obedience under that Sanction, that he ſhall die, if his perſonal conformity be not perfectly adequate to the Command, for he hath provided another foundation of Juſtification. However, he hath ſo required hearty compliance with his Command, that none of thoſe who deny it, ſhall obtain Salvation by Chriſt. For not only the Law, but the Goſpel Threatning is out againſt all ſuch. We are therefore told, in Heb. 12. 14. *Follow peace with all men, and holineſs, without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord.* 1 *Joh.* 3. 3. 2 *Theſ.* 1. 8. And tho' God can and will, pity and pardon the infirmities and follies of his Children, yet if they be not upright and cordial in their ſubjection to him, he will reject them; if they be workers of Iniquity, they muſt expect to hear that fearful Word, *Depart*, *Mat.* 7. 28.

3. *THAT all that own Subjection to this Covenant, do therein profeſſedly devote themſelves to the Service of God.* There is an outward Diſpenſation of the Covenant, under the Goſpel, in which God treats with Man, about this great Concern. To which End, he ſends the Goſpel to them, makes the Offers of Salvation to them, invites them to comply with theſe Offers, according as they are propoſed; and Men do give an Entertainment thereto, ſo far as to ſubject themſelves profeſſedly to the Covenant, & bring themſelves under a declared Obligation to it; by Virtue whereof, they become the People of God, by an outward Denomination, and are Subjects of the Goſpel Covenant. Now all ſuch do declare their Subjection to God, and promiſe Obedience unto his Precepts; for this belongs to the Eſſentials of the Goſpel Covenant, in which they give themſelves up to God to be for him, and for no other. Yea, this is one thing that is ſealed in Baptiſm, in which we are conſecrated to God, to be his Servants, and to do his Will. This therefore is required of all ſuch as ſo acknowledge God, 2 Tim. 2. 19. *Let every one that nameth the Name of Chriſt, depart from iniquity.*

4. *THAT all their Hope of enjoying God as their God in this Covenant, is upon their complying with theſe Terms.* There are great and precious Promiſes, contained in the new Covenant, and they that are Owners of them indeed, ſhall be happy forever. Theſe Promiſes are ſet before all to whom the Goſpel comes, and thoſe who profeſs *the Faith*, do in ſome reſpects ſtand related to theſe Promiſes. It is therefore ſaid of Iſrael, Rom. 9. 4. *Who are Iſraelites: to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the ſervice of God, and the promiſes.* But ſtill, theſe Promiſes are made to them, on this *Hypotheſis*, viz. that they come up to the things there demanded of all ſuch as are ſo related to the Covenant; ſo that, till they come up to theſe Terms, they cannot challenge the good promiſed, to be their

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own, and if they never do so, they will not only miss of it, but bring more and greater Guilt upon themselves. There is indeed, a good Hope set before them, and they enjoy all the Advantages of the Means for obtaining, but if they remain in their Sins, and do not yield all Obedience to the Command, according to Truth and Sincerity, they will lose their Hopes, and come into greater Condemnation. Hence that, Joh. 3. 19. *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

5. *THAT when God hath given to Men, the Grace necessary for this Obedience, he doth it for this Design.* Man by his Fall, lost not only his Fidelity, but his Ability too, being stript of all those sanctifying Graces, in which his Power lay. Now God, in the internal Application of the new Covenant, which is done in Conversion restores those Powers to the Man, by renewing him in the Image of his Mind; by putting his Spirit upon him, and reimprinting on his Heart, those Graces which he had lost, and which are necessary to all such as serve God acceptably. Thus therefore the Tenor of the new Covenant is expressed, *Jer.* 31. 32, *&c.* Now there must be some Aim or Design in this Work of the Spirit, for God doth nothing in Vain; and this was that they might be enabled to comply with the Terms of the Covenant, and serve God in newness of Life. God himself hath said on this Account, Isa. 43. 21. *This people have I formed for my self, they shall shew forth my praise.* And it is expressed in, Luk. 1. 74, 75. *That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.* This he aimed at in the Redemption wrought by Christ. So that if these do not thus live, they would have received the Grace of God in Vain.

6. *THAT all the Promises of this Covenant, are given to be the Encouragements of this Obedience.* There are great and precious Promises made in the Gospel to all the Children of God, and they are sealed to them upon their cordial closing in, with the Terms on which they are offered. Now, though it be true, that all these Promises are free, and made for the discovery of the Riches of God's Grace to miserable Man; yet as they are connected by the preceptive Part of the Covenant, and inseparable from it, so they are those Cords of Love, with which God draws us to his Service: as they are to let us know that we serve a good Master, so they are to stimulate us to serve him cheerfully and faithfully. The Apostle therefore builds his Exhortation upon this, 2 Cor. 7. 1. *Having therefore these promises (dearly beloved) let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* And it is used as an Argument, to animate Christians to Fidelity and Constancy, in their serving of God, Gal. 6. 9. *And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.* Rev. 2. 10. There are a great many Temptations and Discouragements which God's People encounter, in the way of new Obedience; but they are corroborated by these Promises against them all. This carried *Moses* thro' all, Heb. 11. 26. *Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of reward.* And this is recorded in his Commendation. And indeed, this is the only way wherein we can testify our Gratitude to God, for all the kindness he hath shewn us in the Covenant, and all that he requires of us. As he told them, Deut. 30. 19, 20. *I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayst cleave unto him.*

7. *THAT God's Glory is specially concerned, in their faithful keeping of this Command.* We formerly observed, that several of the Reasons given to particular Commands, are in themselves general, and applicable to them all, as inforcing of Universal Obedience; and such is this under our Consideration. But there is some specialty intended, in affixing it to this particular; and that is, that God is more peculiarly honoured or dishonoured, according as this Command is observed or neglected. Instituted Worship is a main distinguishing note between the true & false Church. Israel were therein to be differenced from all the Nations, by their standing fast to the Laws and Ordinances given them by God. This is the great trial of our Obedience, and wherein we make it appear that we do acknowledge him to be the Lord our God, when we dare not to turn away from the Command, to the right hand, or to the left. This was his commendation, 2 Kin. 22. 2. *And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not to the right hand or to the left.*

III. *THE Zeal which he hath for his own Worship.* Which is first asserted, *I am a jealous God*; and commorated upon, both in his just revenge on the breakers of this Command, *visiting*, &c. and in the rich Mercy which he hath in store for such as keep it, *shewing Mercy*, &c. Men may think it a light matter to neglect Instituted Worship, or to obey & practice humane Institutions in Worship, but God assures us, that he hath another esteem of it. The word translated *jealous*, signifies both to be zealous, and jealous, and there is a propinquity in them; for the more Zeal that a Person hath for a thing, the more jealous will he be apt to be, of being opposed in it. But this Word hath a special use, to set forth the jealousy between Husband and Wife, in respect of Conjugal Fidelity; and therefore it is connected with the mention of the relation between them, *I thy God, am jealous.* It intends, that

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God looks on the Covenant between him and them, as a Marriage Covenant; and that he expected they would be true to him; and look'd upon it as a most horrible abuse offered to him, to be otherwise; and therefore it would be a grievous provocation to him for them so to do. For this reason, all the Idolatrous and Superstitious practices of Israel are so often in Prophetical Scriptures, represented under the title of Adultery, because in them they plaid false with God, as an Adultress doth with her Husband. And the reason why this is peculiarly mentioned under the Second Command, is because God's Ordinances are the *Media* of Special & Conjugal Communion between him and his People, in which he applies his peculiar Favours to them, and bestows his Loves upon them; and they by their Fidelity to them, give testimony of their Chastity, that their Love is set upon him alone, that they are satisfy'd in Communion with him, and that they are for him and no other. Whereas, when they go from God's Institutions, and follow Men's Inventions, they go a Whoring from him, and seek after other Lovers, which must needs stir up his jealousy. Now God sets forth this Zeal of his, in *two Particulars.* The one for our Caution, to take heed how we tamper in matters of Worship, the other to encourage us in our Fedelity.

1. *HE threatens remarkable Revenge upon those that bring themselves under the Guilt of false Worship. Visiting*, &c. Where by the way observe, he doth not say of those that make graven Images, but of those that hate Me, thereby intimating, that false Worship proceeds from, and is an indication of, Men's hatred of God. The special Penalty here mentioned is, his leaving some notable mark of his displeasure upon the Posterity of such. Tho' he also limits it to *the third or fourth Generation*; thereby to shew his pity; yet he lets such know, that he will make some Monuments of his jealous Revenge on them. Touching the equity of God's doing this, there are many Disputes. I shall only here briefly observe; That no Man suffers Eternal Punishments for the Sins of any of his Progenitors, excepting the first Transgression of our first Parents, in whom all sinned, Rom. 5. 12. *Wherefore as by one man sin entred into the world, and death by sin: so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.* But Men suffer that for their own Sins. That God sometimes leaves the Children of such Apostates to follow their Fathers steps, as a witness against them, tho' yet these Children have Sin enough on them, to justify God's so leaving them. That God often, in the dispensation of temporary Providences, leaves some awful marks of his Severity upon the Children of false Worshippers. Sometimes he cuts off whole Families for that reason. So he did by the Family of *Jereboam*, for his setting up the Calves: And tho' he had one godly Son, yet he must dye too, tho' favoured to die in his Bed. Thus also he dealt with *Baasha*, and *Ahab*: And sometimes he brings the Families to beggary and contempt; as he did that of *Eli*, for his suffering his Sons to abuse God's Instituted Worship. However, God useth his Sovereignty here. Thus we find, that notwithstanding *Ahaz* had been wofully guilty, in defiling the House of God with Superstitions, yet *Hezekiah* his Son was a great Reformer, and a glorious Prince. Nevertheless, this is that which such may and ought to expect from God; and they that regard it not, lay in ill for their Children, and discover that they are more cruel to them than the Ostriches. And surely, did Men believe the Truth of this Threatning, they would be more heedful to themselves in this regard.

2. *HE Promiseth signal Blessing to those that uphold the purity of his Worship. And shewing Mercy, &c.* When he saith, *that keep his Commandments*, it respects all the Precepts of God: but it is mentioned in this, to let us know, that they who are not careful in this, will not regard the other Commands of God. These are further indigitated, by the Principle from which their Obedience flows, viz. Love to God, *that Love Me*; signifying, that External conformity without cordial respect to God, will not be acceptable to him. And he further adds the Spring from which this Blessing derives, viz. the *Mercy* of God. The Word signifies a free and undeserved benignity bestowed. Noting, that our best Service cannot merit the blessing, but it is a fruit of God's meer good will, and that he here also acts his Sovereignty. And to make it appear, he hath sometimes left the Children of holy Men, to bring remarkable Judgments on themselves: As the two Sons of *Aaron*, God's Saint, and *Manasseh* the Son of holy *Hezekiah*. We may finally observe, the difference between the Threatning and Promise; that is limited to the third and fourth Generation, this is extended to *a thousand*, i.e. Generations, as it is expounded, Psal. 105. 8. *He hath remembred his covenant for ever: the word which he commanded to a thousand generations.* Which, tho' Hyperbolical, yet carries great emphasis in it. And it hath been remarkable, how God hath blessed the Posterity of such as have been Zealous for his Worship, and careful Reformers of it. So that love to our Posterity should influence us with this care. And it is observable, that when any of God's Servants have been faithful in looking after the pure Worship of God, tho' they have failed in many things, yet God hath born that Testimony for them, that they did that which was *right in his sight*: Whereas, if they have but so much as tolerated high Places, tho' to offer Sacrifice only to the true God, he hath set a note upon that, as diminutive of their glory.

Use. *LET the Consideration of these things, make us very cautious to our selves, how we entertain the Ordinances of Worship: That we keep exact to those of Divine Institution, and neither neglect, nor go beyond them.* And there is enough

enough in the reasons laid down to inforce the Exhortation. And for our help I shall only offer these Rules,

1. *LET the Fear of God rule in our Hearts.* This is that which only will keep us in awe. Let us count his favour better than Life, and his frowns worse than Death. Believe, that he is an holy God, and jealous for his great Name, and this Fear maintained, will curb in our wantonness.

2. *LET us maintain an high and venerable esteem of God's Wisdom & Fidelity.* All false Worship is introduced, under a supposition, that Christ hath not done sufficient in his Gospel, for the carrying on of Positive Worship, and therefore Men must do something in their Prudence that may help it. But if we can resolve, as we ought, that Christ Loves his Church, and is infinitely Wise, and knows what it needs for it's Edification; and is Faithful in his House; this will curb in our Curiosity, and restrain our Luxuriancy, and make us abundantly satisfy'd in his Ordinances.

3. *LET us acknowledge the intire dependance of the Efficacy of all Ordinances in Worship, upon his Blessing.* Remember, that Means will do nothing of themselves; that all our Encouragement to attend on them, is our hope that he will bless them for our profiting: That he hath promised this blessing to the due attendance on his Appointments; that he hath not engaged it to any of Men's devising, but threatned them that observe them: So that we cannot in Faith wait on any other, but those which are his own.

[FEBRUARY 10. 1701.]

SERMON *CLXIII.*

QUESTION LIII.

WHICH is the Third Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Third Commandment is, *Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless, that taketh his Name in vain.*

IN the two former Commands, Precept is given us about the kinds of Worship, which we observed were, Natural, directed in the First; and Instituted, about which Precept is given us in the Second. The two following Precepts do also refer to Worship, belonging to the first Table; and they serve to regulate us in the right performance of the Worship required in both the former. And this comes under a double Consideration, First, With respect to our due behaviour in our Carriage towards God, which is required in the Third. Secondly, With respect to the Time of Solemn Worship, which is laid down in the Fourth Command.

OUR due behaviour in our Carriage towards God, is required in the Third Command. And that we may take a distinct Account of it, it may be considered in the Positive and Negative part of it; for, tho' the Precept is laid down Negatively, yet there are Affirmative Duties that belong to it. Here then,

QUESTION LIV.

WHAT is required in the Third Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Third Commandment requires, the Holy and Reverend Use of God's Names, Titles, Attributes, Ordinances, Word and Works.

THAT we may take a particular Account of what is contained in this Answer, we may consider, 1. The Object of this Duty, viz. the *Name of God*. 2. The matter about which this Duty is to be pursued, i. e. the *taking of it up*. 3. The Duty it self, viz. *Holy Reverence.*

I. TOUCHING the *Object of this Duty*, it is said *to be the Name of God.* Now by the *Name of God* we are to understand all those Manifestations of himself, which he hath made in and to the Creation: It is one way by which Men distinguish things, one from another, by giving Names to them; which is the first reason of the imposing of them. This therefore when ascribed to God, comprehends in it his declarative Glory; or his back Parts in opposition to his Face: As appears, if we consider, Exod. 33. 20,23. *And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see my face, and live. And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back-parts: but my face shall not be seen.* With Chap. 34. 5, 6. *And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.* By God's Face is intended his Essential Glory, and hath no Name. Hence that, 1 Tim. 6. 16. *Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see.* His back Parts therefore are his manifestative Glory, or that of himself which he hath seen meet to reveal, by which we may have such a knowledge of him, as is suited to our created Capacities, and sufficient

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for our bleſſedneſs. Whatſoever therefore either bears on it the impreſſion of any of his Perfections, which are to be read in it, or whatſoever notice is given to him, whereby he is differenced from all other Beings, belongs to his Name. Theſe are in our Catechiſm reduced to ſeveral comprehenſive Heads; and this is to be underſtood *metonymically*: Not that the things themſelves are God's Name, but that his Name is engraven on them, and the Letters of it are to be underſtood by them: And for that reaſon not the things themſelves, but God appearing in them, is to be acknowledged by us, and a ſuitable reſpect is to be paid to him upon the diſcovery. Theſe are,

1. *HIS Name.* By which we are to underſtand, thoſe Names which he hath aſſumed to himſelf in his Word; either Incommunicably, and cannot be put upon any other Being without Blaſphemy: Such as *El, Schaddai*, Gen. 17. 1. *I am*, Exod. 3. 14. *Jehovah*, Exod. 6.3. Every whereof diſcover him to be an incomparable Being. Or ſuch, as tho' they may be given in low and diminutive reſpect to ſome ſecond Beings, yet are by way of Eminency aſcribed unto him, and there is but an obſcure ſhadow of them in the Creature; as *Elohim*, tranſlated Gods; and other things, which will more properly be conſidered under his Attributes.

2. *HIS Titles.* By which we are to underſtand thoſe Prerogatives which he aſſumes to himſelf, with relation to his Creatures, which properly belong to him, and may not be aſcribed to any other Being whatſoever; many whereof the Scriptures do furniſh us withal: Such as, *the Lord of Hoſts, the Holy one of Iſrael, the King of Saints, the God of Salvation*, and many more. Which Titles may not be inſerted into the title of the greateſt Monarch in the World, but carry in them the ſignification of a Being ſuper-tranſcendent.

3. *HIS Attributes.* Which tho' in a large and comprehenſive ſenſe, they comprize both the former, yet more reſtrainedly, they intend thoſe Perfections of his Nature, which are Eſſential to him, and are uſually called the Divine Properties; Such as his *Eternity, Omnipotency, Omnipreſence, Immortality, Immutability*, &c. For by our apprehending of a Being, to whom theſe do appertain, and acknowledging of them to him, we aſcribe the Divine Glory to him, which is his due; and they are ſo many Letters, by which we ſpell a God. Thus, 1 Tim. 1. 17. *Now unto the King eternal, immortal, inviſible, the only wiſe God, be honour and glory, for ever & ever, Amen.*

4. *HIS Ordinances.* By which we are to underſtand, thoſe holy Appointments of Inſtituted Worſhip, which he hath commanded his People to ſerve him in: Of which we conſidered under the former Precept. Theſe do all bear his Name on them, in that they come forth by his Supream Authority, and have his Name underwritten, *I am the Lord.* Nor can any other Name in Heaven or Earth, warrant any ſuch Inſtitution: and in them we are to read God's *Sovereignty*, his *Wiſdom*, and his *Power*, in making them ſerviceable to his own Glory, and our Salvation.

5. *HIS Word.* By which we are to conceive his written Word, or the Holy Scriptures: Tho' it alſo comprehends all thoſe Revelations of his Will, which he hath at any time made extraordinarily to his People, or to Men inſpired. For we are told, Heb. 1. 1. *God who at ſundry times, and in divers manners, ſpake in time paſt unto the fathers by the Prophets.* Yet theſe are now collected together, and commended to us, in our Bible: Of which we read, Pſal. 138. 2. *Thou haſt magnified thy word above all thy name.* And indeed, the great deſign of giving to us theſe Writings, was to help us to acquaintance with God, and bring us to the enjoyment of Him.

6. *HIS Works.* Under which is comprehended his whole Efficiency in Creation and Providence. Which are for that reaſon aſcribed to his Name, becauſe in them, there are the convincing Diſcoveries made of his Being, and glorious Perfections; and tho' they come incomparably ſhort of ſo making him known, as is done by the Goſpel, yet they have ſuch ſtamps of his Glory upon them, as bear witneſs to his Being, and Divinity, and teſtify in the Natural Conſcience that there is none like him. Of the Works of Creation, ſee, Pſal. 19. 1. *The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament ſheweth his handy work.* Rom. 1. 20. *For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.* Of his Works of Providence, Pſal. 9. 16. *The Lord is known by the judgments which he executeth.* Pſal. 86. 8. *Among the gods there is none like unto thee (O Lord) neither are any works like unto thy works.* Act. 14. 17. Now in every one of theſe, the Duty required in this Command is concerned, as will be diſcovered in the Sequel.

II. TOUCHING the *Matter about which this Duty is to be exerciſed or purſued*, viz. *the taking up of this Name*; We may obſerve, that the word tranſlated *take*, ſignifieth to take a thing up, to bear it, and to elevate or lift it up on high: and is in the Word of God, applied to many purpoſes: And in this Precept it comprehends any manner of uſe that we make of the Name of God. And it intends two Things,

1. *THAT there is an uſe to be made of the Name of God.* God hath therefore revealed his Name to us, that we ſhould improve theſe Diſcoveries for his Glory, and our own good. There is therefore a glory owing to it from us, which we ought to pay unto it. Hence that, Pſal. 29. 2. *Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name.*

2. *THAT we be very cautious, what uſe we do make of it.* That we take heed to our ſelves, that in all reſpects we carry it worthily towards this Name of his. Which what

what it is, will be afterwards conſidered. Here only obſerve, that this Command, being of the firſt Table, properly refers to the Worſhip of God. The Name of God, is the Object of our Worſhip, for we are to Worſhip him according to what he hath revealed of himſelf to us, and therefore we are never to uſe this Name of his, but with a frame ſuitable to Worſhip. And we may further obſerve, that this taking up of his Name, comprizeth both our Thoughts, Words and Actions, in all whereof this Caution is to be uſed. For there is an Internal and an External Worſhip due to him from us, about which we muſt here take our Direction. And finally, we may take notice, that this Duty is to be practiſed not only in the Obſervances of inſtituted Worſhip, but alſo in all the parts of natural Worſhip, which we are to pay to him at all times: For this third Command hath reſpect to our due Carriage to God, in the manner of our performing Obedience, to both the former.

III. *THE Duty itſelf which is here required, is holy Reverence*; or a religious Veneration of this glorious Name of his. The Duty proper to this Command, is that which is oppoſite to the Vanity forbidden, for in negative Precepts we are to judge of the Nature of the affirmative Duties, by the negative; they being the contrary to that which is forbidden. Now the Word, *in Vain*, is uſed both *nominally* and *adverbially*; and it ſignifies falſhood, raſhneſs, levity, and unprofitableneſs; the contrary to all which is ſummarily included in that comprehenſive Duty of Reverence: which is uſually in Scripture Language called Fear. Hence that is aſſerted concerning his Name, Pſal. 111. 9. *Holy and reverend is his name.* Now this religious Reverence of God's Name, is an awful Reſpect which we have engraven upon our Hearts, and which we maintain the Exerciſe of, in our Thoughts, Words and Actions: Of which, Jer. 10. 7. *Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain.* Now there is a civil Reverence which we owe to Men who are our Superiours, and a religious one, which is due from us to God, and theſe two are vaſtly different one from another; and it is this latter, which is the Subject of our preſent Speculation.

NOW the Expreſſion of this Reverence, may be conſidered either *generally*, or *particularly*, with reſpect to the ſeveral things, in which the Name of God is made known to us.

Firſt, *IN general*, I ſhall only obſerve theſe two things,

1. *THAT whenſoever we any way make uſe of the Name of God, we ought to obſerve our due Diſtance.* We ſhould always have in Mind, what an infinitely glorious Being he is, exalted above all Glory and Praiſe, and what low and little things we are; and except we ever carry the Impreſſion of this upon our Hearts, we ſhall not pay him the Reverence that we owe to him. We have this exemplified in *Abraham*, Gen. 18. 27. *And Abraham anſwered and ſaid, Behold now, I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto the Lord, which am but duſt and aſhes.* And are directed about it, Eccl. 5. 2. *Be not raſh with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be haſty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.* Our Carriages therefore muſt be meaſured according to this.

2. *THAT we do always exalt God's Name, when we make uſe of it.* We obſerved, that the Word *take*, ſignifies to *lift a thing up on high.* And *metaphorically* it is uſed for the giving it ſuperlative Commendation; and this is a very proper Expreſſion of our keeping our diſtance. This Word is therefore uſed, for extolling of God, Pſal. 68. 4. *Sing unto God, ſing praiſes to his Name; extol him that ruleth upon the heavens by his name Jah, and rejoyce before him.* We muſt in all reſpects give him the Acknowledgement of being infinitely greater and more glorious than all Beings whatſoever, and on all Occaſions make it to appear, that we do really entertain ſuch Thoughts concerning him. So he reſolved, Pſal. 145. 1, 3. *I will extol thee, my God, O King, and I will bleſs thy name forever and ever. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praiſed, and his greatneſs is unſearchable.*

Secondly, *IN particular, We may conſider the ſeveral Duties reſpecting the diverſe ways, in which God communicates his Name to us.* For though we are ever to maintain a Reverence toward God, yet there are diverſe ways in which we are to expreſs it, ſuitable to the ſeveral things in which he hath manifeſted himſelf unto us. And theſe may be conſidered,

1. *IN reſpect of his Names, Titles, and Attributes.* I put theſe three together, becauſe they are very nearly related, and the difference between them is not great. For his Names and Titles may in a ſound ſenſe, be referred to his Attributes; and hence the Duties here, are common to them all. And theſe are,

Firſt, *THE Thoughts of theſe ſhould raiſe ſuitable Diſpoſitions in our Souls, towards God.* When we meditate of theſe glorious Perfections of his, we ſhould entertain them with Affections becoming. Hence,

1. *THEY ſhould raiſe in us adoring Thoughts of God.* They all of them commend him to us, as a moſt worthy Being. And we ſhould upon them acknowledge, that he doth tranſcend all the Praiſes of Angels or Men: As he, Neh. 9. 5. *Bleſs the Lord your God forever and ever, and bleſſed be thy glorious Name, which is exalted above all bleſſing and praiſe.* We ought on this account, to gaze upon theſe Perfections of his, with the moſt ſurprizing Admiration, confeſſing the Infiniteneſs, and Inſcrutableneſs of his Glory, and accordingly to acknowledge our Ignorance of him, yea, that no Creature can come at the Compre-

henſion of them, ſo great, and ſo wonderful is he. And accordingly make his demand, Job. 11. 7, 8, 9. *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? canſt thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven, what canſt thou do? deeper then hell, what canſt thou know? The meaſure thereof is longer then the earth, and broader then the ſea.*

2. *THEY ſhould maintain in us, an holy Fear of offending Him.* And accordingly raiſe in us a Caution to ourſelves in all we think, ſpeak, or do, that we avoid every thing which may expoſe us to his righteous Diſpleaſure. When we conſider who, or what manner of God he is, it ſhould make us to draw that Concluſion, Heb. 10. 31. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* And thereupon render us exceeding Circumſpect in our whole Walk. Doubtleſs the Pſalmiſt had been in this Speculation, when he drew up that Reſolve, Pſal. 76. 7. *Thou, even thou art to be feared, and who may ſtand in thy ſight when once thou art angry?*

3. *THEY ſhould kindle in us, an inſatiable Deſire after an Intereſt in his Favour.* And this ſhould ſtir up in us, reſtleſs endeavours to ſecure a Title to him as our God. Think what inconceivable Happineſs it muſt be, to view his glorious Perfections, and be able to underwrite in the foot of the Accompt, *This God is our God forever.* Hence we ſhould make our humble ſuit to him for his Grace, and earneſtly implore him, that he would accept us into his Favour. *David* could ſay, Pſal. 63. 3. *Becauſe thy lovingkindneſs is better than life; my lips ſhall praiſe thee.* And it was the Contemplation of his Infinite Excellencies, that drew this Profeſſion from him.

Secondly, *WE ſhould be very careful about our Words, or taking of his Name into our Mouths.* It is a Duty incumbent on all the People of God, to be often ſpeaking of him. It is ſaid in, Pſal. 29. 9. *In his temple doth every one ſpeak of his glory.* And *David* tells us what he and others would do, *Pſal.* 145. 4, *&c.* But we ought to maintain an holy Reverence of him in our Hearts, and make it appear in the manner of our ſpeaking.

1. Here, *IN our ordinary Diſcourſe, we ſhould mention God's Name with great Serioufneſs.* If we ſpeak of him at all, it muſt be with a Diſcovery, that his very Name, bears an Awe upon our Hearts. We ſhould put the higheſt Honour upon him, in every mention that we make of him. The Name of God is ſaid to be great and fearful, *Deut.* 28. 58. If then we ſpeak of it, we ſhould aſcribe Greatneſs to it, and teſtify our Fear of it. We ſhould not uſe any of the Names, Titles, or Attributes of God, as Words of Courſe, in common and light Talk, but with Solemnity, and to put the greateſt Honour on Him.

2. *IN Swearing.* We ought in this to uſe utmoſt Care, to pay a reverend Reſpect to the Name of God. Swearing is uſed as a Confirmation of a Teſtimony, and it is done by calling upon the Name of God, in which we appeal to him, to be a Witneſs to the Truth, of what we teſtify unto. There is a vaſt difference between a Teſtimony and an Oath, the former belongs to the ninth Commandment, and ſo refers to the ſecond Table, which hath Man for the Object *immediate*, whereas an Oath is a part of religious Worſhip; and is uſually referred to the third Command, in that in it we pretend to a Veneration of God's great Name. That an Oath belongs to Worſhip, and muſt therefore be reduced to the firſt Table is evident, becauſe it hath God for its *immediate Object*. And for that reaſon, Swearing by the Name of God, is often *Synecdochically* put for all religious Worſhip, as, *Pſal.* 63. 11. and elſewhere. And that the right and reverend Uſe of it belongs to this third Command, is evident, becauſe all Reverence of God in Worſhip is pointed to by it; or all profitable uſing of God's Name; though the Duty itſelf may belong to the firſt. That it is lawful & warrantable for Chriſtians, in the Days of the Goſpel to ſwear, and ſometimes a Duty ſo to do, is a Truth which he that denies, renders himſelf Guilty of a ſuperſtitious breach of the ſecond Command. Nor doth that of Chriſt, Mat. 5. 34. *But I ſay unto you, Swear not at all.* Or that of the Apoſtle, Jam. 5. 12. *But above all things, my brethren, ſwear not.* Diſprove it, ſince it is manifeſt, that in both of theſe Texts, Swearing in common Talk is only forbidden, which is indeed great Sin & Profaneneſs. Whether in Suppoſition, that Man had continued in his State of Integrity, he would have had any Occaſion for Swearing, may admit of a Debate, but the Neceſſity of it ſince the Fall is very great. Man's Sin hath filled him with Falſeneſs and Incredulity. Every Man is a Liar, and Men's Suſpicion one of another, is ſuch, that except they give the greateſt Confirmation of what they ſay, they are not believed, and ſcarcely then. Yea, God himſelf is ſometimes put upon it, to ſwear to his People, that he may be believed. Now there is nothing more accommodable, according to the light of Nature, to oblige any to ſpeak the Truth, without Diſſimulation, than the Solemnity of an Oath, and many, who make but little Conſcience of lying, are ſtartled at an Oath, and good reaſon, for as we in it call God to witneſs to the Truth of what we ſay, ſo we do, implicitly at leaſt, imprecate his Wrath upon our Heads, in Caſe of Falſehood; in which we do neceſſarily acknowledge him to be an all-knowing, and righteous Judge, who taketh Vengeance. Hence the uſual Form of an Oath among the Ancients, began with ſuch Words, *God do ſo to me, and more alſo.* Hence alſo that of *Paul*, 2 Cor. 1. 23. *I call God for a record upon my ſoul.* And this is enough to convince us, with what holy Reverence, we ought to addreſs ourſelves, to ſo ſolemn and aweful an act of Worſhip as this is, as knowing, that we can neither *impoſe* upon God's Knowledge, nor *bribe* his Juſtice.

Juſtice. Now the Reverence towards God, which is here required, may be conſidered either in general, in reſpect of Swearing it ſelf, or in particular, with regard to the ſeveral kinds of Oaths.

I. IN *general*, in reſpect of Swearing it ſelf. And the Duties here follow, from the Nature of an Oath, viz. That it is a ſolemn Appeal to God, and Invocation of him, as an Omniſcient and Holy Judge. And here,

1. *WE ought always when we go about to Swear, to call to our Minds, who that God is, whom we are now about to invoke.* We ſhould affect our Hearts with his Majeſty, and Glory. We ſhould conſider, that we are not now applying ourſelves to an Idol, that can neither ſee nor hear, neither do good nor evil, neither reward nor puniſh us; but that God who ſearcheth Hearts, who is alſo jealous for his great Name, and will not forego his own Glory; that God who is holy in all his Ways, and juſt in all his Doings, who is not mocked, and to whom we muſt give an Account of this very Act; and this thought will put us upon doing it with fear and trembling; if we believe him to be ſuch a God, as he hath told us that he is, we cannot but be very ſerious in what we do.

2. *WE muſt well ponder what we do, when we Swear.* Poſſibly the expreſs Terms uſed, are no more, but that we ſwear *by the living and true God*, but we ought diſtinctly to revolve in our Minds, what is included in this. We ſhould make a Commentary on it, in our Thoughts, and conſider, that we do now directly put ourſelves into the Hands of the great Judge; we do now invoke the great God, and adjure him, to pour out his Vengeance upon us, and make us the Inſtances of his Wrath and Curſe, if we be not ſincere and upright, and true, in what we ſay; ſo that we lay ourſelves open to all his Judgments in caſe we diſſemble or lie. And now remember, that this God will certainly do ſo, as we imprecate upon ourſelves, either in this Life or in another, in caſe we have wickedly expoſed ourſelves to this Judgment of his. We ſhould at ſuch a time reflect upon that flying roll, *Zech. 5. begin.*

3. *WE ſhould hereupon cautiouſly ſatisfy our own Conſciences about our Call now to Swear.* And there is enough in the former to enforce this. Where the hazzards are great, every Man will enquire, what Obligation is on him to engage. That a Chriſtian is ſometimes called, is beyond queſtion, and to refuſe or decline it, would be his Sin. God's Glory, and our Neighbours Welfare may ſuffer by the neglect of it. That he is not always called to it of God, when others may ſollicit him, or his ſinful Heart may prompt him, is equally certain; and he who truly reverenceth God, will never Swear but when it is his Duty, and will for that reaſon firſt deliberate and enquire. And there are theſe *three* Rules, will be helpful in this Deliberation.

1. *THAT the Thing itſelf be a Matter of Weight or Moment.* God's Name ſhould not be invoked, nor God called upon about Trifles. We muſt be ſure that it be a Matter worthy of his ſitting a Judge upon. And always this muſt be judged of, by the Concernedneſs of God's Honour, and our own, or our Neighbours good in the thing. Hence a Matter that is in itſelf of no Concern, or about which, neither will God be diſhonoured, nor Man ſuffer, either in Life, Chaſtity, Eſtate, or Reputation, is beneath the great Weight of an Oath; and thus to eſpouſe God's Name in ſuch things, would be greatly derogatory to it.

2. *THAT the Thing itſelf, is not otherwiſe to be determined, but by an Oath.* We are always to remember, that an Oath is the higheſt Appeal, we now remove the Caſe in queſtion, to the Supream Judge. So that if the Matter be of Weight, yet if it may be cleared and confirmed ſufficiently, and to anſwer the end of an humane Faith, without it, this is not neceſſary, and to add it is ſuperfluous, which our Reverence to the Name of God, requires us to avoid. Sometimes, our bare Aſſertion will give Credit to us, ſometimes the Confeſſion of the Party concerned will put the thing beyond queſtion, & that which can be done as well without it, cannot require it of us.

3. *THAT it requires our particular and perſonal Oath, for the Confirmation of it.* A thing may be of Weight, and it may require the Eſtabliſhment of it by Swearing. But there is a further Inquiry, viz. Whether ours be neceſſary thereunto; and that is when the matter will not be ſufficiently confirmed without our Oath be given about it: So that if two or three be already offered, in the ſame Caſe and Circumſtances, Reverence of God will make us afraid of multiplying Oaths, unneceſſarily. And all theſe three are included in that Precept, which requires us to ſwear in Judgment. *Jer. 4. 2.*

4. *WE ſhould be exceeding wary, what and how we ſwear.* This Reverence ought to influence both the Matter and the Manner of it. For in both of theſe the Name of God is concerned not a little.

1. *WE ſhould be wary what we Swear.* We ſhould be exceeding curious and critical, about the Matter of it. And this belongs to the *Truth* required of us in Swearing. *Jer. 4. 2.* And here we are to weigh and revolve every Article, Word, Circumſtance, that there be no miſtake. For though Truth & Falſehood, belong to a Teſtimony as ſuch, and ſo are not the matter of this Precept, but the Ninth, yet the Care about them, in order to our Swearing to the Thing, belongs to this, and is a part of that Reverence which we owe to God in it; conſidered, as he is a God of Truth. And though a meer moral Certainty of a thing, may command our humane Credit unto it, yet it is not enough to allow us to atteſt to it with an Oath; becauſe in it, we lay ourſelves open to the Judgment of God, if

the thing be not ſo, which no ſerious one dares to do, but upon his own perſonal Knowledge of it. And if we Swear to any one Clauſe, of which we have not ſuch an Aſſurance, we therein expreſs a Levity of Spirit, unbecoming the Gravity of an Oath.

2. *WE ſhould be equally wary to ourſelves, how we Swear.* For this Reverence is alſo concerned in the Manner of our ſo doing; and this alſo belongs to the Truth before mentioned. For this Truth not only refers to the Matter of the thing to which we offer our Teſtimony, but alſo to the frame of Heart which we do it withal. There is *the Truth of the Thing ſworn*, and *the Truth of him that ſwears*, both whereof are here to be regarded; and this Latter, is of as great Weight as the Former. That therefore is one part of the Character of a pious Man, Pſal. 24. 4. *He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lift up his ſoul unto vanity, nor ſworn deceitfully.* A Man may Swear nothing but Truth in Words, and yet reſerve a Meaning to himſelf, which makes his Teſtimony fallacious, and Men are impoſed on by it, which is one ſort of Equivocation. A Man may ſwear that which is falſe alone, and reſerve in his Mind a Clauſe which would make it true, and this is perfectly Jeſuitical. Or, he may ſwear in a ſenſe, which he knows Men will not underſtand, but put another Interpretation upon. Or he may Swear only to a part of the Truth, which will altogether alter the Caſe and pervert it. And this belongs to the Righteouſneſs required, (*Jer.* 4. 2) that he avoid this. The Reverend reſpect which is due to God, who is not to be mocked, will command the Man to avoid all theſe, and to practice heart Sincerity in what he doth. And let us be wary in all theſe things, knowing that we have to do with a jealous God.

[MARCH 10. 1702.]

SERMON *CLXIV.*

II. IN *particular*, with regard to the ſeveral kinds of Oaths, there is ſomething ſpecial, wherein this Reverence is to be expreſſed, beſides the forementioned general Duties.

NOW every Oath is either *Aſſertory* or *Promiſſory*.

1. *AN Aſſertory Oath is with reſpect to Things done; and it reſpects Matter of Fact.* And here the great comprehenſive Duty is, that we be *deliberate* in it, and be very careful that it may anſwer all the *Ends* of ſuch an Oath. Raſhneſs is for that End to be avoided by us. Now the End of ſuch an Oath is mainly that Righteouſneſs may be advanced, and Truth may take place among Men. An Aſſertory Oath is to end Controverſies, and Judgment is therefore to proceed upon it; ſo that God's Name is here brought in to iſſue ſuch Matters; and we are aſſured, that his Name is not to be eſpouſed to any thing but what is Truth and Righteouſneſs, and is diſhonoured by every thing that is contrary thereto. This Reverence therefore requires greateſt Exactneſs and Caution, leſt by any miſtake the Truth ſuffer, and Juſtice be perverted: For if we occaſion any Man harm, by our wrong Information, and bring God's Name in, to maintain it, we ſhall thereby take it in Vain.

2. *A Promiſſory Oath hath reſpect to Things to be done:* In which we oblige ourſelves to the doing of them, and call God to be our Voucher in it. Now the thing which we oblige ourſelves to by ſuch an Oath, is promiſed either to *Man*, or to *God*, and this latter is uſually called a *Vow*. Although ſome diſtinguiſh between an Oath and a Vow; but I know not where it can be better aſſigned, than to a Promiſſory Oath. I ſhall not ſpeak of theſe diſtinctly, ſince the Duty is one and the ſame in both. As to the Reverence of an Oath, and touching the Lawfulneſs of Vows, I ſhall not here debate. It was once a Duty, and it belongs to natural Worſhip, and is therefore not ceaſed ſtill. And it is certain, that ſuch a Vow is implied in every Addreſs we put up to God, for any Favour, promiſing him Obedience. But in all Promiſſory Oaths, the Fear of God ought to make us cautiouſly to obſerve theſe Rules.

1. *IT muſt be of nothing, but what is itſelf lawful.* That which it is a Sin to do, is aggravated by binding ourſelves in an Oath to do it; and to fulfil ſuch an Oath, is ſtill to increaſe our Guilt. Such was that of thoſe, *Acts* 23. 12. And to vow any thing to God, which is a Sin, is an offer to mock him. So that our Fear of God ſhould put us always upon firſt conſidering whether the thing be agreeable to God's Will, and ſo whether if we do it, it will be acceptable to him. And accordingly, if it be not ſo, to withhold our engaging, or elſe if our Oath be paſt, to repent of it, and not add Iniquity to Sin by performing it.

2. *IT muſt be of that which is in our Power to perform.* Not but that God hath a ſuperiour Power over us, and can obſtruct our Purpoſes in his Providence, when he pleaſeth; for which reaſon, all ſuch Promiſes ought to carry this Reſerve in them, viz. If God permit. But ſtill it muſt be in ſuch Things, as in the ordinary courſe of Providence, we have a proſpect that we may perform them. To promiſe any thing, which is above our Ability, and for which we have no reaſon to promiſe ourſelves, that God will make us able, is to deſpiſe God, and muſt needs in the iſſue reflect upon his Honour. Such Oaths are in themſelves fallacious, and muſt be broken eventually; and then to charge that upon God's Providence, is an Act of high Profaneneſs.

3. *WHEN we have paſt ſuch an Oath lawfully, we ought to ſtand to it, whatſoever Inconveniences may afterwards ariſe upon it.* If they be

be made to Men, we have that part of the Character of a godly Man, Pſal. 15. 4. *He that ſweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.* And if it be a Vow to God, we have that Caution given us, Eccl. 5. 5. *Better is it that thou ſhouldeſt not vow, then that thou ſhouldeſt vow and not pay.* And, Prov. 20. 25. *It is a ſnare to a man who devoureth that which is holy; and after vows to make inquiry.* And indeed, Reverence to God's Name, which ſtands concerned, ſhould bear down all the Temptations from outward Damage appearing. Yea, and it is our Duty not to delay here; and ſome have thought, that the Evil which befell *Jacob*'s Family, was a Chaſtiſement of his delaying to pay the Vow, he had made at *Bethel*.

4. *HYPOTHETICAL Promiſes, oblige only hypothetically.* If I promiſe upon Condition, the Perſon to whom I make it can demand it only upon that Condition; and if he doth not perform it according to the Nature of the Obligation, the Promiſe is reſcinded, and the Perſon diſcharged, without any reflection on the Name of God. And though there is a vaſt difference between Promiſes to Men, and Vows to God, yet ſpecial Vows made on ſuch an Hypotheſis, do not oblige further, becauſe God, by withholding of the Favour ſought, cuts off the Opportunity of our Performance; but Promiſes made to Duties, that always are ſo, are not hereby made void.

5. *A Promiſſory Oath, tho' lawfully made to Men, yet may be diſcharged by the perſon to whom it is made, if he ſees meet.* And the reaſon is, becauſe the end of it is ſo anſwered, which was the ſecuring to him the performance of ſuch a thing, which he, by ſuch a releaſe, accepts of as performed; and ſo God's Name is not wronged hereby. And ſometimes it may be a moral Duty in Perſons who have ſuch a power, ſo to take off the Obligation, and it may be oppreſſion in them not ſo to do it. Yea, and God himſelf ſometimes accepts of the Will for the Deed, and prohibits the actual performance of Vows made to him; as in the caſe of *David*'s Vowing to Build an Houſe for God. Compare, *Pſal.* 132. 2, *&c.* with 1 Kin. 8. 17, *&c.*

6. *THE Fear of God, calls for Uprightneſs and Integrity, in all our Promiſſory Oaths either to God or Man.* What we thus promiſe, muſt be with a ſincere purpoſe to perform, in all plainneſs, according to the tenour of the Promiſe, without fraud, or any ſiniſter deſigns. And the reaſon is, becauſe God himſelf is called in as a Witneſs, who knows the Heart and is not mocked. Hence when thoſe Men asked advice of the Prophet, and ſo engaged themſelves, *Jer.* 42. 5, 6. God makes that Animadverſion upon it, ver. 20. *For ye diſſembled in your hearts, when ye ſent me unto the Lord your God, ſaying, Pray for us unto the Lord our God, and according unto all that the Lord our God ſhall ſay, ſo declare unto us, and we will do it.*

Thirdly, *WE ſhould carry the awe of theſe Names, Titles, and Attributes of God upon our Hearts, ſo as to influence our whole Converſation.* Our Lives ſhould in all things be ſo ordered, as that every of theſe ſhould appear to have made a ſuitable impreſſion upon us. For this reaſon we ſhould do as *David* did, Pſal. 16. 8. *I have ſet the Lord always before me.* And hence, we ſhould be as much careful to our ſelves, in the moſt ſecret Actions, as in thoſe which are done before Men. We ſhould improve every Attribute of God practically, by it to learn what is our Duty, and make an Argument of it, to be very circumſpect in all that we do. In a word, to purſue that great Precept of our Saviour, Mat. 5. 48. *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

AND here, beſides the *Univerſality* of this Duty in *all things*, of which we have that general Precept, Prov. 23. 17. *Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.* There is one ſpecial uſe, in which this is to be obſerved, viz. in *Lottery*. The word *Lottery*, is ſometimes uſed largely, for any thing in which there is a meer contingency, in reſpect of ſecond Cauſes; and ſo there is a Lottery in almoſt every thing that we intermeddle withal in this Life, Eccl. 9. 11. *I returned, and ſaw under the ſun that the race is not to the ſwift, nor the battel to the ſtrong, neither yet bread to the wiſe, nor yet riches to men of underſtanding, nor yet favour to men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them all.* But ſometimes it is taken more reſtrainedly, for the determining of any matter in Controverſy, by an application to the Divine Providence, in the uſe of a *Medium*, which hath nothing in its own Nature, to diſcover the equity of the Caſe.

THAT it is Lawful, and ſometimes Expedient among Men to make uſe of ſuch a *Medium*, is beyond Diſpute; elſe Controverſies muſt be undecided by Men, and give endleſs troubles, becauſe there is no other way to iſſue them. God therefore ordained them among his People. Now tho' a Lot, as to the uſe of it, is a Civil thing, yet in the Nature of it, it is Religious, and in that reſpect belongs to the firſt Table, and is by ſome aſſigned to the *Firſt*, by others to the *Third* Command. And doubtleſs the reverence to be obſerved in the uſe of it, is to be referred hither.

NOW that *Reverence* due to the Name of God upon this Account, will be diſcovered by the Nature, Occaſion, Matter and Manner of it. Here then,

1. THE *Nature of a Lot, is the referring the determination of any caſe in debate, to God's Providence.* Hence we have that Obſervation, Prov. 16. 33. *The lot is caſt into the lap; but the whole diſpoſing thereof is of the Lord.* The Name and Attributes of God are therefore to be acknowledged in it, which do always require the reverence of the Creature; and his Supremacy and Wiſdom are to be adored in it, which requires a ſuitable behaviour. Which, what it is, will be conſidered under the laſt Head.

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2. *THE Occasion of this is the determining some Controversy by the governing Providence of God.* So that there must be something that is controverted, else there is no Occasion for it. Now that it may give just Occasion for this, *two things* are requisite,

1. *THAT it is a Case that requires a determination.* It must be a matter of moment, either in it self, or in its circumstances. To use such a Solemnity, in matters of no moment, is inconsistent with that reverence of God's Name, which is due to it. In small and trifling matters, it becomes such as fear God, rather to come one to the other, than by contending to drive it to such an issue.

2. *THAT it be no otherwise determinable.* For this is an applying of ourselves to a more than ordinary course of Providence, and that is *more* immediate, though not absolutely so. For it is above the common Rules of humane Judgment. So that if God's ordinary Providence, hath already determined the thing, it is Vanity to provoke to that, which is more than so. For why should I expose my Right to Lot, when God hath made it already indisputable? Or if the thing be at present under a Debate, and not determined, yet if the common Law of Equity and Justice will decide it, which God hath given us for the Rule of Government, there is no need of an higher Appeal to God; inasmuch as God hath made it Man's Duty, to conform to these Rules, where they may be used, and acquiesce in them; and what is it less than tempting of God, to ask a farther Determination of that, which he hath already determined? And that is far from the Reverence which is due to him.

3. *THE Matter of it*; and this will come under a *double* Consideration, *viz.*

1. *THE Matter about which it is to be used.* This we observed, is a Case under Debate; but there are *two* sorts of Cases, which may be so, viz. Things *done and past*, and things *not yet done, but future.* That Lots of both these sorts were in former times among Israel, made use of, by God's Appointment, is evident, by the History of those Times. Thus was *Achan* detected of his Sacriledge by a Lot, *Josh.* 7. And thus were the Lands of Israel appointed to be divided by Lot. But the former of these was not appointed for a common Rule, to detect Crimes by, no not Murder it self; which was therefore to be left a secret till Men were otherwise discovered in the ordinary way. As will appear from that Law, in *Deut.* 21. *begin.* So that no Lot might be cast for the finding out things past, without an extraordinary and special Command of God for it, since there is no Precept for it, either in the Law of Nature, or in the written Law: Whereas of things future, about which there may also be Contention, it hath a foundation in both, viz. for the Dividing Estates, especially of Inheritance; and Election of Persons to Places of Trust.

2. THE *Matter of a Lot*; or *the Medium which is to be used in the determining the question controverted*; *and that is a thing in it self meerly Contingent.* And by this I intend such a thing as in its own Nature hath no power to determine the Justice or Equity of the Case, but is equally capable of falling out this way or that. So that every Contingency is not fit matter for a Lot: because in some there may be the skill or art of Man in it; or the thing though not necessary, yet hath more of probability to fall out this way than the other. For there is nothing of advantage to be given to either Party in it; for that would take away the reason, and subvert the very end and design of a Lot.

4. *THE Manner*; *and this is to be gathered from the Premises.* And here these Rules are to be observed,

1. *THE Universal Governing Providence of God, is to be acknowledged and adored by us.* Without this the whole Action would be irrational. The very Heathen, being ignorant of the true God, did on this account make blind Fortune a Goddess: And so do all they interpretatively, who resign the case up to *meer* Contingency, to be determined by it, unless they have a due regard to the Governing Providence of God. It's therefore to be practically believed, that he doth Efficiently over-rule things that are most Contingent, and determine them according to his infinitely wise Counsel; according to the forecited, *Prov.* 16. 33.

2. *HENCE the Matter is to be intirely submitted to this Providence.* God is not else duly reverenced. We ought therefore always to address our selves to God, at least with our Ejaculatory request, that he would put the issue to this Affair, according to his Holy and Sovereign Counsel: That he would accomplish his Al-wise Purpose in it. We are to chuse him Umpire in this matter, and acquiesce in him as such. And say as he, 1 Sam. 14. 41. *The Lord God of Israel, give a perfect lot.*

3. *HENCE there is no course to be used to forestall this Providence, by any cunning of our own.* There is no humane Art at all to be used to influence the Lot, so as to make it to incline more on one side than another. There is no craft to be used, or endeavour to know how to put a bias upon the thing, so as that it should incline to our side: No foresight to over rule our Choice: No bribing of the Person that is to manage it: Which things have been too frequent in such Occasions. Nor any trying by such things that we have more skill in, than our Antagonist: For so it ceaseth to be a Lot, and is turned to a Mockery, wherein God's Name is greatly dishonoured.

4. *THE determination is quietly to be rested in, as the voice of God himself.* And this is a genuine practical Conclusion from the Premises. To murmur or be discontent at the event, plainly argues irreverence, and that

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we did not aright acknowledge God in the Thing. For God doth certainly tell us his mind by the Lor, and not to be content with it, is to riſe up againſt his Government.

II. *IN reſpect of God's Ordinances*, viz. thoſe Inſtitutions of his Worſhip, which have his Name underwritten: *I am the Lord.* And this Reverence is to be uſed in *three* reſpects.

1. *IN a due Preparation to attend upon theſe Ordinances.* In them we draw near to God, to enjoy Communion with him; we ought therefore to get ourſelves in a readineſs for ſuch a Meeting, as we would do to meet with a great King. We ſhould gather up our *Hearts*, that we may carry them with us; Rouſe up our *Graces*, that they may be ready for Exerciſe. Lay off our Affections to other things, and go with the moſt earneſt longings to meet with God, and enjoy Fellowſhip with him. Get into the Pſalmiſts Frame, Pſal. 84. begin. *How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hoſts? My ſoul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my fleſh crieth out for the living God.* It is our Duty, whenever we come before him in the way of his Ordinaces, to do it with Reverence. Lev. 26. 2. *Ye ſhall keep my ſabbaths, and reverence my ſanctuary: I am the Lord.* Pſal. 85. 7. *God is greatly to be feared in the aſſembly of the ſaints: and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.* We ought therefore to prepare before hand, by due Meditation and Prayer, accounting it our Happineſs to enjoy him, and making his reckoning, Pſal. 84. 10. *For a day in thy courts is better than a thouſand.* We ſhould therefore put every thing aſide, which will offer any Impediment to our free Communion with him, 1 *Pet.* 2. 1, 2. And guard our Affections that they do not carry us after vain Objects, Eccl. 5. 1. *Keep thy foot when thou goeſt to the houſe of God.*

2. IN our attending upon the Ordinances, we ſhould *take heed to our Carriage both of inward and outward Man.* As to our inward Man, we ſhould attend with greateſt Diligence and Submiſſion; and to that end, get our Hearts fixed, our Minds intent, our Underſtandings exerciſed, our Wills ſubdued, our Faith enlarged, our Affections preſſed for Service, and our whole Man in an obediential Frame, ready to *hear* what God hath to ſay, and *practice* whatſoever he requires of us. And as to the outward Man, we ought to look well to our Behaviour; that we uſe no irreverend Geſtures, in the Ordinances, whiles diſpenſed, but in our whole Carriage remember whoſe Preſence we are in, and to be very careful to guard our ſenſes; to ſee that our Eyes and our Ears are rightly employed, and to take heed of Drowſineſs, and bodily Indiſpoſitions: For the Body is to ſerve, or elſe it will obſtruct the Soul.

3. *IN our after Improvement of Ordinances.* They are appointed for our Growth in Grace and Knowledge, for our Conviction, Direction, and Excitation. And we then only pay God due Reſpect for them, when we live upon the Supply we have by them, and improve it to our ſpiritual Nouriſhment. Hence that, 1 Pet. 2. 2. *As new born babes deſire the ſincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.* For this end we ſhould both meditate on what God hath offered to us; Pray over it for his Bleſſing, and ſet ourſelves to live the Truths which we hear,

III. *IN Reſpect of God's Word.* Which is alſo one great Part of his Name: and we cannot duly reverence him, unleſs we do pay an aweful Deference to that. Here alſo three Rules may be conſidered.

1. *WE muſt pay a Divine Credit to it*, i. e. *we muſt entertain it as the Word of God, and the Manifeſtation of his Will to us.* And for that Reaſon we muſt pay an entire Belief to the Truth of it, not in the leaſt queſtioning the Truth of any part of it. It is true, we ought to be well grounded in the Perſuaſion, that it is infallibly the Word of God, and no cunningly deviſed Fable. But on this Conviction, we are neither to doubt of the Truth of one Article of it, how far ſoever ſome of them may ſurpaſs the Comprehenſion of our Underſtandings; nor to think meanly of any part of it, as if impertinent, though we do not ſee into the Deſign. Nor deſpiſe it for the plainneſs of the Stile, but give it all Honour becauſe it is his Word, who is infinitely Wiſe and True. This Commendation *Paul* gives to them, 1 Theſ. 2. 13. *For this cauſe alſo thank we God without ceaſing, becauſe when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, which effectually worketh alſo in you that believe.*

2. *HENCE we ought to pay an entire Subjection to it, and to God in it.* We muſt make it the whole Rule of our Faith and Manners. We muſt reſolve our whole Faith into the Revelations of it, and take all our Meaſures from it, and order our whole Converſation according to it, Pſal. 119. 105. *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.* Iſai. 8. 20. *To the law and to the teſtimony, if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them.* We muſt take nothing from it, nor make any Additions to it, but content ourſelves with the Directions of it, Deut. 12. 32. *What thing ſoever I command you, obſerve to do it; thou ſhalt not add thereto, nor diminiſh from it.* We ought to be entirely at the Command of it, and yield a compleat Obedience to all the Precepts of it, and not turn from it to the right hand or the left. We ought to give Credit to the Threatnings of it, and be ever awed by them, and to rely upon its Promiſes, as ſure, and which cannot fail. And all this becauſe it is His Word, who is to be Feared and Reverenced.

3. *WE ought to be very cautious how we take this Word into our Mouths.* We ſhould beware of a common frame of Spirit, when we either read it, or ſpeak of it. Hence we ought to be very ſerious at all times when we mention

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it, and do it with Gravity, Sobriety and Veneration of the Author of it. We ought not therefore to use it for any jocular Purposes, much less to furnish ourselves for profane Discourses. We ought not to advance civil Mirth with it, much less vain Drollery, by making Jests of it; all which are directly contrary to the holy Reverence due to the Name of God.

IV. *IN respect of God's Works.* God's Name is written upon all of these, and we ought to read it, and reverence it in them. It is true, the Works themselves are not to be adored by us, because God is in them. This was a great part of the Pagan Idolatry and Superstition. But yet we are to observe what of God is to be seen in them, and pay him the Veneration which is due, to such a God, as they discover him to be. Now these Works of God, are either those of *Creation*, or of *Providence.*

1. *WE are to reverence him, in the Works of Creation*; by observing and ascribing to him, those glorious Perfections of his, which are imprinted on them, and shine forth in them: As, his infinite and admirable Wisdom, Power and Goodness. We are told, Rom. 1. 20. *For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.* And there are astonishing Rays of his Divinity, which appear, not only in the great Works of the Heavens, Sun, Moon and Stars, of which, *Psal.* 19. *begin.* But in the least and most contemptible, yea, in all of them. Of his Wisdom, Psal. 104. 24. *O Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wisdom hast thou made them all.* His Power in speaking such a World into Being, Psal. 33. 6, 9. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made: and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. For he spake, and it was done, he commanded, and it stood fast.* His Goodness, ver. 5. *The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.* And there is not the least Worm that we tread on, nor the least pile of Grass which grows out of the Earth, but carries more Wonders in it, than the greatest Philosopher is able to resolve, and proclaims God to be its Author, and it calls us to fear this God.

2. *WE are to adore him in regard of his Works of Providence.* The Preservation and Gubernation of the Lord are so admirable, that God is to be seen in them, and they afford matter of awful Speculation and Improvement. And that we may suitably express this Reverence,

1. *WE must acknowledge him to be the Author of all those Providences that fall out in the World.* We must not ascribe them to Chance, or the Management of second Causes, but to God alone, that it is his Hand, and second Causes his Instruments. This therefore are Men faulted for, Isai. 26. 11. *Lord when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see.*

2. *WE must study those Lessons from these Providences which may fortify our reverential Fear of him.* And this will be by reading those Perfections which shine forth in them, from whence these Lessons are to be learned. We are here to see his *Sovereignty*, that he doth his Pleasure in all, and that the whole Creation are at his Dispose, Psal. 135. 6. *Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deep places.* His *Wisdom* and *Power*, in upholding all things, and keeping the World in that Order in which it is. His *Holiness* and *Righteousness*, in all the Testimonies which he bears against the Wickedness of Men; His *Love* to his People, and *Faithfulness* to his Promise, in all his Appearances for them in their hours of need. And hence learn, how fearful a thing it is for Sinners to fall into his Hand, and how great is the Happiness of all those who have him for their God and Portion; which will put us on studying to please him, and Care lest we offend him.

3. *A suitable Acknowledgement of him in all the Providences that befall us in the World.* These are either Merciful or Afflictive; if he bestows Kindnesses upon us, we should acknowledge his Benignity, undeserved by us, and engage ourselves thereby the more to his Fear. And therefore we have that, Hos. 3. 5. *And shall fear the Lord and his goodness.* And if he lays his Hand on us in Afflictions, we are to adore his Supremacy, to acknowledge his Righteousness, to celebrate his Patience, to submit to his Hand, to accept of his Chastening, and to avoid all Fretting or Murmuring at him; much more charging of him, with the least Injustice. And in all these Respects we are to take care, that we preserve the Honour and Glory of God's holy Name.

USE. AND if this be our Duty, let it engage us to see and bewail our woful shortcoming; and accordingly shew us, what need we have of Christ, to answer for us, and procure our Pardon: so to put us upon a more careful heed to, and watch over ourselves in this Regard: and in the Sense of our own utter Impotency to comply with the Precept of ourselves, to seek to Christ, for his Spirit and Grace to help us in our Duty, that we may sincerely and constantly pursue it; and to give acceptance to our Sincerity. And let us entertain an high esteem of God's *precious* Name, and when we see it so much taken in vain by vile Men, let it engage us, with the greatest Circumspection, to look after our Hearts and Lives; that having a deeply rooted veneration for him in our Hearts, we may regulate our Thoughts, Words and Actions according thereunto: That so we may be found in the Number of those that fear before him, for whom he hath laid in great and precious Promises; which give us to understand that God hath not commanded us to fear him in vain.

[APRIL 7. 1702.]

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SERMON *CLXV.*

QUESTION LV.

WHAT is forbidden in the Third Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Third Commandment forbiddeth, the profaning or abuſing of any thing, whereby GOD maketh Himſelf known.

THO' it be ſufficient in itſelf for our knowing what is Sin, to lay open the *Duty* before us diſtinctly, yet ſuch is our dulneſs and inadvertency, that we have need alſo to be particularly inſtructed about *Sins* which are a breach of the Command. And tho' it be a comprehenſive Rule, that every Aberration from the Precept, either by Omiſſion or Tranſgreſſion, is a ſinful breach of it, yet we are too apt either to forget or miſtake; and for that reaſon God hath done both of theſe in his Word, and made it the Duty of his Miniſters, not only to lay down the Command, but alſo to ſhew his People the Tranſgreſſions of it, Iſai. 58. 1. *Cry aloud, ſpare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and ſhew my people their tranſgreſſion, and the houſe of Jacob their ſin.* Yea, this Command, as the moſt of the Decalogue, is laid down Negatively, pointing us nextly what we are to avoid. Let us then take a brief view of the *Negative* part of it.

WE obſerved under the *Poſitive* part of this Command, that the comprehenſive Duty required in it, is *holy reverence of God, in reſpect of all thoſe Diſcoveries which he maketh of himſelf to us.* The contrary to this, or the *Sin forbidden*, is in the Command called, a *taking of his Name in vain:* This our Catechiſm expreſſeth in two words, viz. Profaning or Abuſing this Name of his. In which Words there is a gradation contained. Profaning a thing according to the uſage of it, is as much as making it Common, and is oppoſed to ſanctifying it; which is done by a ſeparation of it from all common uſe, and conſecrating it to that which is Sacred. When therefore Men do, either in Thought, Word, or Deed, put a common, mean, or low account upon God's precious Name, they then profane it. Abuſing of it hath a reſpect to ſomething that is higher and more grievous, and it intends the caſting diſparagement or reproach on a thing, to abuſe it to ſordid and baſe ends, to caſt active indignity upon it. And this is done, when we ſubordinate it to our Luſts and Corruptions, and theſe *Two* are comprehenſive of the meaning of taking it in *Vain.*

NOW the ſeveral ways in which this Command is broken, and are for that reaſon forbidden in it, are too many here to be enumerated. I ſhall endeavour to give ſome touch upon the principal, as they come under the diverſe Heads mentioned in the former Anſwer, by which the Name of God is to be underſtood by us, according to the Scriptures. Here then,

Firſt, *IN reſpect of God's Names, Titles and Attributes*, this Command is many ways violated: More eſpecially and comprehenſively by ſuch things as theſe,

I. *BY a light and frothy uſing of them in common Diſcourſe.* It is true, we ought to be often ſpeaking of God, but it ſhould always be with greateſt Reverence, ſo as to make it appear that we have an awful Fear of him in our Hearts: but when raſhly and indeliberately, we mention his Names or Perfections, and ſo make them common, we profane them; for herein we make it to appear, that we have a low Opinion of them, and that we have not that awe of God upon our hearts; contrary to *Mal.* 1. 6. Thus when Perſons at every turn cry out, Oh Lord, Oh God, God Almighty, and the like; as if the Names and Perfections of God were for nothing elſe but for Men to play withal. How much more, when Men ſpeak or expreſs themſelves paſſionately, unbecomingly, and cry, God forgive me, &c. Which is to entitle him to our Sins: How do ſuch forget that duty, Deut. 28 58. *That thou mayeſt fear this glorious and fearful Name, THE LORD THY GOD.*

II. *BY ſinful Swearing.* That Swearing doth of its own nature belong to Religious Worſhip, we have before obſerved; for God's Name and Attributes are concerned in it; it being an Appeal to his Judgment, who is all-knowing, and able to take Vengeance; who is no other but God. That it is ſometimes lawful and a duty to Swear, hath alſo been evidenced. But there are ſeveral ways in which his Name may be abuſed on this account; and more particularly,

1. *BY common Swearing.* When perſons mix Oaths with their ordinary Diſcourſes, and poſſibly can ſcarce utter a few Sentences without Swearing; which is too much the cuſtom of the Age we live in. They therein horribly profane God's Name, and contradict the Precept which hath bounded our ordinary Converſe to bare Affirmations and Negations, Mat. 5. 34, 37. *But I ſay unto you, Swear not at all. But let your converſation be, Yea, yea: Nay, nay: for whatſoever is more than theſe, cometh of evil.* Whereas how many think no Oratory ſo graceful as that which is lined with Oaths.

2. *BY falſe Swearing.* The uſe of an Oath is for the confirmation of the *Truth* of what one aſſerts, and it is by calling on God to be a Witneſs thereto. Now God is a God of Truth, and he hates all falſhood. There can therefore be no greater diſhonour put upon him, than to make him the Patron of a lye; to put his Name down for a Witneſs to that which is not ſo. Nor can there any greater

contempt be caſt upon God, than is done by this. For by Swearing we invoke God to puniſh us, if what we ſay be not true: Which how could we dare to do, if the fear of God had any impreſſion upon our Hearts? It ſaith that Men regard not that Curſe, *Zech.* 5.4.

3. *BY raſh & indeliberate Swearing.* Poſſibly they do think the thing is true, but do not firſt ponder it in all the Circumſtances of it, to ſee that they are not miſtaken, but that they know it to be ſo, and not by hear-ſay only, but of their own knowledge and diſtinct memory. Precipitancy in it is a ſign that we do not conſider that God is a jealous God for his great Name, but that we practically believe that he little regards what we ſay, and will not call us to an account. And what is this but to deſpiſe him?

4. *BY needleſs Swearing.* Nothing can be more ſolemn than an Oath; and therefore in nothing do Men ſhew more, either of their reverence or contempt of God. For Men therefore to call God a Witneſs againſt their own Souls, which is implied in every Oath, 2 *Cor.* 1. 23. when the thing it ſelf is not of weight or moment, is an Argument of an irreligious frame of Spirit. And this is done, either when neither the thing nor circumſtances are of weight, ſo as to make it needful, or when the thing is ſufficiently clear without our Affidavit; and therefore it is ſuperfluous, and the Controverſy may well enough be ended without it.

5. *BY fallacious Swearing.* Tho' there is no difference in God's account between this and falſe Swearing. Hence he is charged with lying, Pſal. 52. 3. *Thou loveſt evil more than good: and lying rather than to ſpeak righteouſneſs.* Yet in the thing among Men there is this difference, in *that* the thing it ſelf is falſe, but in *this* it may in ſome ſenſe be true, but under a cloak of deceit: either by ſuppreſſing part of the Truth, or expreſſing of it in ambiguous Terms, ſo as to impoſe on Men by it; and therewith a deſign to pervert Judgment, and to wrong the Innocent. And ſuch was *Doegs* teſtimony. Now this is to becloud the Truth, and not to give light to it, which is an abuſe offered to God's Holy Name. That therefore is a note of one who ſhall aſcend into God's Hill, Pſal. 24.4.—*Nor ſworn deceitfully.*

6. *BY Swearing by any other Name but that of the true God.* The Name by which we Swear, is a Scripture teſt, to prove of what Religion Men are; for he by whoſe Name Men Swear, is the God whom they pretend to Worſhip Thus, Gen. 31. 53. *And Jacob ſware by the fear of his father Iſaac.* For the very nature of an Oath implies, that in it we addreſs him to whom we aſcribe the Divine Perfections. If then it be not the true God, it is an Idol. And to put any other in the room of God, is highly derogatory to his Name and Glory. Hence that is an Article againſt Men, Jer. 5. 7. *Thy children have forſaken me, and ſworn by them that are no gods.* God is alſo deſpiſed, when Men Swear by things which they know to be unable to Judge them: when inſtead of Swearing by God, they Swear by the Bible, by the Evangeliſts, by their Faith, Troth, by their Head, by the Temple; all of which are comprehended, *Mat.* 5. 34,35,36.

7. *BY violating of their Promiſſory Oaths.* When Men do not only make Promiſes, but call God to witneſs to them, and yet they neither regard their own Truth, nor God's Glory, which is now concerned peculiarly in it, they certainly break this Command; and therefore there is much aggravation of Sin by this. 2 Chron. 36. 13. *And he alſo rebelled againſt king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him ſwear by God.* Becauſe herein Men invite God himſelf to be their Security, for their faithful performance of their Promiſes; whom they hereby diſhonour.

III. *BY ſinful Carriage about Vows.* We formerly ranked theſe under promiſſory Swearing; tho' ſome ſuppoſe ſome nice diſtinctions between them. A Vow is a ſolemn binding our ſelves to perform ſomething to God or for his Glory, and ſo hath God for the immediate Object to whom it is devoted. The Lawfulneſs and Uſefulneſs of ſuch Vows, we have already taken notice of. But as God is honoured by them when they are righly attended, ſo his Name is reproached by them when it is otherwiſe. And this is done more eſpecially,

1. *BY unlawful Vows.* And this more peculiarly reſpects the thing Vowed. The end of a Vow is to bind our ſelves to ſomething by which God is honoured; and therefore to Vow that which the doing of will diſhonour him, is an abuſe to his Name. To oblige our ſelves to do that which is itſelf ſinful, is ſuch. And hither belongs *Jeptha's* Vow, if it devoted his Daughter to Death. Hither belong the Popiſh Vows of Chaſtity, Poverty, and Monaſtical Obedience, which are Superſtitious, and therefore unlawful: For hereby they preſume that God will be pleaſed with ſuch things, which is an high reflection upon his Name.

2. *BY the performance of ſuch Vows under a pretence of Conſcience.* It is true, Men Sin by making ſuch Vows, and ought therefore to be humbled before God for it, and repent of it: but to reſolve that they muſt do it becauſe of the Vow, is ſuperſtitious and erroneous; and ſo to do, is to offer a farther affront to God. It therefore added to *Jeptha's* Sin, if in Conſcience of his Vow, he ſacrificed or ſlew his Daughter. And his duty to do it is in vain pleaded from Lev. 27. 29. *None devoted, which ſhall be devoted of men, ſhall be redeemed: but ſhall ſurely be put to death.* In the Hebrew it is every *Cherem* or *Anathema*; which is Anathemiz'd *out of Men:* it is not ſaid *by Man*, noting the Subject. Now it was not lawful for Men to devote their Children to Death, nor Sacrifice, but utterly forbidden by the Law. It therefore intends ſuch as God hath devoted, and probably intends the Canaanites, whom they were not to ſpare. 3.

3. *BY their not regarding to perform their lawful Vows.* That is a duty, Pſal. 76. 11. *Vow, and pay unto the Lord your God.* And not to do it, is to diſregard God's Name, to which we have obliged our ſelves. And this neglect evermore manifeſts either falſeneſs and hypocriſy in our Vowing; or diſregard to God, as if it were no matter whether we were true to him or no. We are therefore told, Eccl. 5. 5. *Better is it that thou ſhouldeſt not vow, then that thou ſhouldeſt vow and not pay.*

IV. *BY Imprecations or Curſes.* It is true, there is an implicit imprecation in every Oath that is made by Men, becauſe in it they invoke God to be a Judge, and if they Swear falſely to puniſh them. But there are more immediate and direct imprecations, which are called Curſing, diſtinct from Swearing. And that is, when Men do call for ſome miſchief to befall themſelves or others, which is uſually occaſioned by ſome diſguſt they take, or ſome Paſſion they are thrown into: in which God is either *explicitly*, or at leaſt *implicitly* invoked, to execute our ill wiſhes: Not only when Men expreſs God's Name, as when they ſay, God damn them; or when they Petition God to deſtroy or blaſt, whether themſelves or others; but alſo when they wiſh any evil to befall Men, that they may die, or ſome plague may overtake them; or devote them to the Devil, and many like; becauſe here is a tacit addreſs to God's Providence which governs all Affairs, and ſo to God himſelf, who is the Governour. And yet how much of this Sin is practiſed among Men that call themſelves Chriſtians. Men by thus doing, make a daring treſpaſs upon this Command, contrary to the Precept, in Rom. 12.14. *Bleſs them which perſecute you, bleſs and curſe not.* It may here be alledged, that there are inſtances in the Word of God, of ſuch as have imprecated againſt themſelves or others, who were godly Men, and that very frequently; ſurely then it is lawful. A little to clear this matter, let us obſerve,

1. *THAT ſome Imprecations of Good Men were ſinful, and flowed from their ſinful Infirmity.* Such as *Job's* & *Jeremiah's* curſing their Birth, and many Perſons, as *Job* 3. *Jer.* 20. 14. Such are not written for our learning, but avoidance.

2. *THERE are ſome Imprecations on Scripture record, which are Prophetical:* And were the extraordinary impreſſions of the Spirit of God on thoſe that declared them; wherein they uttered the Judgments of God which he had purpoſed againſt ſuch. Such are many in the Pſalms, divers whereof are alſo *Typical*; for the Spirit of God was the dictator of them, and therefore are not to be drawn into imitation by any who do not ſpeak by Divine Inſpiration.

3. *THAT no Man may Imprecate againſt himſelf abſolutely.* There is indeed an hypothetical imprecation in every Oath; but poſitively to wiſh or pray for miſchief to our ſelves, is directly contrary to that love which every Man owes to himſelf by the light of Nature, and law of God. We expreſs hatred to our ſelves by ſuch a thing, which is unnatural, and therefore unlawful, Eph. 5. 29. *No man ever yet hated his own fleſh.*

4. *THAT it is our duty to love and pray for our perſonal Enemies.* Mat. 5. 44. *But I ſay unto you, love your enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which deſpitefully uſe you, and perſecute you.* When they curſe, we ought to bleſs them, and to deſire that God would bleſs them. Certainly then, we ought not to imprecate God's Curſe upon them, for any injury they have done to us.

5. *THERE are ſome who openly ſet themſelves againſt God's Cauſe, whoſe Converſion we ought to deſire and pray for.* There are ſome indeed for whom we ought not to Pray, 1 *Joh* 5. 16. But for others we are bound to Pray, that God would turn their Hearts, and cauſe them to favour his Intereſt and People, 1 *Tim.* 2. *begin.* Some withſtand through ignorance, others in malice.

6. *WE ought to diſtinguiſh between the Perſon and the Cauſe.* Doubtleſs we are to Pray that God would diſappoint all the Counſels and Attempts of ungodly Men againſt his Goſpel and People: yea, and that he would vindicate our perſonal righteous Cauſe, againſt thoſe that injuriouſly oppreſs us; but ſtill we muſt obſerve that Charity for them which the Precept calls for. *In ſum then*; To Imprecate any miſchief upon our ſelves is wickedneſs: To Imprecate upon any Man's Perſon, his Ruine and Eternal Deſtruction, except we know him guilty of the Unpardonable Sin, is Unlawful; becauſe we know not but God may give him Repentance; which we ſhould deſire and Pray for. To Imprecate God's Judgments upon our perſonal Enemies, for wrongs which they have done to us, is a revenge forbidden. To imprecate to that Cauſe which ſets itſelf againſt the Kingdom of Chriſt in this World *abſolutely*, and againſt them who are violently ſet againſt it, *hypothetically*, is our Duty: for when we Pray that God's Kingdom may come, we implicitly Pray, that Satans Kingdom may be ruined.

V. *BY Blaſphemy.* Blaſphemy is any reproachful reflection upon God, in regard of any of his glorious Perfections. Of which there are divers degrees. All of which are ſo far violations of this Precept. Any thing that is ſpoken againſt God, which caſts diſhonour upon him, is certainly a taking of *his Name in vain.* And this is done, partly by calling in Queſtion any of his Attributes, as his Holineſs, Juſtice, Mercy, Truth, &c. Such as that of *Senecherib, Iſai.* 37. 10 *with* 23. Partly, by aſcribing any thing to God which is unworthy of him. Such is that, Pſal. 50. 21. *Thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch an one as thy ſelf.* And that, *Jam.* 1. 13. Thus when Men make God no better than an Idol, and ſpeak of him as if he were no greater than a Creature, when they charge him either with Impotency, or Falſhood, or Ignorance, they do therein Blaſpheme his Name. And

when they reproach Chriſt, who hath God's Name upon him, by denying his Diety, and making him a meer Creature, or not acknowledging him to be the Eternal Son of God, they diſhonour him by Blaſphemy. On which account *Paul* acknowledgeth, 1 Tim. 1. 13. *Who was before a blaſphemer.*

VI. *BY aſcribing any of the Divine Titles or Attributes to any meer Creature.* That theſe do belong to the Perſon of Chriſt is certain, for he is God, Phil. 2. 6. *Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.* The Perfections or Attributes of God are vulgarly diſtinguiſhed into Incommunicable, and Communicable: By which we are only to underſtand, that the words uſed to expreſs them, are ſome, proper to be aſcribed to God; others are uſed, both of God and the Creature, by a kind of *Analogy*. But in theſe there is an infinite diſproportion. Now the vanity of Men doth herein wofully diſcover it ſelf, and their profaneneſs horribly appears, when they give that honour to the Creature, which belongs to God only. And herein the vile Adulation of ſinful Men, diſcovers it ſelf, in giving flattering Titles to ſuch as they would inſinuate themſelves into: And how eaſily doth this profaneneſs ſteal into Men's *Penegyricks*. God challengeth the Glory of his Name unto himſelf, with jealouſy, Iſai. 42. 8. *I am the Lord, that is my Name, and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praiſe to graven images.* When therefore Men aſcribe to their fellow Creatures, Infinity, Eternity, Omnipotence, or Omniſcience, they reflect diſhonour upon God, by making a Second Being equal to him, in any of theſe Perfections: And yet, how hath the vain Oratory of Men, ſoothed up Princes in this reſpect. And to aſcribe Wiſdom, Juſtice, Bounty &c. to any in the *abſtract*, to call ſuch an one Wiſdom itſelf, Juſtice itſelf, &c. comes under the ſame Crime. And for Men to accept of ſuch flattery, is highly provoking to God, *Act.* 12. 21, *&c.*

VII. *BY an Hypocritical Profeſſion.* An Hypocrite in Religion, is one that profeſſeth himſelf to be a Servant of God, and pretends to his Worſhip, to truſt in him, to ſubmit to him, and he takes God's Name into his mouth, but mean while, he doth it with a falſe Heart, and is inſincere in all that he doth; he hath an Idol in his Heart all the while. Now, though God is not mocked, becauſe he knows, and will call ſuch to an account, yet there are none in the World that do offer at a greater Mockery than this is. The Hypocrite in Heart doth deſpiſe God, elſe he could not be an Hypocrite. And for this reaſon God is ſo frequently in his Word denouncing his ſevere Menaces againſt Hypocrites as the worſt of Men, and ſuch as do moſt grievouſly provoke him.

Secondly, *IN reſpect of God's Ordinances.* Which are an appointed *Medium*, for our Communion with him in this World. This Command is violated,

1. *BY a Neglect or Contempt of theſe Ordinances.* God imparts himſelf to his People by his Inſtitutions, and for Perſons either to reject them with Contempt, to reproach them as things of no value, to ſpeak againſt them as things that are needleſs; or to take no heed to attend upon them, according to God's Command, is to deſpiſe God. They who under a pretence of lifting up Spiritual Communion with God, do throw dirt upon all the outward Means appointed in the Goſpel, do certainly *take God's Name in vain.* For to reflect upon them, is to reflect upon the Author and Inſtitutor of them, who is God himſelf. And for ſuch as live where the Means of Grace are to be enjoyed, and regard not to wait upon them, but frame all excuſes to abſent themſelves from them, do thereby depreciate the Wiſdom and Sovereignty of God: Contrary to Lev. 26. 2. *Ye ſhall keep my ſabbaths, and reverence my ſanctuary: I am the Lord.*

2. *BY careleſs and unſuitable attending the Ordinances.* There is Contempt as well in this, as in the other. There is an irreverend management of our ſelves about the Ordinances, which ſhews the Contempt of them as really as the rejecting them. Ordinances may be abuſed as well as neglected. And whatſoever is contrary unto, or defective in that due reſpect which is called for in the obſervance of theſe Duties, is here forbidden. And this is done in three reſpects.

1. *BY ruſhing upon Ordinances without due Preparation.* It is indeed the duty of Chriſtians to maintain holy frames, by which they may be diſpoſed for any Solemn Service, when called to it. Hence to turn their backs upon any occaſion for it under ſuch a pretence, is vain & unjuſtifiable. But on the other hand, for Chriſtians to take no time to call themſelves up to Meditation on the things they are ſetting about, and to get in a readineſs to meet with God in the ways of his Appointment; but to go the Houſe of God, and hear the Word, and ſit at the Lord's Table, with a common frame of Spirit, is a neglect of this Command. I am ſure the Pſalmiſt could make ſuch a Profeſſion, Pſal. 57. 7. *My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed; I will ſing and give praiſe.* And the neglect of this, argues that we have not that venerable eſteem of God, that is his due.

2. *BY all manner of Irreverence in our attending upon the Ordinances.* And that either in our *Hearts* or *Geſtures*. If we carry our Bodies, and leave our Hearts behind us, we break this Command. Ezek. 33. 31. *And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they ſit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they ſhew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetouſneſs.* If we come to an Ordinance, and do not carry in our minds the Preſence of God with his Appointments, and accordingly regard it not; when we reckon that we have only to do with Men, and not with the Great GOD, and hence are not awed

with

with this Thought; when we ſuffer our Eyes to rove, and Thoughts to go out with them to other Objects; when we uſe irreverend Geſtures in the Houſe of God, or at any Religious Duty; when we Sleep at an Ordinance; when we Whiſper together and Laugh, and divert thus from the Duty in hand: When we receive the Warnings, Counſels, Reproofs offered, with Prejudice: When we are weary of, and wiſh the Ordinance were over, by reaſon of a low eſteem we have for the Truth offered in it: We hereby ſhew a want of the Fear of God.

3. *BY a neglect to improve the Ordinances to the Ends or Purpoſes of them.* God comes in theſe to inſtruct and corroborate us in our Duty. There is therefore an after-uſe to be made of theſe, by which only we can glorify God by them. When therefore all our Zeal and Religion terminates in the bare formal attendance on the Ordinances, and though we ſeem to be a little raiſed and engaged in the time, yet we go away, and leave all our Zeal and Affection behind us. If we do not receive God's Counſels for our after Practice, and accordingly endeavour to live the Truths which we have been taught; if we do not take his Warnings ſo as to be awed by them, to be more watchful to our ſelves afterwards in our Converſation: If we are not allured by the precious Promiſes to more deligent and delightful ſerving of God; we are as vain, as fooliſh and lewd as before, and regard not how we live, but poſſibly are more bold to Sin; we therein do abuſe the Appointments of God, and pervert them from their right uſe; and becauſe his Name is on them, he is thereby diſhonoured, and his Name profaned. In a Word, when Men make the Ordinances, inſtead of an help to New Obedience, an encouragement to a vain Converſation, and a cover to any manner of Wickedneſs, they grievouſly tranſgreſs the Third Command. As they, Mat. 23. 14. *Ye devour widows houſes, and for a pretence make long prayers.*

AND let us be very heedful to our ſelves on this account: For as there is a grievous pronitude in our corrupt Nature to this Sin, ſo there is no little hazzard in our thus doing. And if thus we take God's *Name in vain*, we thereby not only hinder our ſelves of the profit, which otherwiſe we might get by the Means of Grace, but we ſhall incur the Divine Diſpleaſure, and ſtir up the holy Indignation of that God againſt us, who will not bear that his Name ſhould be thus trampled upon by thoſe that pretend to a Veneration of it.

[MAY 5. 1702.]

SERMON *CLXVI.*

Thirdly, *IN reſpect of God's Word:* In which he hath recorded his Name, and made diſcovery to us of his holy Pleaſure, and given it to us for our directory to guide our feet in the path of Peace, and excite us to his Fear and Service. Here this Command is broken,

1. *BY reading or ſpeaking of the Word with a common frame of Spirit.* We read, in Pſal. 138. 2. *Thou haſt magnified thy word above all thy name.* And that is one thing that belongs to the Character of a godly Man, *Iſai.* 66 2. He *trembleth at* God's *Word.* For Men therefore to apply themſelves to the Holy Scriptures, with ordinary thoughts or opinions of it, and pay no more deference to it, than they do to Writings meerly humane, is to undervalue it, and to forget the Author of it: it is to put a ſlight upon the Divine Oracles, and that is nothing leſs than to profane them, and not to look upon them to be, as indeed they are, the Word of God.

2. *BY careleſs neglect of Reading & Hearing the Word of God* God doth by his Word impart to us his Counſel, and hath made it to be the great *Medium* of our acquainting our ſelves with him, and maintaining that Fellowſhip with him in which our preſent Bleſſedneſs doth conſiſt: It is that from which we are to take the direction for the right ordering our whole Lives, if we would ſerve God aright, and know the way of our Peace. Hence that, in Joh. 5. 39. *Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which teſtify of me.* For Men therefore, either to live without Bibles, or let them lie mouldring by them, without making them the man of their Counſel; either not to read them at all, or not to meditate on them frequently, is to deſpiſe Communion with God: it is to undervalue God himſelf, yea, to live without God in the World; which muſt needs be prodigious profaneneſs: for this Command is broken by Omiſſion as well as Commiſſion.

3. *BY not giving a divine Credit to the Word of God.* This Word is God's Teſtimony, and we are to receive it as ſuch, and by ſo doing we honour God, Joh. 3. 33. *He that receiveth his teſtimony, hath ſet to his ſeal, that God is true.* We therefore greatly diſhonour him, when we do not thus do. Nor is it enough to pay an humane Credit to it, or entertain it meerly with an hiſtorical Faith, as we do the Writings of Wiſe, Intelligent, and Faithful Men: but if we do not look upon it to be given by the Inſpiration of the unerring Spirit, with whom it is impoſſible to lie or deceive; and thereupon adventure our truſt, yea our Souls upon it for Eternity, we caſt reproach upon that God whoſe Word it is. Hence that, 1 Joh. 5. 10. *He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, becauſe he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.* And what horrid profaneneſs is this?

4. *BY denying, and much more making a ridicule of revealed Religion.* Revealed Religion, is that of God which is made known to us in the Holy Scriptures; in all of which, and in every part, the way of Life is declared to us. When therefore we call the Truth of theſe in queſtion, deny the poſſibility of the things,

things, or flout at them as if ridiculous, or turn them all into meer Allegories and uncertainties, they herein highly reproach the Author of them. It is the complaint which God makes of that People, Hoſ. 8. 12. *I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a ſtrange thing.* i. e. they were Riddles, inextricable Myſteries, contemptible Fables, fit to be believed by none but ſuch as had forfeited their reaſon, and therefore to be deſpiſed by Men of Underſtanding.

AND here we may take up a bitter Lamentation over the *Deiſm* which ſo horribly prevails in this perilous Age that we live in; in which there are ſo many that employ all their Wit & Malice, to droll upon the Scriptures, and render them as ſenſeleſs, unintellegible and ſelf-contradicting: and perſuading us, that it is to unman our ſelves, to ſuffer our Reaſon to be captivated by the Myſteries revealed in the Word of God. And how far they have gained upon the pride of Men to dethrone the Scriptures, and ſet up the *Diana* of depraved Reaſon in the room of them, and offer up to their Shrines, and pay their Devotions to *that*: Which is none of the leaſt reaſons of the horrid debaucheries with which the Chriſtian World is overſpread.

5. *BY abuſing any part of the holy Word, in a jocular way.* How common a thing is it grown among vain Men, to make their facetious and drolling Diſcourſes from the Word of God? When Men either make a jeer at, or fetch their jeſts from the Holy Scriptures; when they uſe any portion or expreſſion of the Word in a jeering way, by taunts or girds; for which the Prophet in the Name of God reproves & threatens them, *Jer.* 23. 33, *&c.* And when Men ſeek to make ſport to themſelves and others, by uſing of the words of Scripture to ſet out their Merriment, as if the Word of God were for Men to play withal; they hereby violate this Command. And how many are there, who never count themſelves ſufficiently witty, unleſs they are thus profanely wicked?

6. *BY perverting of the Word of God, for the eſtabliſhing and maintaining of falſe Doctrines.* When wicked Men profeſs Principles, unſound, erroneous or heretical, and go about to force in the Word of God to the patronage of them, and accordingly ſtrain it to a ſenſe contrary to the analogy of Faith, and contradictory to it ſelf; this is an horrible abuſe of it. When Men go about to torture the Scriptures, to make them to confeſs things which they abhor, is an Affront offered that carries the higheſt indignity in it. And yet how many are there that ſo do. 1 *Tim.* 6. 5. For indeed, hereby they reflect upon God, and make him the Patron of Error and Blaſphemies; yea, to be raſh and ignorant, not to know his own Mind, and to contradict himſelf; than which, what greater indignity can be offered to the Alwiſe God?

7. *BY miſapplying the Scriptures to themſelves or others.* When Men make a wrong practical Judgment of the Word of God they do abuſe it: As when they miſapply the Promiſes to themſelves, and draw Comfort from them, when it doth not belong to them; or apply the Threatnings to their Neighbours when provoked, which they have no juſt warrant for from the Word of God: or when they encourage wicked Men in their leud Courſes by the words of the Scripture falſely applied: Thus alſo when they juſtify any ſinful action or courſe from the Word, when it indeed condemns it; or when they take offence at that in others, and cenſure them for it, which the Word hath not forbidden, but it is either a lawful Liberty, or poſſibly a Command: To approve that which God hates and forbids, or to find fault with that which he both condemns and abhors, and to juſtify this Sin by the Scriptures, is to take his Name in vain.

Fourthly, *IN reſpect of God's Works.* In theſe he makes himſelf known to us; and as he is to be Reverenced in and for them, ſo there is a carriage towards them in which we may diſcover our irreverence; which is alſo here forbidden, viz.

1. *WHEN we do not give to God the Honour of his Work of Creation.* God hath made himſelf known by giving being to the World and all things in it; and they do all of them bear upon them the impreſſions by which he is to be known and glorifyed. We are therefore told, Pſal. 19. 1. *The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament ſheweth his handy work.* And Rom. 1. 19, 20. *Becauſe that which may be known of God, is manifeſt in them, for God hath ſhewed it unto them. For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, ſo that they are without excuſe.* Now in this regard we diſhonour God in two points.

(1.) *WHEN we do not acknowledge him to be the Author of theſe Works, but aſcribe them to ſome other prime Cauſe.* The Works of Creation are glorious. He then who gave being to them, muſt needs be diſcovered to be ſo by them. His Name is engraven on them, and therefore to eraſe *that*, or put *another* inſtead of it, is to diſgrace him, and the way to extinguiſh his fear. Hence that, Jer. 5. 22. *Fear ye not me ſaith the Lord? will ye not tremble at my preſence, which have placed the ſand for the bounds of the ſea, by a perpetual decree that it cannot paſs it; and though the waves thereof toſs themſelves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not paſs over it.* To ſay the World is Eternal, or to aſcribe its Original to *fate*, or to chance, or any being beſides him, or in partnerſhip with him, is to advance them into his Throne, and give his Glory to them, which is both Idolatry, and a robbing him of his Glory, and contrary to that Reverence which is due to him.

(2.) *WHEN we neglect to obſerve his Perfections which ſhine forth in them, and to glorify him*

him accordingly. God hath left a legible Character of his Divine Attributes on these Works of his, which may be read and understood by the improvement of Natures light; and there is not the most despicable Worm, but bears this stamp upon it. His Infinite Wisdom, Power and Goodness are relucent in them; and they carry with them powerful Motives to excite us to love, fear, & serve him. And it becomes our duty to search after these Perfections in them, and adore him accordingly. Psal 111. 2. *The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.* And therefore not to do so, is to despise him.

2. *WHEN we do not acknowledge him in his Works of Providence, but terminate our selves on our selves, or some other second Being.* The Supream Efficiency of God in all the things that are done in the World, calls for our Adoration, Jer. 10. 7. *Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain: forasmuch as among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms there is none like unto thee.* And there is a fearful threatning against such as do not regard them, Psal. 28. 5. God then, is not reverenced by those, who though they see the things, yet do not mind the Maker of them, but let them come and go without any remarks. When we ascribe all the Changes that fall out in the World to meer *Casualty*, or ludibrious *Fortune*, and look no higher than Creatures in them. If we accomplish any Undertakings, we assume it to our selves, and say with him, Dan. 4.30. *The king spake and said, Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?* Hence we have that caution, Jer. 9. 23, 24. *Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight saith the Lord.* When we receive any benefit by the Creature, we pay our thanks and homage unto that, but not unto Him, whose meer Instrument it was. When we receive unkindness from these, we take notice of their injury, and seek our revenge upon them, but take no notice of Him whose Axes & Hammers they are. We hereby with-hold that due respect from God, which belongs to him, and so cast Contempt upon his Name.

3. *WHEN we abuse the Mercies of God, which he confers upon us.* God bestows his favours upon Men to engage them to love and honour him, they are to serve him therewithal. When therefore they abuse them, they abuse his Goodness, and him in it. And this is done,

(1.) *BY Intemperance:* When we abuse the good-things of God to nourish our carnal lusts withal. It is true, Intemperance it self is a Sin against the Second Table; but considered, as God's kindness is hereby abused, and turned into wantonness, and we dishonour him by his own Works, so it is *profaness*, and a violation of this Command. For, when we serve Sin with that which we are bound to serve God with, we cast contempt on his Name, and despise his Command, who hath bidden us to serve him with our Substance, and improve all that we have to help us to do it with cheerfulness.

(2.) *BY Carnal Security.* When we make those things which are given us by God, to be our Gods; and put them in his place, by trusting in them, and fortifying our selves with them against him, and think we can live well enough without him under the shadow of these. This is an abuse of them, and highly reflects upon him. This therefore is given as the Character of ungodly Men, Job. 21. 13, 14. *They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave. Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us: for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.* And is one great Article which God draws up against those proud Men, Isai. 28. 14. *Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men that rule this people which is in Jerusalem.* When Men eat and are full, and then forget God, as those are charged, Hos. 13. 6. *According to their pasture, so were they filled: they were filled, and their heart was exalted: therefore have they forgotten me.* This is an high affront.

(3.) *BY Unthankfulness.* We receive kindness from God every day, tho' we deserve none at all from him; but we confess not our Obligation, nor think our selves beholden to him; and so do neither confess it to him, nor judge how we may make suitable returns for it: This is base Ingratitude, and what God chargeth on the very Heathen, as a thing highly provoking to him, *Rom.* 1. 21. And for which he expostulates with that ungrateful People, Deut. 32. 6. *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee and established thee?* And is far from coming to that gracious frame of the Psalmist, Psal. 116. 12. *What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits towards me?* And is directly contrary to the end of these Mercies, *Psal.* 105 *ult.*

(4.) *BY hardning our Hearts against his Counsels and Warnings.* God expects that his Goodness should lead us to Repentance, but if we are hardned by it, we abuse it. Hence that Expostulation, Rom. 2. 4, 5. *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? but after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up to thy self wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.* When God's Mercies make us proud, too good to be spoken to, so that we cannot bear to be reproved, and stop our ear at all Warnings, and refuse to receive instruction from him, what higher scorn can we cast upon him? This therefore is a complaint which God himself maketh on this account, *Jer.* 23. 21. 4;

4. *WHEN we murmur againſt, and quarrel with him under adverſe Providences.* This proceeds from the ſame root of irreverence with the former; for they that deſpiſe God's Goodneſs, will fret at him, when he lays his afflicting Hand upon him. It is becauſe Men think themſelves worthy of, and that God owes them all their good things, that their Hearts riſe up againſt him, and they think and ſpeak reproachfully of him. Which ſhows the vile eſteem they have of his precious Name. And how often were the Children of *Iſrael* at this in the Wilderneſs; and how many cautions are there laid in againſt it, in the Holy Scriptures? Now hereby we act contrary to our great duty of ſilent Submiſſion to God, and improving his Corrections to Repentance; for it hardens us againſt it. Hence thoſe complaints, Jer. 5. 3. *Thou haſt ſtricken them, but they have not grieved; thou haſt conſumed them; but they have refuſed to receive correction: they have made their faces harder then a rock, they have refuſed to return.* And, Iſai. 1. 5. *Why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more? ye will revolt more & more.* And when it ariſeth to that, in 2 Kin. 6. 33. *Behold, this evil is of the Lord, what ſhould I wait for the Lord any longer.* Men are then arrived at the height of profaneſs. Thus many ways may this Command be violated. For whereſoever God's Name is to be ſeen, and it is diſregared, then it is taken in vain.

Question LVI.

WHAT is the Reaſon annexed to the Third Commandment?

Answer.

THE Reaſon annexed to the Third Commandment is, that however the Breakers of this Commandment may eſcape puniſhment from Men, yet the Lord our God will not ſuffer them to eſcape his righteous Judgment.

IT is ſaid, *The Lord will not hold him guiltleſs.* The word ſignifies to cleanſe or make innocent, guiltleſs. And it is obſerved, that in *Hiphil*, it doth not ſignify to make a Perſon ſo, but to treat him as ſuch. The word is ſometimes applied to Sanctification, and ſometimes to Juſtification. And here it is uſed in the latter ſenſe, viz. for the applying of the juſtifying Sentence unto him. And there is a *Meioſis* in the words, wherein more is intended than expreſſed, as is uſual in ſuch negative Expreſſions, which are frequently made uſe of in the Word of God. The meaning is, he will certainly declare him to be guilty, and proceed with him as ſuch. Our *Catechiſm* emphatically ſets out the intention of it. In which two Things are to be obſerved,

1. *A Suppoſition that ſuch may eſcape Puniſhment from Men.* And it tacitly points at the Atheiſm and Preſumption of vain Men, who are ready to feed themſelves with Confidence that if they are not detected and cenſured by Men, they are ſecure, and need to fear no danger. This therefore is granted. And it is a thing very obſervable, that ſuch Sins as are againſt the Firſt Table, are little regarded or teſtifyed againſt by humane Authority, and particularly thoſe that are breaches of this Command. Many of them indeed lye out of the reach of Civil Cenſures, being covered under the Cloak of Hypocriſy. And as for thoſe that are open and notorious, either there are no Laws armed againſt them, Men fondly pretending, that the Legiſlative Power of Civil Rulers, extends only to Second Table Duties; or if there be any ſuch, they are not proportioned to the merit of the Offence, but to the ſuppoſed damage which humane Society may ſuffer by them, which they think is but little; which makes vain Men think it no great Sin to diſhonour God, by vain Swearing, Curſing, or uſing of God's Name ludibriouſly; or becauſe theſe things are grown ſo common and cuſtomary, that ſuch profane Perſons are little taken notice of, and there be but few that dare give their Teſtimony againſt it, becauſe they themſelves are involved in the ſame Guilt. Now the wickedneſs of Mens Hearts takes advantage by this impunity, and becauſe the fear of God is not before their eyes, and they have little Occaſion to be afraid of Men, they are imboldened thus to tranſgreſs.

2. *AN Aſſertion to take off the force of this Suppſition; They ſhall not eſcape the righteous Judgment of God.* And this is the emphaſis of ſuch diſcrete Propoſitions, and the meaning of it is, that it is but a poor Argument of Impunity, becauſe we can avoid Civil Penalties, if mean while God ſtands armed with Vengeance, to execute upon all ſuch profane Perſons. And that he ſo doth, we are fully aſſured. Here then let us obſerve,

1. *THAT God is the Supream Governour of the World.* Tho' he hath put Men into place of Authority, and required of them to repreſent him, in executing of righteous Judgments upon the Tranſgreſſors of his Law, yet he hath not left it ſo in their hands, but that he looks after it; and though they are defective in their duty, yet he will appear to be a Righteous Judge, Pſal. 11. 7. *For the righteous Lord loveth righteouſneſs, his countenance doth behold the upright.* Hence that of *Abraham*, Gen. 18. 25.—*Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?*

2. *THAT God is jealous for his Great Name.* He therefore in the former Command calls himſelf a jealous God. See alſo, Exod. 34. 14. *For the Lord, whoſe name is Jealous, is a jealous God.* God muſt have a laſt End in all his Works of Efficiency, and that could be no other but his own Glory, Prov. 16. 4. *The Lord hath made all things for himſelf: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.* Rom. 11. 36. *For of him, and through him, and to him are all things:*

to whom be glory for ever. He therefore will not loſe it for want of looking after it; and becauſe he can recover it in deſpite of all that would rob him of it, he will do ſo. He himſelf hath ſaid, Iſai. 42. 8. *I am the Lord, that is my Name, and my glory will I not give to another.* And he will be as good as his word. And becauſe he knows that ſinful Men, who were appointed actively to glorify him, have fallen ſhort of it, he watchfully looks after them, and will call them to an Account for it.

3. *THAT God ſees and knows all the Affronts that ſinful Men do offer to his great Name, and is highly provoked by them.* Oftentimes Men ſee not, nor know of ſuch things, ſo that if they would, they have not the advantage to bear a Teſtimony againſt ſuch things; but God is an Eye and Ear Witneſs of all the Affronts that are thus offered to his Glory. The breakers of this Command do reproach him to his Face; His Anger is therefore greatly incenſed by it; they by ſuch Sins dare him, bid a challenge to him, and he is diſpleaſed highly by them.

4. *THAT hence God will certainly, ſooner or later, recover his Glory of ſuch.* If they profane his Name, he will ſanctify it, *Ezek.* 36. 22,23. And therefore, though poſſibly they may for a while, not only eſcape the Penalty from Men, but alſo proſper in their wickedneſs, and God himſelf ſeem to take no notice of them, but let them alone; yet he will take the Occaſion to let them know to their coſt, that his jealous Eye did not ſlumber, *Pſal.* 50. 21.22. And here obſerve,

(1.) *THAT they are every moment expoſed to Divine Vengeance.* They have no ſafety, but are always in danger. Of every ſuch Perſon it may be ſaid, as Job. 15.26. *He runneth upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick boſſes of his buckler.* And certainly he who enters the liſts to contend with the Great GOD, is highly daring, and hath no reaſon to hope that he ſhall eſcape. For who ever reſiſted God and Proſpered? And therefore wo to him that thus ſtriveth with his Maker. The Curſe of God is out againſt them, the Sword of Vengeance is up to cut them off, and there is nothing but Arbitrary Patience that holds it back. For we are told, Pſal. 7. 11. *God is angry with the wicked every day.*

(2.) *THERE have been thoſe in this World, who have been made the amazing Inſtances of God's Holy Indignation on this account.* God hath cut them off by ſome ſtupendous Judgments, and hung them up in Chains as Monuments of his Jealouſy, and to teach others to beware how they Profane his Great & Fearful Name. He hath therefore threatened to make the Plagues of theſe Men Wonderful, Deut. 28. 58, 59. *If thou wilt not obſerve to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayſt fear this glorious and fearful Name, THE LORD THY GOD. Then the LORD will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy ſeed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and ſore ſickneſſes, and of long continuance.* Did he not ſo, by the two Sons of *Aaron*, when they offered ſtrange Fire, *Lev.* 10. *begin.* And *Moſes* gives the reaſon of it, *ver.* 3. Did he not ſo by the two Profane Sons of *Eli*; hence the fearful threatnings againſt them, 1 *Sam.* 2. 31, *&c.* and the reaſon is rendred, *ver.* 30.

(3.) *BUT if they meet with no remarkable temporary Judgments in this Life, yet Eternal Vengeance is reſerved for them, in the World to come.* This Life is a time of God's forbearance, and Profane Sinners abuſe it to horrible Licentiouſneſs: and becauſe they feel not the Hand of Vengeance, they embolden themſelves in their Gigantick Attempts againſt Heaven; but there is a Day of Recompence coming, when God will render to all according to their Deeds; then ſhall theſe Blaſphemers of God know, to their Eternal Confuſion, that God kept an exact regiſter of all their Indignities, which they affronted Him withal, He Himſelf hath ſaid, Deut. 32. 33, 34. *Their wine is the poiſon of dragons, and the cruel venom of aſps. Is not this laid up in ſtore with me, and ſealed up among my treaſures?* Such Men therefore, are now laying up for themſelves treaſures of Wrath, *&c.* Rom. 2. 5. *But after thy hardneſs and impenitent heart, treaſureſt up unto thy ſelf wrath againſt the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.* We are therefore aſſured of this, Pſal. 139. 19, 20. *Surely thou wilt ſlay the wicked, O God: depart from me therefore ye bloody men. For they ſpeak againſt thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain.* And though there is Mercy for the Penitent, even for this Sin alſo; yet if they Live & Dye in it, the Guilt of it ſhall follow them to the Great Judgment, and they ſhall feel to their Eternal Confuſion, how fearful a thing it is to Deſpiſe, the Holy Name of God.

USE. *AND may we not here take up a ſad Lamentation, for the horrible abounding of this Sin in the Chriſtian World?* Nor need we to look abroad, or affect ourſelves with the reports of other Places, where it cries aloud to Heaven for Vengeance, bidding us to expect ſome dreadful Judgments to come upon them, for this very thing: but we have reaſon, with Tears of Blood, to bewail the growth of this Abomination in our own Land, which might once have been called a Land of Uprightneſs. Time was, when Curſing and Swearing ſeemed to be ſtrangers among us, and ſcarce once to be heard in Seven Years. But alaſs! how far otherwiſe is it now? So that not Men only, but even Children in the Streets, have gotten their Mouths bliſtered with ſuch Profaneſs: beſides the many other ways, in which this Command is fearfully Violated, too numerous to be now recounted. Wonder not then if God be riſen from His Holy Place, and threatens Vengeance for this upon a Profane Generation. And it tells us what we may well expect as like to enſue, when thoſe who have his Name called upon them,

do ſo wofully deſpiſe it. Let us then take heed to ourſelves, and Fear and Tremble at the tokens of God's Judgments, and do what in us lies to put away this Iniquity from the midſt of us; and let us be found Mourners in *Zion* for this Abomination: the Prophet could once ſay, Jer. 23. 10. *For the land is full of adulterers, for becauſe of ſwearing the land mourneth:* And let us expect no better, except this among other Crying Sins, be put away from among us. And if we will be like other Places, in imitating their Heaven daring Sins, let us not think it ſtrange if God make us ſhare with them in the Effects of His Wrath, which he is now making way for being poured on a Profane Generation. And let us look to ourſelves and to our Families in this regard: Labour we to get a reverend reſpect to the Name of God in all things, to be filled with Love to him, and an awful dread of his Glorious Perfections, a Reverence to His Sanctuary, to Tremble at His Word, to be afraid of His Judgments; and let us give warning to others, and bear a due Teſtimony againſt thoſe Sins in our Places, and Pray hard to God, that He would for Chriſt's ſake forgive this Sin alſo to our Land, and pour out a Spirit of Repentance and Reformation upon us Univerſally; and if we thus do in Sincerity, we ſhall find God Propitious to us, and it may be we ſhall be hidden in the Day of His Indignation.

[JUNE 2. 1702.]

SERMON *CLXVII.*

QUESTION LVII.

WHICH is the Fourth Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Fourth Commandment is, *Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy, ſix days ſhalt thou labour and do all thy work, but the ſeventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou ſhalt not do any work, thou, nor thy ſon, nor thy daughter, thy man-ſervant, nor thy maid-ſervant, nor thy cattel, nor thy ſtranger that is within thy gates; for in ſix days the Lord made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all that in them is, and reſted the ſeventh day: wherefore the Lord bleſſed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it.*

UNDER the former Command we conſidered the due performance of God's Worſhip, with reſpect to our behaviour towards God in it. It follows that we now conſider it with reſpect to the time, which is Appointed & Sanctified by God, for the more ſolemn performance of Worſhip; and the way or manner of improving this time to the end of it. Which time we call *a Sabbath*, and now under the Goſpel Diſpenſation, *the Lord's Day*; about which there have been, and ſtill are many hot Diſputes among Chriſtians, in ſeveral reſpects; upon which I ſhall not Diſcourſe *Polemically*, but endeavour to propoſe the Scripture Doctrine concerning each of them, which may be diſtinctly conſidered under the following Queſtion.

QUESTION LVIII.

WHAT is required in the Fourth Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Fourth Commandment requires the keeping holy to God, ſuch ſet times as he hath appointed in his Word; expreſly one whole Day in Seven, to be an holy Sabbath to Himſelf.

THE great deſign of this Precept, is to inſtruct and direct us about holy Time, and the right improvement of it in the Worſhip of God. And our Anſwer ſuppoſeth that there is ſuch time, as is to be accounted Holy, and that it is ſo, by vertue of God's Appointment in his Word: and alſo what proportion of time is ſo allotted, and for what end.

FOR the more full laying forth the Truths contained in this *Aphoriſm*, we may Inquire, 1. *What Sabbath is intended in this Command?* 2. *How the Command appears to be a moral Precept?* 3. *What Time is allotted to be obſerved as an holy Sabbath?*

I. *WHAT Sabbath is intended in this Command?*

Anſ. *BY a Sabbath in general we are to underſtand, a Time which is ſet apart from other time, for a Day of Reſt unto God, by Divine Appointment.* The word Sabbath, whatſoever other purpoſes it is ſometimes uſed for, doth for the moſt part intend *a time of Ceſſation from ordinary Employments, and devoted to the Duties of Worſhip.* It ſignifies a Reſt or Ceſſation. Not that on it Men are wholly to ceaſe from all Employment, for there were Sacred Services appointed for the People of God to attend on ſuch Occaſions; as will afterwards be conſidered; but becauſe Men were on it to ceaſe from ſervile Work, of ſecular Buſineſſes, and devote themſelves to ſuch as were Sacred. Now there were ſeveral times ſo ſeparated by God in the *Moſaical* Pædagogy, all of which are for that reaſon called Sabbaths, becauſe God had forbidden Worldly Buſineſs to be done upon them, and required

required his People to ſpend them, in thoſe that were Religious. Such were the ſeveral Feaſts enumerated in the Books of *Moſes*, and the great Day of Expiation; becauſe God had put a ſtamp of Holineſs upon them, by a poſitive Precept, which he had given about them: hence called Sabbaths, in the plural. But the Sabbath nexily treated of in this Command, is the weekly Sabbath, or that which is to be celebrated one Day in Seven, and is therefore called the Seventh Day, becauſe from the firſt Appointment of it, it was aſſigned to the laſt of the Seven, in the Hebdomadal Revolution. Now to the Conſtitution of ſuch a Sabbath, it is requiſite,

1. *THAT it have an Holineſs ſtampt upon it.* It muſt be eſteemed, and improved as holy Time. Whether this Holineſs be natural or relative, is diſputed; but that any diſtinct portion of time, ſhould in its own nature be holy, above any other, antecedently to an Inſtitution for it, is hard to conceive: but that it may have a relative adherent inſeperable Holineſs put upon it, by the Authority of him who is Lord of time, is beyond any juſt exception; for what elſe is relative Holineſs but the ſeparation of a thing from Common, and devoting of it to Sacred uſe: in which regard, the Tabernacle, and all the Utenſils of it are ſaid to be Holy: and this any portion of time is capable of, when it is Authoratively exempted from the reſt of time, for the Holy Performances which are to be done in it.

2. *THAT this Holineſs be put upon it by Divine Authority.* This or that time, if Holy, muſt be ſo either in itſelf of its own Nature, or by Inſtitution; and if thus, it belongs to Inſtituted Worſhip, and ſo refers to the Second Command; under which we obſerved, that neither Angels nor Men, can by their own Authority, make any Inſtitution of Worſhip. And for this Reaſon, God calls them *His* Sabbaths, *Lev.* 19. 30. 26. 2. As for Days of *Faſting* and *Thanksgiving* we muſt obſerve, that ſuch as were ſet and ſtated among God's Ancient People, they had an expreſs Command for them, from God himſelf, and ſo they participated in the Nature of a Sabbath; but as for others that are Occaſional, though they belong to the Duties of Worſhip, as to the Service itſelf, which alſo neceſſarily requires that there be a ſuitable time taken up in them; yet the time itſelf is not Holy, but common time, and it is kept, not for the ſake of the time, but of the Duty, which cannot otherwiſe be performed; and it is of the ſame Nature with the time we ſpend in our Family or Cloſet Worſhip, or in Lectures; which may be attended by ſome, while others are engaged in common Buſineſs; which ought not to be, if the time itſelf were Holy. And we know that *Jereboam* Sinned, not only in ſetting up the Calves, to be a falſe *Medium*, but alſo in appointing a Day for his Worſhip, of his own deviſing, 1 *King.* 12. 33. So that to prove a Sabbath which is ſtated, we muſt find an Ordinance of God for it, and that it is a durable Ordinance, and hath the Seal of God's Authority upon it, elſe we do nothing. And we have a great deal of reaſon to do it at this time, becauſe it is ſo much deſpiſed and neglected; and it is evident, that all Godlineſs goes wofully to decay therewithal. And it is an Obſervation, that hath formerly been made, and experience proves it every day, that the Power of Religion will always fare among a People, as the Sabbath doth. Let us then proceed to enquire,

II. *HOW this Command appears to be a Moral Precept?*

Anſ. *SOME there are that altogether deny this Command to be Moral and make it a part of the* Ceremonial *Law, and others are at a loſs where and how to fix the* Morality *of it.* There is need therefore, that ſomething be here offered to clear this matter; for if we look at this Command to be meerly *Ceremonial* and not Moral, it is then aboliſhed with the Law of Ordinances, and there is no ſuch Duty lying upon Men in Goſpel times, as the keeping of a Sabbath, and then farewel Religion. There are Three Enquires that may be made here, (1) What it is for a Command to be Moral? (2) How it appears that this Fourth Command is ſo? (3) Wherein the Morality of it conſiſts?

(1.) *WHAT it is for a Command to be Moral?*

Anſ. *THIS word Moral, is an equivocal word, and is made uſe of by Men in various ſenſes.* Something whereof was formerly conſidered, when we treated of the Moral Law in general. I ſhall here only add to obſerve, that there is a twofold diſtinction uſually given of the Laws of God: the *former* is of thoſe that are *Natural*, and ſuch as are *Poſitive*; the firſt of which are frequently called *Moral*, and the other *Inſtituted*: But the word Moral, is not always underſtood in this reſtrained ſenſe, nor are we ſo to take it here. For there are ſome Poſitive Laws, which may in a ſound ſenſe, be called Moral, and are by ſome Divines ſaid to be *Moral Poſitive*, and how they are ſo, will be anon conſidered. The *latter* is the uſual Diſtribution of the Divine Laws, into *Moral*, *Ceremonial*, and *Judicial*, to which three Heads, all the Statutes in *Moſes's* Pædagogy are reduced; and the difference between theſe, is warily to be obſerved; and whatſoever doth not belong to one of the two latter, muſt needs be referred to the firſt. Here therefore we may take up theſe general Rules.

1. *THAT which the Light of Nature dictates to be a Duty incumbent on men, is Moral.* This is agreed on all Hands: God put into Man a Natural Conſcience, and it belongs to his Practical Underſtanding. Now on this Conſcience God at firſt Imprinted the Law Moral, which was the Rule according to which Man was to be treated in the ſpecial Government of God: and though Sin hath much defaced that Inſcription; yet there are the remains of it abiding, which tell men, this ought to

be done, that to be avoided; and his Conſcience accordingly, either accuſeth or excuſeth him, Rom. 2. 14, 15. *For when the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, theſe having not the law, are a law unto themſelves: Which ſhew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conſcience alſo bearing witneſs, and their thoughts the mean while accuſing, or elſe excuſing one another.* Now whatſoever is thus atteſted unto by Conſcience, is a Moral Duty: for Mans reaſon, as he cannot but approve of ſuch things in his Judgment, ſaith that this ariſeth from the Nature of the thing itſelf, whereas Ceremonial and Judicial Laws, are in themſelves Arbitrary, and though God hath a reaſon why he enjoyns them, yet it doth not ariſe from the Nature of the things themſelves, nor would they ever have been known to be Duties, nor indeed would have at all been Duties, if God had not ſo preſcribed them by his Sovereign Authority; and in this regard they are entirely Poſitive.

2. *THAT which is a Rule, in its own Nature ſuited to mankind, as they are bound for God's Glory as their laſt end, is to be accounted Moral.* For this was the proper deſign of the Moral Law. And it was perfect and every way compleat on this account, as we are aſſured by that *Encomium* given it, *Pſal.* 19. 7, *&c.* For God having made Man to Glorify him, as a Cauſe by Counſel, gave him this Law for his Direction; hence that Pſal. 119. 105. *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.* The other Laws indeed, were given in Wiſdom, to help God's People in their Glorifying of him, and he accommodated them for this deſign, but they did not ſuit to Man as Man, but in ſome Circumſtances, and particularly as conſidered in his lapſed Eſtate: and the whole Uſe & Efficacy of them depended on the Will of God who gave them, and were to put man in mind of his Sin and Miſery; the Apoſtle therefore hath thoſe remarks on the Ceremonies of that Law, Heb. 9. 9. 10. 4. *Which was a figure for the time then preſent, in which were offered both gifts and ſacrifices, that could not make him that did the ſervice perfect, as pertaining to the Conſcience. For it is not poſſible that the blood of bulls and of goats, ſhould take away ſins.*

3. *THAT which is a Rule equally incumbent on all Mankind, ſince the Apoſtacy, is Moral.* And this follows from the former. And I ſay ſince the Apoſtacy; for poſſibly, if Man had ſtood, the Tree of Life and of Knowledge, would have continued Sacramental, though that is uncertain, which yet were Ceremonial, as well as Arbitrary. For that Law which was given to Mankind in *Adam* to be a rule of Life, was the moral Law. And it is as truly a Sin in the Heathen to violate any of theſe Rules, as for the People of God. And therefore the wrath of God is out againſt thoſe as well as theſe, for all ſuch Tranſgreſſions, Rom. 1. 18. *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven againſt all ungodlineſs, and unrighteouſneſs of men, who hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs.* We therefore are told concerning ſuch Sins, in Lev. 18. 27, 28. *For all theſe abominations have the men of the land done, which were before you, and the land is defiled. That the land ſpue not you out alſo when ye defile it, as it ſpued out the nations that were before you.* Whereas the Ceremonial and Judicial Laws of *Iſrael*, did not bind the other Nations; it was no Sin for a *Canaanite* to eat Swines fleſh, &c.

4. *THAT Rule which is perpetual and unchangable, is accounted Moral.* That which was a Rule to Man before the fall, and after it, in the times before Chriſt's coming into the World and after it, till time ſhall ceaſe, is ſuch; becauſe it belongs to that rule of Relative Juſtice, which God had fixed from the firſt, when he plighted a Covenant with Man in his ſtate of Integrity: That Law of which Chriſt hath ſaid, Mat. 5. 18. *Till heaven and earth paſs, one jote or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled.* The other Laws were temporary and mutable, and tho' they continued during ſuch an *Æra*, yet they were not unchangable, and therefore the word *forever*, which is ſometimes annexed to them, intends properly an Age, and in reſpect of them, ſuch a time. Hence the Apoſtle in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, by many Arguments proves the Antiquation and Abolition of the Moſaical Pædagogy, particularly, *Chap.* 7. 12, 18, 19. 8. 7, 13. And though the Sacraments of the New Teſtament are to abide through the *Æra* of the Goſpel Diſpenſation, which will continue to the end, yet they were not from the beginning, but were introduced upon the bringing in of the Goſpel Kingdom.

5. *THAT Command whoſe Reaſon is unchangable, is to be counted Moral.* That all Moral Precepts are unchangable, we before obſerved; but that we may judge of them to be ſuch, we muſt inquire into the reaſon of the Duty itſelf. It is true, the reaſon of our Obedience to all Commands, as well Moral as others, is unalterable, viz. the Supream right that God hath to Command us; but the reaſon of the Command it ſelf is another thing: For Moral Precepts are ſuited to the nature of Man, as bound to ſuch an end. And when the reaſon of the Command is in regard of its native tendency to lead us to our great end, it is moral. The reaſon of the other Commands was not perpetual: The reaſon of the Ceremonial, was firſtly to point to a Chriſt to come, and to prepare Men for him: The reaſon of the Judicial, was to be a mound between *Iſrael* and the other Nations. But now Chriſt is come, and the wall of Separation is pulled down, and all difference between Jew and Gentile ceaſed. According to, *Eph.* 2. 14, 19. *Col.* 3. 11.

6. *THOUGH a Law may in the Circumſtances of it be Poſitive, yet the ground of it being Moral, the Law it ſelf is to be accounted ſo.* Whether a Law purely Poſitive, whoſe reaſon is

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not in the Law of Nature may be called Moral, may well be questioned: but that a Law may have the foundation in the Law of Creation, and yet the determination of the Circumstances of it be Arbitrary, is unquestionable. And when God hath so determined them, the Law may be said to be *Moral Positive*. And such are the Institutions of the several natural Duties to be performed in the Ordained Worship of God. Such are the particular Ordinances for Church Assemblies, to Pray, Preach, and Hear the Word of God. And the reason is, because the Duties being Moral, the stating of them by God's will, doth not make them cease to be so, the Law of Nature requiring us to yield Obedience to him therein.

(2.) *HOW this Command appears to be so?*

Ans. THERE are some reasons to prove the Morality of it, which are inserted in the body of the Command; which may afterwards come to be considered. Here only let me offer these few Conclusions, to be weighed.

1. *THIS Command was given to Man in Innocency, continued from the fall till* Moses, *revived under* Moses, *and renewed in the days of the Gospel.* And this proves its Morality according to the Rule premised, taken from its perpetuity. There are four Assertions in this Argument, all which have been disputed and denied by the *Anti-Sabbatarians*, but seem to have a good footing in the Word of God.

(1.) *IT was given to Man in Innocency.* Nor need we to look farther for the proof of this, than, *Gen.* 2. *begin* in which we have an account of God's fixing and establishing *a Day of Rest*, upon his having finished the Works of Creation, which was done in six Days: nor doth it make any just exception, that it is said, *ver.* 2. that he finished his Work *on the Seventh Day*; for it is in the *preter tense*, which is also used for the *preterpluserfect*, viz. that when the Seventh Day came, he had already perfected that Work, and accordingly rested on it. And then, *ver.* 3, 4. tells us, that *he blessed it*, and *sanctified it*; so that the Day it self was the Subject of this Blessing, which imports an addition of some Goodness, which was done by Sanctifying it, which is therefore Exegetical of the former. Now things are said to be Sanctifyed by God, when they are separated and dedicated to holy uses. And this meaning is explained, in *Exod.* 20. 11. Nor can we with any reason suppose that God Sanctified that Day for himself, but for Men. And therefore it was not that individual Day, but that Day in the Week, as the forecited Reason of the Fourth Command plainly infers.

(2.) *IT was continued from the Fall until* Moses. For tho' there is no account given in the Scriptures of the renewing of this Precept during that time; or of the observation of it by any of the *Patriarchs*, before or after the Flood till then; yet we are both assured that it was appointed at first, and upon the renewal of it on Mount *Sinai*, there is the same reason given of it, *Exod.* 20. which intimated, that it retained its force all that while. And therefore we find *Moses* speaking of it, as a thing well known before then, *Exod.* 16. 23.

(3.) *IT was revived under* Moses. And that which is more observable, at the renewal of the publication of the Moral Law, *Exod.* 20. And the reason given for it is, as we observed, the same with that in *Gen.* 2. *begin.* Nor doth the appointing of Ceremonial rites to be observed on this day, make the day it self to be Ceremonial, in as much as God had appointed a Ritual or Ceremonial Worship to be attended by that People; and the end of a Sabbath is for the Worshipping of God in the Institutions which he hath appointed; and there were also Moral Duties of Natural Worship to be performed on it, as Prayer and Praising of God.

(4.) *IT is renewed in the times of the Gospel.* I might here insist upon other probable Arguments, but I shall only observe, that as this was fore-predicted in the Old Testament, particularly, Psal. 118. 24. *This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoyce and be glad in it.* By God's making it, he intends not his Creating it, for so the emphasis were lost, and there would be no more in it, than any other day. It is therefore added, *We will rejoyce*, &c. Noting that it was to be a Day set apart for holy Duties; and this is pointed at, *ver.* 23. which refers to Christ and Gospel times. And *Isai.* 11. 10. which properly refers also to Christ. Of which more afterwards. So it is expresly intimated and intended, Heb. 4. 9, 10. *There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entred into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.* For the Apostle is there designedly speaking of a new Day or *Æra* of the Church in Gospel-times, in which God's Worship should be established, and particularly, a keeping of a Sabbath, as the word *rest*, intends. And if we understand it Synecdochically to include all Gospel Worship under it, yet so this must be a Principal part of it.

2. *IT was given with the rest of the moral Law on Mount Sinai.* It is true, God gave to *Moses*, the Ceremonial and Judicial Laws, for the greatest part of them, on the same Mountain, but not after the same manner. These were given to *Moses* by himself, and he was to publish them to the People, and commit them to writing. And they were given after the other, as an *Appendix* to them. But this Law was given to them from the mouth of God himself, who spake out of the Fire to the whole Congregation. And he only spake these Ten Words, as they are called, and added no more, *Deut.* 5. 22. Now the other Nine are all moral Precepts, and why this alone should be merely Ceremonial, is not easily solved. Besides they were written with the rest, on the Tables of Stone, to denote, not only the hardness of their Hearts, but also

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the durableneſs of the Precepts: theſe were put into the Ark of the Covenant. Now the Ark was a Type of Chriſt; and this ſignified to us, that Chriſt only was able to keep this Law for us inviolable; and was to aſſure us, that the keeping of a Sabbath, was an Unchangable Duty, incumbent on God's Covenant People.

3. *THIS Precept comprehended under it the Strangers who dwelt in the Land.* And for this reaſon it was not Ceremonial. For tho' it were true, that their bought Servants that were Originally Strangers, were capable of, nay were to be brought to the Ceremonial Worſhip of the Nation; yet they were to be introduced to all the reſt by Circumciſion: nor might they eat the Paſſover, or of any Sacrifices until then, being looked at, as unclean. But then a Stranger, by whom we underſtand, one who was neither a Servant, nor a Proſelyte, but a Sojourner among them; one who neither was Circumciſed nor made Profeſſion of the Religion of that Nation: I ſay, ſuch an one, tho' he was not bound to obſerve the Ceremonial Law, yet he was bound by the Law of the Sabbath. And the reaſon of this ſeems to be Moral, or becauſe it was a Precept laid on Mankind from the beginning. And if it be objected, that they were only prohibited Servile Work on that Day, leſt otherwiſe they ſhould give evil Example to the *Iſraelites:* It may be replied, that the ſame reaſon would hold for other Ceremonies as for this, if it were one; whereas we find otherwiſe concerning a thing that dieth of it ſelf, *Deut.* 14. 2. notwithſtanding it was Ceremonially unclean.

4. *THIS Statute was given with reſpect, not to Civil, but Sacred Concerns, and was therefore no Judicial Law.* It is a received Rule, that as the Ceremonial Law properly referred to Worſhip, ſo the Judicial, to Civil Concerns; but it is Evident, that the keeping of a Sabbath belongs to the firſt Table, and is therefore proper to Worſhip, and ſo cannot belong to the Judicial, which belonged to the Second, and Conſequently, if it were not Ceremonial, it follows that it is Moral.

5. *THE keeping of a Sabbath, or ſetting apart of ſome time for Religious Service, hath been obſerved by almoſt all the Nations in the World, and ſuch as were altogether ſtrangers to the Moſaical Pædagogy.* I need not to produce particular Inſtances for this, with which the writings of the *Heathen* Authors do abound. And whereas ſome Object, that they borrowed them from the *Jews*, and did it in imitation of them, this will not hold, for, beſides that in the times before the Babylonian Captivity, thoſe ſtrange Nations had little, if any acquaintance, either with the Laws or Cuſtoms of the Iſraelitiſh Polity; they alſo bear a peculiar Prejudice againſt that People, who had any acquaintance with them, and mocked at their Superſtitions as they called them. But the true reaſon was, becauſe the light of reaſon in them, told them, that if there was a God, he was to be Worſhipped, and Conſequently, that it was highly rational, that ſome time of Solemn Worſhip, ſhould be conſecrated to him: though they were Ignorant of the time, which he had ſeperated for himſelf, and Conſequently took upon them to appoint times, according to their own vain imaginations: however, they had this general Conviction on their Conſciences, that there was ſomething owing to God upon this account; and no wonder if they ſhould err in the particulars, in whom the Law of Nature had but dark remains, and inaſmuch, as the determination of the time depended, on the Divine deciſion.

6. *THE reaſon for the keeping of a Sabbath, is Moral and Perpetual.* And this not only in regard of the Author of the Precept, who is God, and ſo there is the higheſt reaſon for our Obedience to all his Poſitive Precepts whatſoever, but alſo in reſpect of the thing itſelf; ſo that this Law is itſelf, Holy, Juſt and Good, and every way ſuited to Humane Nature, or for the good of Man, as he is made for the active Glorifying of God as his laſt End. But this will be more particularly conſidered in thoſe things that follow,

Use. ALL that I ſhall here ſay, by way of Application is, *Let us hold faſt this Principle, and not ſuffer ourſelves to be robbed of it.* Nor is there any one Command, that we had need to be more careful about, whether we conſider, the great attempts in the Chriſtian World, to undermine the Doctrine of a Sabbath, by ſome on one pretence, by others on another; or what are the fatal Conſequences in reſpect of Religion itſelf, where Sabbaths are little regarded, as being accounted not Divine, but Humane Inſtitutions: Which will further appear afterwards.

[July 28. 1702.]

SERMON *CLXVIII.*

(3.) *WHEREIN does the Morality of it Conſiſt?*

Anſ. THAT we may take up a right Conception of this matter, we muſt call to mind what it is for a Command to be Moral, according as it hath already been ſtated; *viz.* Not meerly as it ſtands diſtributively with that which is Poſitive, but as it is differenced from Ceremonial and Judicial. Here then two Rules may ſuffice for the clearing this Caſe.

I. *THAT the light of Nature affords us a Moral Reaſon for the keeping of a Sabbath*: And ſo far it is grounded on Natural Religion; inasmuch as the reaſon for it is fetched from the Nature of Man, and the Relation that he bears to the ſpecial Government of God; and for that reaſon it obliges all Men Univerſally, and is of the ſame force in all Ages perpetually.

NOW,

NOW the light of Nature in fallen Man, will, if duly improved, afford him ſuch Concluſions as theſe,

1. *THAT Man was made Actively to Glorify God.* He that acknowledgeth a God, and Man to be his Creature, as the very *Gentiles* do, muſt confeſs that Man as ſuch, owes himſelf to God; that Argument is Convictive, Pſal. 100. 2, 3. *Serve the Lord with gladneſs; come before his preſence with ſinging. Know ye that the Lord he is God, it is he that hath made us, and not we ourſelves; we are his people, and the ſheep of his paſture.* And it is equally rational, that every Creature do ſerve God, according to the Capacity he hath put into it. Man therefore being made capable of devoting himſelf actively to the Glory of God, muſt needs owe it to him, *Rom.* 12. 1.

2. *THAT there is a Worſhip due to God from Man, wherein he is to ſerve him.* It is true, Man is to ſerve God in all his Actions of all ſorts, Civil, as well as Religious, by conformity to his Precepts therein, and ſubordinating all his other ends to God's Glory as his laſt end, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. But there are Religious Services, which are not only ultimately, but nextly to be performed to God; which all Nations have believed and practiſed; ſo that a meer Heathen could define Man, a Creature made for Religion. In all Places, where a God is believed, ſome Worſhip is maintained, tho' they miſs it both in the Object and Medium, *Mich.* 4. 5.

3. *THAT this Worſhip is due from the whole Man.* The Soul indeed is the next Subject of the rational Powers in Man, and is therefore principally concerned in this, but it is the Man as a Subject of Reaſon who owes himſelf to God; and all his Senſes & Bodily Organs were made to be uſed by the Soul, as its Inſtruments in the performing of its imperate acts, and are therefore to be employed in this Worſhip. And as there is an Argument for this from the Redemption of the whole Man, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. ſo we may argue from the Creation of the whole; and the more forceably, becauſe we are redeemed, that we may be again reſtored to the Service for which we were at firſt made, and fell ſhort of, by the Apoſtaſy.

4. *THAT hence every Man hath a double Calling in this Life*, viz. *a general and a particular.* The reaſon of this is alſo clear in the light of Nature. For all Men are to Worſhip God as their Lord after a religious manner; and this is a Calling common to all Men. And every Man is to look after his Support and Maintenance in this World; for which there are the ſeveral Employments which Men are here concerned in; God having made it Man's duty to ſeek his Supply in a courſe of means. Now God is to be ſerved in both of theſe, and for that reaſon both of them are to be upheld and purſued by Man while he lives. Nor may one be neglected under pretence of the other; for common Reaſon will condemn ſuch a neglect on either hand.

5. *THAT Men muſt have ſpecial times wherein to engage in ſuch Duties of Worſhip, by which they may glorify him.* It is a vain pretence that ſome make, that we ought always to glorify God in all that we can do, and on that account the whole Life of a Chriſtian ſhould be a continual Sabbath. For if beſides Man's making God's Glory his end in all he doth, there are ſpecial ſolemn acts of Duty, which he owes to God, in purſuit of his general Calling, there muſt be ſome ſpecial time allotted for his attending on them. Man is a Child of time, he muſt have time for the doing of all his actions; if therefore he hath a work of Religion diſtinct to attend, he muſt have a diſtinct and ſeparate time for his applying himſelf to it, that he may not be diſtracted in it; but at full & free liberty for the performance of it. And for this, Reaſon will ſuffice, and we need not go to Revelation for it. And the greater and more important the Duty, the greater Reaſon for it.

6. *THAT there ought to be ſome Preparation of time allotted for this Service.* Since Man is to carry on both of theſe Callings through his Pilgrimage in this World, it is fit, both that there be a convenient quantity of time laid out for this as well as for the other; and that it have its ſuitable Revolution, for maintaining the Worſhip of God, ſo as that we may keep up our religious frames in & through our ſecular Employments; and not loſe the Worſhip of God by too long vocations, and ſo our particular Callings eat out our general one. And thus we ſee that the ground or foundation of a Sabbath is laid in the Law of Nature; and the light of Reaſon in Man carries Conviction of the equity of it, and the need that Mankind have in this regard.

II. *THAT when God hath by a poſitive Precept affixed this time, it is ſo made Holy Time, and a moral Duty for us to obſerve it as ſuch.* I ſhall eſſay the clearing of this Aſſertion in the following Concluſions,

1. *THE Holineſs of time is a relation put upon it with reſpect to a Sacred Uſe.* Time, in its own Nature is nothing elſe but the meaſure of the Creatures duration, and is not of the Eſſence, but an Adjunct to Second Beings. Now tho' the Holineſs of God is eſſential to him, and inſeperable from him; yet the Holineſs of other things, is ſomething that may be ſeperated from them; and in things that are in themſelves common, they become Holy by a ſeperating them to a peculiar and ſacred uſe. When they are devoted to God, and he forbids any common uſe to be made of them, therein there Holineſs conſiſts. In this regard was *Iſrael* ſaid to be *Holineſs to the Lord.* And on this account may Holineſs be aſcribed unto time. And this is ſignified in the body of the Command.

2. *HENCE time becomes truly Holy by an Authoritative ſeperation of it to ſuch an Uſe.* The putting of ſuch a relation upon it, requires a Power or Authority in him who affixeth it thereto. It is not therefore in

every

every ones power to put ſuch a ſtamp upon any portion of time, ſo as to bind the Conſcience to pay ſuch a reſpect to it. Men indeed may, and muſt in the time which they expend in attendance upon religious Duties, abſtain mean while from common Buſineſs, but that is not for the times ſake, but with reſpect to the Duties which cannot be otherwiſe done regularly or acceptably.

3. *THAT no time is more Holy than other, Antecedently to ſuch a Seperation.* Neither can the nature of time it ſelf infer any ſuch thing, for it is all alike, and is indeed a common adjunct to other Beings as well as Man, who can put no difference upon it. Nor do any of God's great Works put ſuch an holineſs on time, becauſe they were wrought on it; for then might any Day in the Week lay claim to it. So that nothing but a juridical determination of it, can put ſuch a ſtamp upon it. And for this reaſon God calls the Sabbath, *his Sabbath*, Ezek. 21. 8.

4. *THAT God is the Lord of time, and hence the determination of Holy Time, depends upon his Pleaſure and Command.* That none but God can put Holineſs upon time, hath been already proved: And is further evident, becauſe the putting ſuch a difference between time in itſelf alike, is a thing Arbitrary, and the ſo determining it belongs to one who hath a Sovereign Power over time, which can be no other but God. And becauſe this determination refers to Worſhip, and is an Ordinance of it, which God hath reſerved to himſelf, and hath not given liberty to any Creatures to aſſume ſuch a power to themſelves: As hath been abundantly proved under the Second Commandment. Chriſt therefore in regard of his Mediatorial Diſpenſation hath told us, Mat. 12. 8. *The Son of man is Lord alſo of the ſabbath-day.*

5. *THAT hence becauſe the light of Nature ſaith that there is ſome time due for this, it was agreeable to God's Wiſdom and Government that he ſhould determine a time for it, from the beginning.* The reaſon of this is very manifeſt. For if Man be made for the active and voluntary Service of God, and muſt have a rule of Government to direct him in that Service, there is an hypothetical neceſſity that God do ſome way or other acquaint him with that Rule, or afford him ſome *Medium* by which he may be acquainted with it. If then the light of Nature requires that ſome time be thus ſeparated, and the ſtating of it in its diſtances and revolutions depends on the Divine Pleaſure, there muſt have been a Revelation of this at firſt unto Man, elſe he muſt have remained at an utter uncertainty about it.

6. *HENCE when God hath ſo ſtated & ſanctifyed the time, it becomes a moral duty for us to obſerve it as Holy Time.* Nor doth the Morality of it ſtand in the ſame point that Obedience to meerly Poſitive Inſtitutions do, by vertue of the Second Commandment, which obligeth us to obey God in all things which he enjoins, in ſubjection to his Sovereignty; but becauſe the duty itſelf is in its own Nature Moral, and owing to God by the Law of Creation, tho' the Circumſtances of the practice of it be regulated by a Poſitive Precept, which neceſſarily depended upon his Arbitrement.

III. *WHAT time is allotted to be obſerved as an Holy Sabbath?*

Anſ. OUR *Catechiſm* tells us, that it is *one whole Day in Seven.* And ſo much is expreſt in the Command it ſelf; in which there are ſix days allowed for Labour, and one conſecrated to Religious Worſhip, in the Hebdomadal Revolution. That firſtly had reſpect to the Creation, which had ſix days for the finiſhing of it, and God thereupon challenged the Seventh to himſelf. And hence the dividing of Time into Weeks, conſiſting of ſeven days, hath had a footing from the beginning, even among Nations that had no acquaintance with the Word of God, tho' they had loſt the primative reaſon of it. It is not to be ſuppoſed, that our Divines intend, that God only determined that one day in Seven ſhould be thus kept, and left it to the liberty of Men to chuſe which of them they would ſo obſerve; for they aſſure us of the contrary under the next Queſtion: only here we have the firſt and more general notification of God's mind ſignified to us, with reſpect to the time that he ſaw meet to aſſign to be kept Holy, viz. that it ſhould be one day of Seven. As to thoſe that run it up higher, and would have it to intend either the firſt or laſt day of Seven, it is not very clear; for tho' God did at firſt determine it to be the *Seventh*, yet he gave no intimations that he would ever alter that till a great while after, much leſs that it ſhould be the *firſt* of the Seven. And we know that the aſſignation of the definite time was Poſitive, and therefore could be argued no further than as God revealed his pleaſure about it. But there are two Things that are here to be Obſerved which God fixeth unalterably to be a Rule for Man, from the beginning to the end of time, with reſpect to the Sabbath, conſidered as a Moral Duty, *viz.* 1. That it ſhould be one Day in Seven. 2. That it ſhould be one whole Day in Seven.

HERE then,

1. *GOD hath determined the Sabbath to one Day in Seven.* It is true, that he hath alſo limited the Day itſelf in his Word, according to his Wiſdom and Pleaſure, nor was there ever a time ſince the Creation, wherein it was not ſo fixed: but that was a ſecundary thing in it, and variable; as will hereafter be Conſidered: but this is invariable. It was ſo in the Covenant of Works made with Men in Innocency, *Gen. 2. begin.* It was ſo in the revival of this Covenant on Mount *Sinai*, *Exod.* 20. 10. And that it is ſo in the times of the Goſpel Adminiſtration, will afterwards be conſidered. And this is certain, that God never did by any Precept that is recorded, alter this appointment. And God's ſilence on this Head, is enough

enough to ſet us down in this point. So that either we muſt reſolve that there is no Sabbath appointed under the Goſpel, or it is ſtill of force, that one day of Seven is ſo; and that it is ſuch as God himſelf ſhall give order for, that Chriſtians are to obſerve Religiouſly.

2. *THAT it ſhould be one whole Day in Seven.* It was not only to be a part of a Day, nor yet made up of parts of ſeveral Days, but it was to be one intire Day. And here Two things may come into Conſideration, 1. What ſort of Day is intended? 2. At what time this is to begin and end?

1. *WHAT ſort of Day is intended?*

Anſ. THE more noted and vulgar diſtinction of a Day, is into *Natural* and *Artificial*. The *former* conſiſting of twenty-four Hours, or thereabouts, Comprehending in it, both the time of Light & Darkneſs, ſo that the Night is one conſtituent part of it: The *latter* is the time of Light, beginning in the Morning, & ending in the Evening; and it is put diſtributively with the Night. On which account we often read of *Day* and *Night*. Some there be who reſtrain it to the latter, and not only ſo, but to ſuch a porportion of it as Men are wont ordinarily to expend on other Days in their ſecular Buſineſs. But it ſeems to be altogether groundleſs, and diſallowable. And it is generally agreed by ſuch as acknowledge that God hath appointed one Day of Seven to be obſerved as a Sabbath, that it intends *a ſeventh part of Time*; and is therefore to hold the ſame proportion with the other Days of the Week, which are allowed to Men for their common Affairs. For notwithſtanding natural repoſe or refreſhment with food and ſleep are allowed on that Day, as well as on any other, this hinders not but that the time is to be accounted Holy by the ſeparation of it according to Divine Precept. For the neceſſities of Nature are to be conſidered & relieved, that hereby we may the better ſerve God in the holy Duties which he hath enjoyned us to attend upon. And it is certain, that the Seventh Day in the firſt Inſtitution, and in the renovation of the Precept is expreſt in the ſame manner that the other ſix Days of Labour are, pointing out that there is no difference to be made between *them* and *this*, as to the proportion of time. And therefore altho' the Sabbatical Duties are Moral; yet becauſe the determination of the time, is Arbitrary with God, we are to have recourſe to his Inſtitution for this. If therefore he hath ſet off *a ſeventh part of Time* for this Service, we are no further to diſpute it. And that he hath ſo done ſeems to be very expreſs. Nor have we any Scripture reaſon to conclude, that in one he intends a *Natural*, and the other an *Artificial* Day; or that the one contains the revolution of Light and Darkneſs, and the other only the time of Day Light, or but part of *that*.

2. *AT what time it is to begin and end?*

Anſ. THERE are very eager Diſputes among the Godly and Learned upon this Point, which would require much time to inquire into and adjuſt. But theſe Exerciſes are not deſigned to be *Polemical*; but only to ſearch into the truth of Principles. I ſhall therefore here only lay down a few general Rules or Concluſions, and leave them to the thoughts of all ſerious Chriſtians.

1. *THAT there is no portion of time in itſelf more holy than other time.* As ſuch it is all alike. And conſequently there can be no rule from the nature of time, by which we can determine what time is to be reputed Holy, & what Common; but that hath already been conſidered.

2. *THAT it was at God's liberty to determine what proportion of time ſhould be Holy; and that both as to the beginning and ending of it.* This matter intirely depends on his good Pleaſure. If he had ſaid, I will have ſo much time ſeparated for religious Duties, whether it had been more or leſs; and that it ſhall begin at ſuch a time of the Day or Night, and continue for ſo many Hours, or Days, this Revelation of his Pleaſure about it muſt needs have determined the Caſe; becauſe he is the Sovereign Lord and diſpoſer of all our times, and of us too, who are bound to obey his Will in all things which he Commands us.

3. *THAT as no great Work of God done in it, but only a Word of Inſtitution, makes any time Holy; ſo neither are we to reckon Holy Time to begin at the inſtant wherein ſuch a Work commenced.* That God may, and hath ſo done, and appointed the Memorial of his great Works to be ſolemnized in ſuch times as he hath Sanctified, is evident by his Word. But then, that which ſtamped Holineſs on ſuch a time, was not the Work done, but the Command ſo to Commemorate it: tho' the conſideration of the Work itſelf may convince what reaſon there is for the Duty itſelf. Thus God appointed none of the ſix Days at firſt for a Sabbath, but the Day following, after the finiſhing of the Work of Creation; and tho' the light of Nature ſaith, that it was a convenient ſeaſon for it, and that God's Wiſdom is diſcovered in his ſo ſuiting of it; yet his expreſs Command, and Sanctifying of *that* Day for this purpoſe, was that which put the ſtamp of a Sabbath upon it. And thus alſo, the time when a Work is done, or the inſtant of the compleating of it, affords no Argument, that the time ſhould be Holy from that inſtant: But it muſt have an Inſtitution for it. And if there be none, we are at an uncertainty, becauſe the determination of this matter is intirely Poſitive.

4. *THAT it is the duty of God's People to ſeek ſatisfaction in their minds, about this Caſe.* It is certain, that as no time is Holy, which God hath not made ſo by his Command, ſo we can put a reſpect of Holineſs upon no other time than ſuch as he hath ſo appointed, without an intrenchment upon his Authority. And tho' God will bear with the infirmity of his People, in many miſtakes which they too often labour of, while they know but in part, yet he hath made it their Duty to ſearch the

Scriptures, and labour to be well informed in his Precepts; and if they miſtake through ſluggiſh neglect, they will bring Guilt upon themſelves. And all ſuch things as are done upon ſuch miſtakes, will be loſt labour. It cannot therefore be ſafe for us to take ſuch things upon truſt, but we ought to ſearch the Scriptures, and Pray to God for light, that we may underſtand his mind therein.

5. *IT were much to be deſired that the People of God could joyntly agree in this matter, according to the mind of God.* True, it is not a matter of Prudence, left to the diſcretion of Men to determine, becauſe the Inſtitution refers directly to the time, and therefore God's pleaſure therein is to be ſought, and carefully complied withal. And as, the Caſe is determined by God in his Word, it would be a great Bleſſing ſhould God pleaſe to inlighten the minds of his People in this matter, and prevent their divided Sentiments about it. For if ſome begin and end the Sabbath at one time, and ſome at another, it muſt be, not only that ſome labour under a practical miſtake, but alſo it becomes no little hindrance to the Duty it ſelf: Becauſe there is a Civil Commerce among Men, and there are their Secular Affairs, which they may lawfully follow in common time; and if, while ſome are Sanctifying the time as Holy, others of their Neighbours are uſing it in Worldly Buſineſs, as their own time, Offence will be apt to ariſe, and Temptations will be offerred upon it, to count no time Holy.

6. *THAT Chriſtians ought to bear one with another, in their different Sentiments on this Account, and avoid giving or taking of Offence.* This hath been a matter of Controverſy, among Holy and Learned Men, and is ſtill ſo, which as God bears with, ſo ought they alſo to bear one with another, till God ſhall pleaſe further to pour out his Spirit, and enlighten them in his mind. So that, although it is every Chriſtians Duty, to be perſwaded in his mind, and practice accordingly, and pay a religious reſpect to no other portion of time, than what he is perſwaded God hath appointed; yet there are theſe two things, which we have Warrant and Precept for, in the Word of God, viz. *Not to Cenſure our Brethren*, for differing from us in this regard, while we obſerve them to Live in the fear of God, and practice according to their Conſciences in this regard; and it ſhould put us upon this, becauſe we expect to have the like Charity from them, who think us to be in an Error; and alſo, *To take heed of Scandalizing them, or being Scandalized by them*, i. e. We ought not to lay a ſtumbling block before them by our Example, in giving Occaſion to them to Profane that time which they are perſwaded is Holy, or take Occaſion by their ſo doing, to do as they do, againſt the perſwaſion of our own Conſciences. And therefore on each part it is good to deny ourſelves in that which we account to be our lawful liberty; and we have this advantage in it, that we may attend Religious Duties when there is Occaſion, though without reſpect to the Holineſs of the time.

7. *THAT it is generally agreed among ſuch as acknowledge the Morality of the Sabbath, that a whole day is deſigned and ſet apart for Sacred uſe:* And that this Day contains one Seventh Day of the Week, or twenty four hours, or thereabouts: and not only ſo, but that it is one Day, and not part of one, and part of another; and that this is a Scripture Truth, we have before obſerved: ſo that the only Queſtion remaining is, when the Natural Day begins and ends.

8. *THAT the beginning of the Natural Day, is not to be regulated by the Cuſtom of Nations, but by the Word of God.* Diverſe Nations had their ſeveral Conſiderations on this account, as may be obſerved by their Hiſtories, but we have no ſuch Precept as enjoins us to follow this as a Rule, viz. to begin the Sabbath as the Day is reckoned in the Place that we live in. For then there would be as many ſeveral Rules for this, as there are practices among Men.

9. *THAT the Chriſtian Sabbath is to begin and end at the ſame time that the Sabbath was to do from the beginning.* And the reaſon of this is, becauſe, tho' there be a Change of the Day, yet no Change of the Time for the beginning of it from the Creation. And becauſe none but God hath Authority to make an alteration of the Poſitive Precepts, what is not ſo altered, muſt ſtand.

10. *THE Sabbath from the Creation, and as renewed to Iſrael, ſeems to have begun at the Evening.* The Natural Day did ſo, for time began with Darkneſs, which time of Darkneſs together with the following Light did Conſtitute the Firſt Day, which ſeems to be a Rule for the dating of the Days which followed. Hence Evening is in every one put before the Morning, which Words are evidently Synecdochical, *Gen.* 1. That the *Jewiſh Sabbath* was to begin at the *Evening*, is pleadable from Lev. 23. 27, with 32. *Alſo on the tenth day of this ſeventh month, there ſhall be a day of atonement, it ſhall be an holy convocation unto you, and ye ſhall afflict your ſouls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord. It ſhall be unto you a ſabbath of reſt, and ye ſhall afflict your ſouls in the ninth day of the month at even: from even unto even ſhall ye celebrate your Sabbath.* Nor doth it weaken the place, becauſe it is mentioned under the Inſtitution of one ſpecial day. For it appears that *ver.* 32. is an Explication of what was the tenth Day of the Month: And it is Obſervable, that in the Old Teſtament, a Day is called an *Evening Morning*, *Dan.* 8. 14. and in the New Teſtament, *a Night Day*, 2 *Cor.* 11. 25. And we are aſſured the Evening begins about or ſoon after the ſetting of the Sun, *Mark* 1. 32. And it is very likely, that the *Jews* then counted the Sabbath was ended. It is alſo apparent that the Days of the Month, were reckoned from the Evening, *Exod.* 12. 18, 19. And if

ſometimes

ſometimes the Day be mentioned as beginning with the Morning, we may remember that, Day is not always intended of the long Day of twenty four Hours, but ſometimes of the ſhorter Day, which is put Diſtributively with the Night, theſe two being the parts of a Natural Day. But I ſhall not here enter into Diſpute on this Point, which would be endleſs: But let all that Fear God be well Perſwaded in their Minds.

[AUGUST 25. 1702.]

SERMON *CLXIX.*

QUESTION LIX.

WHICH Day of the Seven hath God appointed to be the weekly Sabbath?

ANSWER.

FROM the beginning of the World to the Reſurrection of Chriſt, God appointed the Seventh Day of the Week to be the Weekly Sabbath, and the Firſt Day of the Week ever ſince, to continue to the End of the World, which is the Chriſtian Sabbath.

UNDER the former Queſtion we conſidered the Morality of the Sabbath: In the clearing whereof two Rules were laid down, and the Truth of them Eſſayed, viz. 1. That the Reaſon of keeping a Sabbath, is found in the Law of Nature. 2. That the obſerving of one Day in Seven, was Poſitively Moral, ſo that both of theſe belonging to the firſt Table or the Worſhip of God, the Fourth Command hath a reſultancy, partly from the Firſt, partly from the Second. The Queſtion before us leads us to the Conſideration of the fixt Day or Time, which was Conſtituted for a Sabbath. And here from the Premiſes, for our help in clearing up the matter before us, Three Concluſions may be premiſed, viz.

1. *THAT becauſe the reaſon for keeping a Sabbath, is in the First Command, it hence follows, that there muſt be ſome Sabbath of force to the End of the World.* Natural Worſhip is undeniably perpetual. If therefore the light of Nature ſaith, that Man cannot aright ſerve to his great end, unleſs he devote ſome proportion of his time to Religious Worſhip, ſuch a Duty cannot ceaſe, while he is a Subject of time, and hath a particular as well as a general Calling to employ himſelf about; which will not ceaſe till time ends with him, and he paſſeth over to Eternity, to keep an Everlaſting Sabbath.

2. *THAT becauſe the keeping of this or that Day, comes under the Second Command, which refers to Inſtituted Worſhip, it belongs to Divine Sovereignty to appoint, and change it, if he ſees meet.* If it had pleaſed God to continue the firſt Appointment unaltred through all Ages of the World, it ought to be ſo obſerved by Man; and the Divine Will ſo revealed about it, had been ſufficient Obligation on Man to attend it. But if he ſees good to declare his Pleaſure for the alteration of the time, and remove it from that to any other, we owe to him our voluntary compliance, and no way to diſpute his Prerogative in it. So that our only inquiry in this Affair, is to inform our ſelves, what God hath done upon this account; i. e. whether he hath made ſuch a Change, and to what portion of time he hath alotted it. And the force of all our Arguing, muſt reſolve it ſelf to a Word of Inſtitution.

3. *THAT yet, becauſe Divine Sovereignty acts in Infinite Wiſdom, therefore, ſo far as God pleaſeth to give us a reaſon for his Inſtitution, we are to inquire after it, and confirm our Faith by it.* God always hath a reaſon of his Precepts; for his own Glory is the laſt end of them, and his unerring Wiſdom accommodates them to be ſerviceable thereunto. But he doth not always declare theſe Reaſons to us, becauſe he will have us to acknowledge his Supream right over us, and therefore he only ſets the Seal of his Sovereignty to them, *I am the Lord.* But at other times he expreſſeth a reaſon for it, whereby he affords us a particular diſcovery of the Equity of the Command itſelf; and when he ſo doth, we ought to improve it, to ſatisfy our Obedience. But I proceed more particularly to inquire into the Anſwer that lies before us. And there are Two Propoſitions contained in it, which I ſhall endeavour particularly to give a brief account of.

I. *THAT from the beginning of the World to the Reſurrection of Chriſt, God appointed the Seventh Day of the Week, to be the Weekly Sabbath.* I need not delay here, in as much as under the former Head, in the proving of the Morality of the Fourth Command, I endeavoured to make it to appear, that a Sabbath was Inſtituted in the time of Man's Integrity, and ever ſince continued, even to, and in the times of the Goſpel. That Day therefore which God did at firſt Conſecrate and make Holy to himſelf, muſt needs continue of force, till either God revoke it, by aboliſhing the Inſtitution of a Sabbath, or change it by introducing of another Day in the room of it; but neither of theſe can be aſſerted to have been before Chriſt's Reſurrection.

1. *THAT God did never abrogate the Appointment of a Sabbath, may be argued both from the nature of the thing, or the Conſtitution of Man under God's ſpecial Government: which hath already been ſufficiently proved; and alſo from the total ſilence of the Scriptures about any ſuch act.* Now it is a ſufficient reaſoning in Divinity, in reſpect

of Poſitive or Inſtituted Worſhip, that as God's Command gives Authentickneſs to every ſuch Inſtitution, ſo it ſtands in force till God doth ſignify his mind to Men, that it is his Pleaſure that it doth ceaſe.

2. *THAT God did at the beginning ordain the Seventh Day to be a Sabbath.* By the beginning we are not to underſtand the firſt moment of time, for there were ſix Days which paſſed in the Creation of the World, before any ſuch notice was given of it; but that as ſoon as God had finiſhed the Work of Creation, in reſpect of the ſeveral kinds of Second Beings, and had made Man laſt of all, whom he endued with a Capacity of Sanctifying a Sabbath, in a religious Contemplation & Improvement of the Works of God, and Glorifying him in them, he thereupon Conſecrated the Seventh Day to this end. And this muſt needs be implied in, Gen. 2. 2, 3. *And on the ſeventh day God ended his work, which he had made; and he reſted on the ſeventh day from all his work which he had made. And God bleſſed the ſeventh day, and ſanctified it; becauſe that in it he had reſted from all his work, which God had created and made.* For tho' God reſted from Creating any new *Species* of Being in the ſixth Day; yet he reſted not on the Seventh from the Work of Providence, which continues without intermiſſion, to uphold with the right Hand of Power, the things ſo made, and to preſerve the Kinds of them. And as to any holy Reſt, God enjoys himſelf Eternally in perfection of Bleſſedneſs, and not being ſubject to time, cannot ſo himſelf keep any particular time as a Sabbath. But beſides, that he reſted on it, he alſo ſanctified and bleſſed it; which intends his putting a *relative* holineſs upon it, which muſt needs be for the uſe of Man. And that this was the Seventh Day from the beginning of time, is every where aſſerted in the Old Teſtament, where any particular account of this Inſtitution is given.

3. *THAT this Seventh Day was to continue for this uſe, from the beginning, till the Reſurrection of Chriſt.* This is denied by ſome, who as they, without reaſon, deny the Inſtitution of it to be expreſſed, in *Gen.* 2. 2, 3. ſo they would perſwade us, that the firſt Inſtitution of the Sabbath, was at the giving of the *Manna*, *Exod.* 16. and will on that account, have it to be meerly *Ceremonial*, and a branch of the *Moſaical* Pædagogy, and conſequently to be aboliſhed when that was. But ſufficient hath been ſaid for the refutation of that Opinion, under the former Queſtion. And tho' the Seventh-day-Sabbath did end with the Law of *Moſes* eventually, yet the reaſon for its ſo doing, was not becauſe it was a part of it, but on another Conſideration, as will afterwards be conſidered. And further to confirm this Propoſition, let us obſerve,

(1.) *THAT the Primitive Inſtitution of the Seventh-day-Sabbath, being given to* Adam *as the Head of Mankind, it continued in force to them, till God ſhould ſome way reverſe it.* God's Ordinances are of force upon the Subjects of them, till the Seal that ratifies them comes to be torn off by him. Every Ordinance of Man muſt ſtand, till it be repealed either by the ſame Authority that eſtabliſhed it, or one that is Superiour to it. But God hath no Superiour, and therefore none but himſelf can diſannul it. Now all Mankind were concerned in this Ordinance, for it was ratified in the Covenant with *Adam*, as he ſtood our Common Head; and was to communicate whatſoever Inſtitution he received from God, as being in that Station or Capacity.

(2.) *THAT from* Adam *till* Moſes, *there is no record in the Scriptures of any repeal of a Sabbath, or alteration of the time.* A deep ſilence in the Word of God concerning any Poſitive Law, is a good Argument in Divinity. So that, if God hath once commanded a thing, and never reverſed the Command, either in general or particular, the ſtamp of Divine Authority abides on it, ſo that it cannot be rejected or neglected, without guilt of Sin, in thoſe that do either reject or neglect it. Now that there is no ſuch act concerning the Sabbath to be found in Sacred Writ, muſt ſtand a Truth, till it can be produced; which I believe will never be.

(3.) *THAT the ſilence of the Word of God about the Obſervation of the Sabbath from* Adam *till* Moſes, *is no Evidence that the* Patriarks *did not Obſerve it.* There are few things left on record about the Affairs of Religion during that time, eſpecially as to the particulars of it; and yet there is enough to ſatisfy us that theſe things were. There is no Law of Sacrifices from the fall, recorded; and yet that there was an Inſtitution for it, appears not only in that there was a Practice of it, but in that God accepted of *Abels* Sacrifice, Gen. 4. 4. *And the Lord had reſpect unto* Abel, *and to his offering.* Which he would not have done, had he not firſt Inſtituted it. And that there was a Religious Worſhipping of God maintained by the *Patriarks*, before and after the Flood, is firmly to be believed.

(4.) *THAT the ſuppoſition, that the Ordinance of a Seventh-day-Sabbath was generally loſt or not known long before* Moſes's *time, doth not diſprove the Authentickneſs of the Precept for it, or ſay that it ceaſed to be Mans Duty.* Certainly *Adam*, and the following Holy *Patriarks*, Communicated to their Poſterity, the Precepts which God had revealed his will to them in; but many that Deſcended from them, grew careleſs in this Affair, and ſo the notice of ſuch things might in time be loſt among them; and we are told, that God *Winked at the times of Ignorance*, Act. 17. 30. And how far this might excuſe thoſe Unhappy Nations, I diſpute not; but that God ſaw meet in thoſe Days, to hand theſe Duties down by Tradition is certain. And it was a great Sin in Parents not to teach them to their Children; tho' God was pleaſed, to his own People, to inſpire Men to revive ſuch things among them, when they began to be loſt, or Degenerate into vain Superſtition.

(5.) *THAT*

(5.) *THAT the ſeventh Day Sabbath is mentioned in the Writings of* Moſes, *before and at the giving the Law at Mount* Sinai *as a thing not unknown before to the People of* Iſrael. At the giving of the *Manna*, which was ſome time before they came into the Wilderneſs of *Sinai*, as the Hiſtory acquaints us; there is indeed a mention of a Sabbath on the ſeventh Day, but not as a thing then firſt Inſtituted, but already Obſerved in Exod. 16. 23, 26, 29. *And he ſaid unto them, This is that which the Lord hath ſaid, To morrow is the reſt of the holy ſabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake to day, and ſeethe that ye will ſeethe; and that which remaineth over, lay up for you to be keep until the morning. Six days ye ſhall gather it: but on the ſeventh day which is the ſabbath, in it there ſhall be none. See, for that the Lord hath given you the ſabbath, therefore he giveth you on the ſixth day the bread of two days: abide ye every man in his place: let no man go out of his place on the ſeventh day.* And when, at leaſt a Month after that Law was given, this Command is given with a *Memento*, *Exod.* 20. 8. And though the word *remember*, is frequently uſed for the Obſervation of a thing, and Meditating upon it, yet doubtleſs it here intends Emphatically a calling to mind of the former Precept that had been given for it; and which it is more than probable, that they had been Wofully Defective in, during their abode in *Egypt*.

(6.) *THAT this Command was renew'd in* Moſes's *Law, with the reaſon enforcing it, which is fetcht from the Original Inſtitution of it, at the beginning. Exod.* 20. 11. Not that every Precept that was revived under *Moſes* was a new thing, or meerly Poſitive and Ceremonial; for all the Precepts of the Moral Law, were then revived, and given in the Covenant which God made with *Iſrael* at the Mount. Now this was directly for the ſeventh Day: and being thus put into *Moſes*'s Pædagogy, it was therefore to ſtand as long as that laſted, and for this reaſon, it was one of the great quarrels that God had with that People, in the times of their Apoſtaſy, viz. their Negligence about the Sabbath, *Iſa.* 58. *begin. Jer.* 17. 19, *to the end.* So that if we would know how long this Article of the Precept was to abide in force, the general Anſwer is, that it was to be, till God ſhould ſee meet to bring in another Diſpenſation of the Covenant, in which, though no Moral Precept was to ceaſe, yet there was a Change in the things that were meerly Poſitive in it.

(7.) *THAT* Moſes's *Pædagogy continued in force, till the Reſurrection of Chriſt, and no longer.* The Law of *Moſes* was given to the People of *Iſrael*, to be a Rule of the outward Adminiſtration of the Covenants between God and them, till the fulneſs of time ſhould come, in which the Promiſe made to *Abraham* ſhould be accompliſhed, and that was when the *Meſſiah* ſhould appear in our Fleſh, and fulfil all that Righteouſneſs which was Typically repreſented in that Diſpenſation. Now this was done by Chriſt, in his ſtate of Humiliation, and finiſhed at his Death on the Croſs, *Joh.* 19. 30. And the Manifeſtation of this was made, in and by his Reſurrection: Now was the time when the Day brake, and the ſhades were to flee away; from hence it was that the Kingdom of the Goſpel was eſtabliſhed, and a new Adminiſtration of it was ſet up. Now had Chriſt fulfilled the Law, according as he ſaid. *Mat.* 5. 17. And together with his ſo fulfilling of it, he Aboliſhed that Pædagogy, for which reaſon we are told, Eph. 2, 15. *Having aboliſhed in his fleſh the enmity, even the law of commandments, contained in ordinances.* Now all theſe Ordinances, which in their Day were glorious, being put to an end, become weak and beggerly Elements, *Gal.* 4. 9. Not that the Antiquating of that Law did of itſelf put an end to the Seventh Day Sabbath, but becauſe till then, there was no appointment of God for the change of the Sabbath to another Day; for if there were then no ſuch appointment, that Day was ſtill in force; and whether there were ſuch a Change of it ordained by Divine Authority, is to be inquired in the next Propoſition; which is,

II. *THAT the Firſt Day of the Week ever ſince, to continue to the End of the World, is to be a Chriſtian Sabbath.* The great thing that is here to be conſidered, is the *Change* of the Sabbath. And in this Inquiry, we are to take it for granted, that there was to be a Sabbath during the ſtanding of the World, and the continuance of a Church of God in it. The reaſon for our belief of which hath been already laid down. Either therefore the Old Sabbath is to abide, or another is appointed of God. And except he hath told us what Day it is, we are ſtill at a loſs. If a reaſon ſhould be demanded, why God appointed one Day of the Week rather than another, or one Day in Seven, rather than a longer or ſhorter revolution; it is enough to anſwer, that ſo Sovereignty pleaſed. Nevertheleſs, not only doth God diſpenſe his Sovereignty in Wiſdom, and therefore hath a reaſon for what he doth; but he hath alſo pleaſed to give us a reaſon, why he hath ſo done. As to the reaſon of the *Chriſtian Sabbath*, and the ſpecial Day appointed for it, we ſhall conſider it afterwards. But for the reaſon of the Seventh Day, from the beginning, he hath himſelf given it in the body of the Command; which will be conſidered under a following Queſtion. In ſum, we may here obſerve, that the Sabbath was at firſt given to Man, to improve in a religious Contemplation and Adoration of the Glorious Perfections of GOD, ſhining forth in the Works of Creation, which not being perfected till the Seventh Day, his Work was not compleatly prepared for him, but now it was fully ready. But becauſe there are many that keep a Sabbath, but deny any ſuch Change; and others, who tho' they acknowledge the Moral Duty of keeping a

Sabbath,

Sabbath, yet allow the Assignation of the time to be only of *Ecclesiastical* Authority, and not by a Divine Ordinance, we may for the settling our Faith in this Affair, take a brief and distinct account of a few things, which may give us light into it.

HERE,

[1.] *THAT the Morality of the Fourth Command, doth not lay any restraint upon God, from Changing the Day of rest.* It is not a forcible way of Arguing, to say, that the Command for a Sabbath is Moral, and therefore perpetual and Immutible; if therefore the seventh Day were once the Day appointed for it, it must be so Unchangably: a reason of the invalidity of such a way of reasoning, hath been already laid, in the consideration we had, wherein the Morality of this Command is to be placed, or in what respect it is Moral. We may therefore briefly confirm our Assertion from the consideration of that, and shewing the force of the Conclusion, to derive from it;

HERE then Observe,

1. *THAT though the keeping of a Sabbath be primarily Moral; yet the designation and limitation of the time, is but secondarily so.* In the former respect it is a Natural Precept, whereas in the latter it is Positive, it being a Declaration of the good pleasure of God, what shall be the time, which he will have separated from common use, and Sanctified to such Service as Naturally requireth some time for the doing it in.

2. *THAT this designation entirely depends upon God's Pleasure.* All time is in his hand. And he is Sovereign Lord over the Creature, which is a Subject of time; and hath Authority to lay out its Work, and tell it what portion of time it shall do its work in, and when it shall abstain from that, and seperate itself to Religious Services of Worship. Hence that this Day hath more of Holiness upon it than another, is not because it is so in its own Nature, but because it is his Pleasure, that it should be so.

3. *THAT as there was a Reason why God did at first determine it to be the Seventh; so, if he seeth reason to alter it to any other, his Authority is Indisputable.* Indeed, we are not to Dispute with him about the Reasons of his Positive Precepts, but are bound to believe that a God Infinitely Wise, knows his own mind and purpose in all that he doth; and that there may be just reason why such an Alteration should be made, according to the different Dispensation of himself to Men, is beyond dispute.

4. *THAT there was not a fixed Natural Morality on the Seventh Day.* I know that there are some who plead, that the Light of Nature did intimate to Man at first, that because God took up Six Days in Creating the World, therefore the Seventh ought to be kept as a Day of rest: but this seems not to hold, inasmuch as all this was of Revolation: Man was last Created, and though the light of Nature told him that the World he came into was God's Workmanship; yet it did not of itself say how much time God took up, in the Creation of it; for God could have done all things with one Word, in an instant; and therefore the distinct knowlege of this is a matter of Faith, *Heb.* 11. 9. As also that Man should observe such a time for the Contemplation of this great work, depended on Divine Institution, and therefore could not immediately result from the light of Nature.

5. *THAT hence, if God had as weighty reason to alter the Day, as he had at first to assign it to the Seventh, neither may his Wisdom or Constancy be called in Question for it.* Though God be Immutable, yet the Creature is a Subject of change, and may pass under a diverse Condition, unto which God may, without any change in himself, suit the dispensation of his Providence to it: He is of one mind, his Purposes alter not; but according to those purposes, he carries the Creatures through many vicissitudes. And herein he manifests his manifold Wisdom, by accommodating his special Government of Mankind, to their present state. And that on this account there was abundant reason, to change the Day of the Sabbath will come under consideration in the sequel. Though still the Duty itself continues in force.

6. *NEITHER doth this change in the least weaken the Morality of the Duty itself.* It is not less a Natural Duty for Men to attend on Solemn Worship, at such time, as God shall Positively appoint for such an end, though he sees meet in his Wisdom to alter it; if still there be a Seal of his Pleasure upon it, the Obligation is of equal force; and as the Holiness of the Day first appointed, must needs cease upon this change: so the same stamp of Holiness, is upon the Day which is by this Edict, thus determined; it having the same Original and Authority, which the former had.

[2.] *THAT we have no other foundation to build our Faith on the Article of such a change of the Sabbath, but the Will of God about it, revealed in his Word.* There may be abundant help for the Confirming of our Faith in it fetched from the consideration of the great reason on which God was pleased to alter it, when we take a distinct view of it: but there is not sufficient in that to infer that there is indeed such a change, because all reasons are not fetcht from the causes of things, but may refer to other Topicks, which may recommend to us the usefulness of them, their suitableness to the design they are for, and consequently the Wisdom of God in so assigning of them, as *Media* to the advancing the great end of all his works, *viz.* the manifestation of his Glorious Perfections.

HERE then let us observe,

1. *THAT*

1. *THAT this Change intirely depended on God's Pleasure.* It is from thence that all Positive Precepts have their Original. It is because he Commands us, that we are under the Obligation to do such things. It was his Edict for it, which made the Seventh Day holy to him; and it must be the same Authority which make another day to be so, in order to Man's acknowledging and celebrating of it: And without that, all the Authority of the whole Creation, cannot oblige our Consciences to such Observation.

2. *THAT God's Pleasure in all his Institutions, must be made known to us, by Revelation.* The Duties of *Natural* Worship are to be read in the Law of Nature; and Man's Natural Conscience did at first contain a full and legible Sculpture of them: Though, since the Fall, these are much obliterated, and therefore God hath given us a new Revelation of them: But as to *Positives*, which do nextly result from the Divine Pleasure, we must know what God's Pleasure is in regard of them, before we conclude them to be Duties: and this knowledge can be in no other way communicated to us but by God himself, telling us what is his Pleasure in this regard; for who is able to dive into his Mind, till he himself declares it to us some way?

3. *THAT the way for us to know this, is by his Word.* He did indeed make known his Pleasure in this respect to his Servants of old, by Inspiration, Dreams, Visions, Messages of Angels, which he continued till the *Canon* was perfected; but he hath now made his Word to be a standing Rule for us to judge of our duty by, and hath directed us to repair thither for all our direction in our serving and obeying him. Isai. 8. 20. *To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.* And therefore *David* pays that deference to the Word of God, Psal. 119. 105. *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.* And we are assured of the compleat perfection of it, for all the ends of Religion, 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.*

4. *THAT hence if there be no Change of the Day, there to be discovered, our Faith of it hath no foundation.* All other Arguments for it of what use soever they may be, for the establishing of our belief of it, will not amount of themselves to a demonstration of the truth of it: For if God hath not in his Word declared his Pleasure in this matter, it would be daring boldness in us, to go about to subvert the order which he at first appointed. Our principal Inquiry therefore will be, whether or no there be that in the Holy Scriptures, that will amount to such an Ordinance, as carries in it the evidence that there is such a Change. Which will be our next Contemplation.

[SEPTEMBER 22. 1702.]

SERMON CLXX.

[3.] *THAT the Scriptures afford us sufficient discoveries of God's mind about this Change.* That which we are here to consider, is, that the Word of God doth afford us Light to assure us that there was a New Sabbath to be brought in, in the days of the Gospel, and consequently there was a Change to pass from the Seventh, to another Day. Which Day this was, will be anon considered. Some have thought that this was fore-signified in the Mosaical Law, by the Appointment of the *Eighth Day*, of the Festival to be solemnly kept, as *holy*, at the Feast of Tabernacles, Lev. 23. 36. *Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you, and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord: it is a solemn assembly, and ye shall do no servile work therein.* Which Feast had a peculiar respect to the Incarnation of Christ. But I insist not on that. But,

1. *THERE are some Typical and Prophetical Text in the* Old Testament, *which manifestly predict this.* And that which I shall peculiarly take notice of is, Psal. 118. 24. *This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoyce and be glad in it.* That Christ is aimed at, at least in this part of the Psalm, as the Antetype, the Jewish Writers themselves do acknowledge, and is commonly believed by Christians; yea, the very matter of it inforceth it, being too lofty to be applied to *David*, any further than in a dark shadow. Here then we may observe, 1. The thing which he is speaking of, viz. the Exaltation of Christ, ver. 22. *The stone which the builders refused, is become the head stone of the corner.* And that Christ was aimed at in it, is evident, because it is in the New Testament ascribed to Him, Math. 21. 42. *Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? this is the Lords doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.* Act. 4. 11. *This is the stone which was set at nought by you builders, which is become the head of the corner.* And this was done when Christ was exalted, the first step whereof was in his Resurrection, of which the Psalmist brings in the Father speaking, Psal. 2. 6, 7. *Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Sion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.* 2. He puts a state of Administration upon it,

ver.

ver. 23. *This is the Lord's doing, it is marvellous in our eyes.* Aſcribing it to God as the Author of the Work, and noting the Surprize it carried in it, Challenging a ſpecial Obſervation. 3. Hereupon he brings in the Conſecration of a Day, for the Celebration of this great Wonder, *ver.* 24. where, 1. There is a remark made on the Day itſelf, *This is the Day*; and ſome read it, and more agreeable with the Original, *This is that Day, the Lord hath made it.* q. d. This is the Day which above all Days, is worthy to be remembred for the Glorious Work that was done on it; and what Day was this, but the Day in which His Exaltation was introduced. Now when he ſaith that God made it, it muſt needs have ſomething ſpecial in it, for God makes every day; but it intends ſomething illuſtrious; He hath made it, ſo as that it deſerves a remark to be made upon it, and to be Celebrated to the Lord, and to be kept in Honour of this great Work. As to thoſe that would have this Day to intend the whole time of the Goſpel Diſpenſation, which therefore they would have to be kept as a time of ſpecial gladneſs, it is precarious, and only made uſe of to leave us no Sabbath at all, which how pernicious it is to the upholding of the Power of Godlineſs, we have before obſerved. In the Antetype it Points to the Chriſtian Sabbath, and is therefore to be aſſigned to the Lords-Day, which was Sanctified upon the Reſurrection of Chriſt. 2. There is a Reſolution to Celebrate it as ſuch; *we will rejoice*, &c. *i. e.* We will Celebrate it with Holy Duties and Exerciſe of Praiſe to God; for which reaſon, the Chriſtian Church is here brought in, taking up ſuch a Reſolution. And tho' this Text alone, doth not tell us which Day of the Week it is, yet it tells us, that the Day of Chriſts Reſurrection, is to be kept by his Subjects, as a Sabbath, in Honour to Him. This alſo was foretold, Iſa. 11. 10. *And in that day there ſhall be a root of Jeſſe, which ſhall ſtand for an enſign of the people; to it ſhall the Gentiles ſeek, and his reſt ſhall be glorious.* That this is ſpoken of Chriſt, the foregoing Verſes evidently prove, & that this reſt intends His Finiſhing or Perfecting His Work of Redemption is manifeſt, as will appear in the Sequel.

HENCE,

2. *THIS is further Confirmed by the* New Teſtament. And here, the moſt remarkable place, is that, Heb. 4. begin. *Let us therefore fear, leſt a promiſe being left us of entring into his reſt, any of you ſhould ſeem to come ſhort of it*, &c. The Apoſtles great deſign in this Epiſtle, is to prove that Chriſt was the end of the Law, and was to bring in a more Glorious Church ſtate, which was Prefigured in the Moſaical Diſpenſation: And in the beginning of this Chapter, he deſignedly proves, that there was another Reſt remaining for the People of God, beſides that which He gave Man at his Creation, and that which Be renewed to *Iſrael*, upon their going into *Canaan*, which he proves, and then explains. For the proof of it, he cites, *Pſal.* 95. which Pſalm, the Jewiſh Rabbi's themſelves acknowledge to refer to the Kingdom of the Meſſiah: In which, at *ver.* 7. he invites Men to the Celebration of Goſpel Worſhip, and urgeth his Invitation, by an Argument, fetched from the Miſery which befel *Iſrael* of Old, for their refuſing to enter into the Reſt of *Canaan*: From the manner of laying down this Argument, our Apoſtle proves that there was another Reſt yet behind, to be introduced in Goſpel times, which muſt of neceſſity be aimed at by the Pſalmiſt. For this end he mentions three Reſts appointed by God for his Church in this World, according to the threefold ſtate of it; two whereof had been already paſt, at neither whereof the Pſalmiſt could aim, which he proves diſtinctly. The firſt of theſe was the Reſt appointed to the Church, under the Covenant of Works, preſcribed to Man under the Law of Nature, upon God's having finiſhed the Work of Creation, when he appointed and ſanctifyed the Seventh Day; this he proves was not the Reſt intended, *ver.* 3, 4, 5. And the ſum of his reaſoning is, becauſe the Law ſtill ſpeaks of another Reſt. The ſecond was that which was renewed under the Moſaical Pædagogy, which was to be enjoyed in the Land of *Canaan*; in which, tho' he had appointed the continuance of the Seventh Day, (in as much as under that Diſpenſation, he had revived the Moral Law, and reinforced the Covenant of Works, tho' together with it, he gave them a vailed Goſpel, and ſo it was truly a Covenant of Grace,) yet becauſe it was to be preparatory for Chriſt's coming, it was more Servile, and for that reaſon he put a new Sanction to the Seventh Day, and added new Inſtitutions and Ceremonial Rites to be attended on it. This he proves could not be intended, becauſe it was ſo long after *Joſhua* had carried them into the Typical Reſt of *Canaan*, *ver.* 6, 7, 8. And the Scripture acquaints us, that it was about Four Hundred Years; whereas the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of another yet to come. Hereupon he draws his Concluſion, ver. 9. *There remaineth therefore a reſt unto the people of God.* The word is, a *Sabbatiſm*, or keeping of a Sabbath, in which he uſeth the *Hebrew* word for a Sabbath, with a Greek termination, to let us know that he intended a Day of Reſt, of the ſame kind or nature with thoſe that had been before appointed. He therefore further explains what Reſt it is, and in what foundation it is laid, ver. 10. *For he that is entred into his reſt, he alſo hath ceaſed from his own works, as God did from his.* Here he makes a compariſon between the work of Creation, and that of Redemption, and gives us to underſtand, that Chriſt our Redeemer finiſhed his Work after the ſame manner that God did his, i. e. Appointing a like Sabbatiſm for the Commemoration of it; for by him that entred into his Reſt, is manifeſtly

nifeſtly intended Chriſt. And the word, *as*, intends, after the like manner, i. e. with a Sabbath; and no other ſenſe can be given it, agreeable with the Apoſtle's deſign and force of arguing. So that herein is manifeſtly laid down the Inſtitution of the Chriſtian Sabbath, upon the introduction of the new State of the Church, under the Goſpel, and that the very day is indigitated in it, will further appear, under the next Concluſion.

[4.] *THAT this Change is from the Seventh to the First Day of the Week.* Having made it to appear that there is ſuch a Change, according to Divine Ordination or Appointment, the way now lies open, the fairer, to enquire for the Day itſelf to which it is Changed. That ſuch a Change is no way contradictory to the Law of Nature, we have already conſidered enough to evidence it: For tho' a Sabbath is purely Moral, yet the Aſſignation of the ſtated time is Poſitive, and therefore depends intirely on the pleaſure of the Law-giver. Now, that the Seventh Day was firſt ſtated, and was alſo revived at the giving of the Law in the Wilderneſs, is ſo evident in the Word of God, that it cannot with reaſon be queſtioned. And that it was tranſlated from the Seventh to the Firſt Day, will alſo find a ſatisfying proof from the Holy Scriptures. I ſhall not here labour in the Argument, which ſome place weight upon, *viz.* that elſe there would have been a loſs of time, and a breach made upon the Appointment of Weeks from the beginning, becauſe I cannot diſcern any weight to be in it; the numbring of Time by Weeks, being of a Civil, and not Theological Conſideration; and this matter depending intirely on the Wiſdom and Pleaſure of the Lawgiver. Nor am I convinced that the Light of Nature doth warrant our keeping of one Day rather than another, as a Sabbath, by reaſon of any great Work of God done upon it, antecedently to a Poſitive Precept given about it; though it may carry in it a good reaſon for the Celebration of ſuch a Day, and of the Wiſdom of God in Commanding it, when once we have an Inſtitution for it. But there are Three Aſſertions that may here be propoſed, which when put together, may be enough to determine this matter, upon ſuppoſition that there is a Change; and of the neceſſity that God ſhould reveal his Pleaſure to us on this account, in order to our being capable of keeping ſuch a Day in Faith, or knowing of our Duty on this account.

1. *THAT the Day thus Preſcribed, is that Day of the Week on which Chriſt Roſe from the Dead.* This was touched at before, and it is to be evidenced from the two Principal texts forecited: That the Day Celebrated in that Prophetical Scripture, (*Pſal.* 118.24.) did in the Antetype intend this Day. And this may be further Confirmed, if we conſider; that it was the Day in which He paſt from His Humiliation, to his Exaltation, as appears from *ver.* 22. Now that not only Chriſts Death, but alſo the time wherein He lay in the Grave, refers to His ſtate of Humiliation, is agreed of on all hands. And for this reaſon, the Goſpel aſſures us, that he received his diſcharge upon his Reſurrection; Hence that in Rom. 4. 25. *Who was delivered for our offences, and was raiſed again for your juſtification.* In this it was that the *Bonds of Death*, which before *held* him, were *broken*, *Act.* 2. 24. Nor is it leſs evident from that in Heb. 4. 10. *For he that is entred into his reſt, he alſo hath ceaſed, from his own works, as God did from his.* For we are not to ſuppoſe that he reſted from his works, during his ſtate of Humiliation. Now when he did ſo Reſt, he did it after the ſame manner that God reſted from His, *i. e.* with a Sabbath, and that immediately upon the Reſt, which muſt be the Day of his Reſurrection.

2. *THAT this was the Firſt Day of the Week* This is ſo fully aſſerted by every one of the Evangeliſts, that nothing more need to be ſaid for the proof of it, ſince it is a Divine Teſtimony, which cannot be miſtaken. For though the words in their proper ſignification be, *one of the Sabbaths*, yet it is a manifeſt Hebraiſm, who uſe the Cardinal number for the Ordinal, and the word Sabbath for the Week, the moſt Honourable Day whereof is the Sabbath: beſides that, the Hiſtory alſo determines it, becauſe it aſſures us, that it was the next morning after the Jewiſh Sabbath was ended, which we are ſure was the Firſt Day. And it is worthy conſideration, that the Spirit of God took order, that this Paſſage ſhould be ſet down by every Evangeliſt, which tells us, that there was ſomething remarkable in it, and doubtleſs this was one thing at leaſt, that it was a Day to be had in Honour to the end of the World.

3. *THAT this Day had a peculiar Honour put upon it, from Chriſts Reſurrection, and during the Days of the Apoſtles.* How far we are to conclude Inſtitution from the Practice of the Apoſtles, I now ſhall not diſpute; though we are aſſured Chriſt referred many things of his will, to be ſuggeſted to them after his Aſſention, by Inſpiration Infallible, Joh. 16. 12, 13. *I have yet many things to ſay unto you, but ye cannot bear them now: Howbeit, when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he ſhall not ſpeak of himſelf: but whatſoever he ſhall hear, that ſhall he ſpeak, and he will ſhew you things to come.* But when we are aſſured of the thing itſelf, theſe things will be cumulative, to eſtabliſh us in the Truth. It was on this Day, that Chriſt did firſt after his Reſurrection appear to his Diſciples, Joh. 20. 19. *Then the ſame day at evening being the firſt day of the week, when the doors were ſhut, where the diſciples were aſſembled for fear of the Jews, came Jeſus and ſtood in the midſt, and ſaith unto them, Peace be unto you.* And his ſecond too, if we take eight days incluſively, ver. 26. *And after eight days, again his diſciples were*

within, and Thomas with them : then came Jeſus the doors being ſhut, and ſtood in the midſt, and ſaid, Peace be unto you. The Day of Pentecoſt ſeems to have been always on this Day, as is pleadable from *Lev.* 23.15,16. And on this day the Apoſtles had a ſolemn Meeting, and the Lord too, choſe it to be the Day of his miraculous Confirmation of them in their Apoſtleſhip, and beſtowing on them the extraordinary Gifts whereby they were furniſhed for it ; as appears, *Act.* 2. *bgin.* It was the Day upon which the Church at *Troas* was appointed to aſſemble together for Preaching, and the Adminiſtration of the Lord's-Supper, and for that purpoſe. *Paul* tarried there ſeven days, Act 10. 6, 7. *And we ſailed away from Philippi, after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days, where we abode ſeven days. And upon the firſt day of the week, when the diſciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his ſpeech until midnight.* It was a a ſtated time for the Church at *Corinth*, for making their Publick Contributions, 1 Cor. 16. 1. *Now concerning the collection for the ſaints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even ſo do ye.* And why, but becauſe then they were to convene for Religious Duties ? Now for what other reaſon ſhould the Apoſtles pitch upon This Day rather than another, had they not received it from Chriſt by his Spirit. *Paul* uſeth ſuch an expreſſion to them, 1 Cor. 11. 23. *For I have received of the Lord, that which alſo I delivered unto you.* Beſides, there is Emphaſis in calling it the *Lord's Day*, Rev. 1. 10. *I was in the ſpirit on the Lord's Day.* That it muſt intend a Sabbath is therein evident, becauſe the Apoſtle mentions it as a Day well known by ſuch a Name, which muſt needs be, with reſpect to its being conſecrated by him, to his Service. For in no other reſpect is one Day His more than another. That it was to be kept in Remembrance of Him, is alſo apparent from the title, as the Sacrament is called the Lord's Supper ; for the ſame reaſon, now the word Lord, in the New Teſtament is uſed for Chriſt, who alſo is ſaid to be *Lord of the Sabbath*; which intimates his Authority to appoint, and put on Holineſs on what Day he ſees meet.

[5.] *THAT the Reaſon of this Change, will further ſerve to confirm us in the Belief of it.* For though God acts his Sovereignty in aſſigning the Day, yet he doth it in Wiſdom, and therefore muſt needs have a reaſon for it ; and though he doth not always tell it us, yet in point of the Sabbath he hath pleaſed to reveal ſufficient to ſatisfy us about it ; and this may come under a double conſideration ; either with reſpect to Chriſt, or to the ſtate of the Goſpel Church.

1. *WITH reſpect to Chriſt.* I ſhall not here particularize but offer this ſummary account of it. That although the keeping of a Sabbath, for the performing of the Duties of Worſhip to God, be a purely Moral Duty, yet the fixing of this or that Day, for it being Poſitive, God hath pleaſed to do it for the Commemoration of ſome great Work of his, in remembrance whereof, the Day is to be kept Holy. This therefore is the ſpecial reaſon given of the Seventh-Day-Sabbath, Exod. 20. 11. *For in ſix days the Lord made heaven, and earth, the ſea, and all that in them is ; and reſted the ſeventh day : wherefore the Lord bleſſed the Sabbath Day, and hallowed it.* Now there are two great works which God would have thus Commemorated, *viz.* that of Creation, and that of Redemption ; the one whereof, is ſpecially aſcribed to the Father, the other to the Son. As therefore when the Work of Creation was finiſhed, God immediately appointed a Sabbath to be kept by mankind, to be as it were a Sacred Monument of it, Gen. 2. 1, 2. *Thus the heavens and the earth were finiſhed, and all the hoſt of them. And on the ſeventh day God ended his works, which he had made ; and he reſted on the ſeventh day from all his work which he had made.* (Although he works hitherto in the the Admirable works of Providence, which are a continued Creation :) ſo when Chriſt had accompliſhed his work of Redemption, in the making ſatisfaction for Sin, which he declared to be finiſhed in his Death, Joh. 19. 30. *When Jeſus therefore had received the vinegar, he ſaid, It is finiſhed : and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghoſt.* And for which he received a diſcharge in his Reſurrection ; He commanded the Remembrance of it to his Church in a Sabbath, although he ſtill works in the Redeeming of His Elect out of the hands of Sin and Satan by Power. And this is the direct aim of the forecited, Heb. 4. 9, 10. *There remaineth therefore a reſt to the people of God. For he that is entred into his reſt, he alſo hath ceaſed, from his own works, as God did from his.* Chriſt Himſelf hath told us, that it is His Fathers Pleaſure, that he ſhould have an equal Divine Honour paid to Him, on the account of His Redemption, to that which was due to Him, as He is the Lord of all : Joh. 5. 23. *That all men ſhould honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, hononreth not the Father which hath ſent him.* And this is one reaſon, why the Chriſtian Sabbath is called the *Lord's Day*, becauſe it is to be kept in Honour of the Lord Redeemer ; and it is as certain, that the keeping of a Sabbath to any, is to pay him Divine Honour. Nor ever was there ſuch a Benefit brought to Mankind, as that of Chriſts Redemption, in which he repaired the ruines of the Apoſtaſy, and opened a way, by which miſerable ſinners, might obtain Salvation ; in which God Himſelf deſigned the manifeſtation of the Glory of His Grace, in which he would be admired forever in thoſe that Believe. Well then might

might He keep up the veneration of this so astonishing a Work, by such a Day, distinct from the Sabbath of the Creation.

2. *WITH respect to the state of the Gospel Church.* Here also let us briefly observe, that as the Renovation of fallen Man, which was provided for by the Death of Christ, is called a New Creation, and resembled to the First Creation. 2 *Cor.* 5. Eph. 4. 24. *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.* And elsewhere. On that account may well challenge a Sabbath in honour of it; so the laying the foundation of the Gospel Church, is frequently set forth under this Comparison; and therefore we frequently read of God's Creating a New Heaven, and a New Earth, which properly aims at the Gospel Church state: Now we are assured, that there was a change to pass in this New Creation, upon all the old things of the Law. Hence that, in 2 Cor. 5. 17. *Old things are past away, behold, all things are become new.* Not that the moral Law was to cease, for that was of perpetual force, being the Law of Nature, but whatsoever was purely Positive in it, was to undergo a change, in order to, or by the bringing in of another Dispensation, more spiritual and glorious; and this is one design of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, to prove that there is such a change; and in particular the Apostle argues it from the consideration of the New Covenant, to be made in these Days, *Chap.* 8. to *ver. ult.* And hence it comes to pass, that to return to the Institution, proper to that Covenant, is to renounce the new one; Hence that, Gal. 5. 2, 4, 10. *Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. I have confidence in you through the Lord, that you will be none otherwise minded; but he that troubleth you, shall bear his judgment, whosoever it be.* For though the Apostles did for a while, till the Jewish Law was buried, and to avoid the offence of that Nation, use some of those Ceremonies as things necessary for the Interest of the Gospel, till sufficient Conviction might be laid before the people of the Antiquating of them, yet they maintained the Liberty of the Gentile Churches, and suffered them not to be brought into Bondage. In a word, the Jewish Sabbath, in so far as it was a shadow of things to come, is for that reason abolished, (Col. 2. 16, 17. *Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath-days. Which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ*) that it may give place to the Sabbath which is a remembrance of Him that is already come.

[6.] *THAT this Change began at the Resurrection of Christ, and is to continue till the End of the World.* There are two Things asserted in this Conclusion, which will need but little to be said for the clearing of them.

1. *THAT this Change Commenced at the Resurrection of Christ.* Thence the Æra of it had its date. Enough hath been already spoken for the confirmation of this. For we have before proved, that the Seventh Day Sabbath was to continue till then, during the time wherein the Mosaical Pædagogy was in force; that at that time Christ had Consummated his Work, and was thereupon to enter into his Rest, till which, the Sabbatical remembrance of it was not made way for; that now Christ having fulfilled the Law, and compleated all that which pointed to him in the Ordinances of it, there was no more use of them, and therefore the Substance being come, the Shadows were to fly away: That the great Work of Redemption being wrought, which equalled at least that of Creation, it was to be solemnly Celebrated with a Sabbath. Now all these things were finished at his Resurrection, by which that New and more Glorious State of the Church was brought in, in which all things were to be New.

2. *THAT this Sabbath is to continue to the End of the World.* That the New Church State of the Gospel hath its Ordinances, is every where asserted in the New Testament, which tho' they are called Spiritual, in comparison of those Carnal ones under the Law, during the Non-Age of the Church, are yet External Media of our Communion with God; which mediate Fellowship must abide, as long as we are in this Life, and therefore, as long as he hath a People in this World; the immediate one being referred for a state of Glory, in another. Now this is the difference between the Church state under the Old, and under the New Testament, that *That* was set up but for a Time, and the Apostle tells us how long, in Heb. 9. 10. *Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of Reformation.* Whereas *This* new one is to remain unchanged, till the consummation of all things. The Kingdom of Christ, which is set up under the Gospel, is to abide till he hath done all the Work that is to be done in it, and that will not be until he hath vanquished the last Enemy, and distributed the Eternal Rewards, 1 Cor. 15. 25. *For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.* And that will not be, till the great Resurrection and Judgment is over. His Priesthood also abides equally with the other, Psal. 110. 4. *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.* Hence said

to

to be *unchangable*, Heb. 7. 24. *But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangable Priesthood.* And because he hath no Successor either in his Kingdom or Priesthood, the Orders and Ordinances of it are Immutable. On this account it is said to be *immovable*, Heb. 12. 28. *Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.* And in this regard is the time of the Evangelical Dispensation called the Last Days. Hence also we have that remark, in ver. 27. *And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of those things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.* So that as the Church of God cannot do well without a Sabbath, while their imperfect state abides, and they are necessitated to see through a Glass: And the First-day Sabbath was stated upon the setting up of the New-Testament Administration, it must continue till time be no more, and the Redeemed of Christ shall be removed to be with Him in his Glory, there to enjoy with Him an Everlasting Sabbath. For we are told, that the establishment of these things abides, till the whole Church is brought to a perfect State, Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13. *And he gave some Apostles: and some, Prophets: and some, Evangelists: and some, pastors and teachers: For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.*

Use. I shall here only draw this *Inference*, viz. *That we may here see the mistake of those, who either retain the Seventh-day-Sabbath in Gospel times, or under a pretence of Spiritual Worship observe no particular Sabbath at all, or keep the Christian Sabbath meerly upon the account of Ecclesiastical Authority.* The *former* of these do in effect say, though in words they deny it, that Christ is not come in the Flesh, and that the Old Covenant still abides. The *second* pretend to a state which cannot, without the greatest vanity and folly be expected in this World, and put from themselves one of the great and excellent Media, which Christ hath ordained for Communion with him on this side Glory. And the *last* do utterly enervate the Authority of the Sabbath, and take away the relative Holiness of it; which cannot depend on the Power of any Order of Men whatsoever, but upon Him alone, who is Lord of the Sabbath. Let us then fortify our selves in the belief of this Article, and labour to express our intire Love and Thankfulness to God and Christ for that Glorious Work of Redemption, on the Efficacy whereof, we hope to obtain Salvation; and serve Him with Reverence and Godly Fear, in the Religious Observation of the Christian Sabbath.

[November 17. 1702.]

N. B. *The Reader is desired to Observe, that by reason of several Presses being made use of in this Large Work, it has fallen out (as is frequent in such cases) that the Pages for a considerable way, are numbred over again.*

SERMON

SERMON *CLXXI.*

QUESTION LX.

HOW is the Sabbath to be Sanctifyed ?

ANSWER.

THE Sabbath is to be Sanctifyed by an holy Reſting all that Day, even from ſuch Worldly Employments and Recreations as are lawful on other Days, and ſpending the whole time in the Publick and Private Exerciſes of GOD's Worſhip, except ſo much as is to be taken up in the works of Neceſſity and Mercy.

WE have already taken an account of the Morality of the Fourth Command, and the perpetual Obligation of it; as alſo of the Day of the Week, which is appointed by the Authority of Chriſt, to be obſerved as a Sabbath, in the Days of the Goſpel. That which now follows to be conſidered, is the *Improvement* that we are to make of, and the *Imployment* we ſhould Exerciſe our ſelves in upon this Day of Reſt; and that is by Sanctifying or Keeping of it Holy; which is ſuppoſed in the Queſtion, to introduce the ſpecial duties enjoyned us on this Account. Now the Sanctification of any thing conſiſts, in the ſeparating of it from Common, & dedicating of it to Sacred uſes. And becauſe Time is properly nothing elſe but an Adjunct of Second Beings, and the Meaſure of the Creatures Duration, therefore the Holineſs of Time muſt be referred to the things which are either to be done or omitted, with reſpect to the Conſervation of it: Or the Time is Holy, becauſe God hath ſeparated it for holy Services, and ſequeſtred it from thoſe that are Common. For this reaſon the Duties that are incumbent on us, are either Affirmative or Negative, what is to be done, and what is to be avoided. And in order to our taking of this up aright, let me premiſe Three things,

1. THAT *there were ſome things Commanded the People of God, under the Law, to obſerve, which are not Obliging on the Chriſtian Sabbath.* To Reduce the Duties of this Command wholly to the Moſaical Pedagogy, is to return to that bondage from which Chriſt hath made us free. There were many Rituals of Ceremonial Worſhip, which were appointed for the Sabbath, and were therefore made Appendices to it, during that Conſtitution, and were therefore to ceaſe, when all theſe were put to an end. There were alſo ſome ſevere Judicial appointments referring to it, though ſtrained higher than ever was intended, by the Phariſees, in the days when Chriſt was here in the Fleſh. They were not to kindle a fire, *Exod.* 35. 3. Now this was given for that ſevere Diſpenſation, and is not ſo in Goſpel times, as we ſhall further obſerve afterwards.

2. THAT *we are not to Meaſure the Duties of the Day by the remaining Abilities left in fallen Men, nor by the Powers reſtored to renewed Men, in Regeneration.* It is one Notorious deſign of the pretended Moraliſts of the Age we live in, to level all Moral duties to Man's Power, whereby, they not only debauch the Chriſtian Religion, but even Morality it ſelf, and make it a Pander to Men's Luſts. But we muſt remember, that the Law of God, is the Rule of Moral Duty, and is therefore juſt in it ſelf, and requires nothing but what is equal, That the Reaſonable Creature ſhould pay entire Obedience to; tho' becauſe it was given to be Man's Rule, and under Sanctions, it was meet that Man ſhould be made with Concreated Powers in him, to pay entire conformity to it; which he was, when he came out of God's hand, tho' he hath loſt them by his unhappy Fall. Nor doth the Equity or Obligation of the Law ceaſe, becauſe Man hath loſt his Strength by his own default; for then, of what uſe had the threatning been? And tho' this Image is renewed but in part in the Regenerate, ſo that they cannot come up to the breadth of the Law in its demands, yet the Law it ſelf remains Unchangable: And tho' God accepts of the ſincere tho' imperfect Obedience of Believers, having accepted of the perfect Righteouſneſs of Chriſt for their Juſtification; yet all their ſhort comings are Moral defects, and on that account ſinful; for the pardon whereof, they are daily to apply to that One Sacrifice; and they themſelves are not to reſt in their preſent Meaſures, but be evermore preſſing on towards perfection, *Mat.* 5. *ult. Pſal.* 3. 13, 14.

3. THAT *many Chriſtians do over Superſtitiouſly Do ſome things, and Abſtain from other things, through an erring Conſcience.* As there are ſome that are over-lax, ſo others are too rigid in their Principles on this account. There are ſome things which they Scrupulouſly avoid on that Day, which are not only lawful, but may be a great Duty for them to do on the Day; and other things they zealouſly proſecute, which they ought at leaſt to abate in: And this unadviſed Zeal of theirs, not only hurts them themſelves; but alſo is not a little prejudicial to others, partly by their unjuſt Cenſuring of them, and partly by occaſioning prejudice in them againſt the Day it ſelf; which what they be, will be manifeſt, in the laying open of this Anſwer, and that which follows. Only it may here ſerve to Admoniſh us that we ought to uſe great care, in getting our ſelves rightly informed in this point.

WE may now proceed to enquire into the Anſwer it ſelf, and therein take an account of the Duties that are incumbent on us, if we would aright Sanctify the Sabbath, to the proper End and Uſefulneſs of it. And here,

I. IN *General*, it is to be done by an *holy reſting all that Day*. And here obſerve,

1. THAT it is to be kept, as a *Day of Reſt*. The Hebrew word uſed for the Sabbath ſignifies, a *Quiet*, a *Reſt*, a *Ceſſation*: it therefore implies that there muſt be a Ceſſation from ſomething, or an Abſtaining from ſome work, or exerciſe, which there is liberty at other times to be imployed in; which, what it is, will afterwards be conſidered. And doubtleſs, one deſign of the Sabbath is to put us in mind, and give us ſome Prelibations of that Eternal Reſt which we hope to enjoy in Heaven, where we ſhall partake in a never ending Sabbatiſm: for which reaſon the future Glory is ſo often called a Reſt in the Scriptures; where we ſhall be called off from all other Diverſions, to hold Immediate Communion with God in Chriſt for ever: the repreſentation whereof is no where more manifeſt, than in the right Obſervation of the Sabbath.

2. IT is to be kept as an *Holy* Reſt. We are therefore Commanded to keep this Day holy: And the word for *Keeping*, is uſed alſo for *Obſerving*, and uſing of greateſt care & vigilence, and the word it ſelf carries ſo much in it as intimates, that there is ſomething to be done by us, in the right ſanctifying of the Sabbath. Nor can it be obſerved acceptably to God, or profitably to our ſelves, by a ſitting ſtill and doing nothing. And indeed, there is no one Command in the Moral Law, that can be duly kept, meerly by Negatives: yea indeed, tho' it be a Day of Reſt in ſome reſpects, yet in others it requires us to be as fully employed, as in any other day of the Week; as will be manifeſt when we come to conſider what Occupation God hath laid out for His People to employ themſelves in, upon this holy Day. Nor indeed would it ſerve to help us to the promoving of our great End, if there were not ſuch Buſineſs laid out for us in it.

3. THIS holy Reſt is to be kept through the *Whole Day*. The meaning of this is, that ſo much Time as God hath ſet apart & Sanctify'd to be a Sabbath, is to be ſpent and applied to this holy Reſting. And this alſo is very apparent by the Letter of the Command from that, in it, indefinitely, not in this or that part of it, but from the beginning to the end of it, even All that Time which God hath ſeparated from Common to Sacred Uſe. There is nothing common or unclean to be admitted on it, nor any thing to be done, but what is ſerviceable to help forward the holy Duties of it.

AND here there is a weighty Queſtion controverted, viz. *What Time is to be employed in this holy Reſt?* whether it intend a *Natural* Day of *Twenty four* Hours, or *Artificial* of *Twelve*? And there are Judicious Divines, who plead for the Morality of the Sabbath, who argue on either hand and offer a proof of their Opinion; but I am not engaged in Diſputes, but only to lay down the Doctrine of Principles, and confirm it.

HERE therefore give me leave to preſent this Aſſertion, viz. *That the whole Natural Day of Twenty Four Hours, is to be kept or obſerved by the People of God, as an holy Reſt to God.* The evidence of this will be ſufficiently gathered, from what hath already been offered, and proved about the Nature of the Sabbath. In ſum, That the whole Time that is by God's Order conſecrated to be Holy, is thus to be accounted, and accordingly kept, is unqueſtionable. For, the Holineſs of the Time is with reſpect to the Subjects of it; for we are aſſured that the Sabbath was made for Man. That the Time ſet apart for a Sabbath is a long Day of Twenty four Hours, hath alſo been conſidered, and Scripture-Evidence for it produced; and for that reaſon, ſo much Time is to be Sanctify'd by us as a Sabbath; and if thoſe Foundations are True, all the Arguments produced to invalidate them, will fall before them; all whereof I ſuppoſe are built on a falſe Principle, viz. *That the whole Time is only Holy, for the ſake of Religious Duties to be performed in it, and is therefore to laſt no longer than Men have ſtrength to attend on thoſe Services of Worſhip*: And thus there is no other Holineſs given to the Sabbath, than to Days of ſolemn Worſhip appointed by Men: And thus the Sabbath muſt be longer to one than another, becauſe ſome have more ſtrength to hold out in theſe Duties than others: Whereas, tho' the reaſon of a Sabbath is for our ſequeſtration to the Attendance on the Worſhip of God, yet the Holineſs of this Time depends upon a Word of Inſtitution, and muſt be reſolved into it; and unto that we ought to have a ſpecial reſpect, in all that we do on it, elſe the ſame Duties that are done on that Day, may be performed occaſionally on other Days; for all Worſhipping of God is not reſtrained to the Sabbath. And there are other Duties alſo to be done on that Day, either Conſtantly or Occaſionally, (as will be conſidered in due time) And this may ſuffice for the *general* Conſideration.

II. THE more *Particular* reſolution of this Enquiry, is contained in the reſidue of the Anſwer; and may be comprehended under two heads. (1) The things that are to be Reſted from on this day. (2) The things that we are to exerciſe our ſelves about in the Sanctification of it.

I. THE things that we are to Reſt from on that Day, are ſuch worldly Employments & Recreations, as are lawful on other days, and this is contained in theſe words, *In it thou ſhalt not do any work*, Hebr. *Every work*: Not that all works of all ſorts are here forbidden, for there were and are the things to be done on that day, which are the work of it: It is therefore to be limited, and it is uſual in that Language to expreſs Particulars, in general terms; which muſt be interpreted according to the Analogy of faith, and ſo as may agree with other Scriptures. Our Catechiſm therefore well expounds it, of *Worldly Employments and Recreations*; and others, of Servile Labour: And the word uſed, is ſuppoſed moſt properly to intend ſuch. However, it is to be underſtood of that which is before called, *Thy Work*, which is allowed to be done on the other

other Six Days; and the Prophet is a good and infallible Commentator on it, Iſa. 58. 13. *Not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleaſure, nor ſpeaking thine own words.*

AND here let us obſerve,

1. THAT there are ſome things *unlawful to be done at any Time*, being themſelves forbidden us by the Law of God; and we are to ſuppoſe that theſe things are not allowed on the *Sabbath*: for doubtleſs that which is in it ſelf a Sin, cannot be Sanctifyed by being done on Holy Time, but the Sin of it is aggravated by the Acceſſion of a Profanation of the Sabbath, which adds to the Audaciouſneſs of it.

2. THAT there are other things that are *Lawful on other Days, which God doth not allow us to do on this Day*: Nay they may be *Duties then, and it would be our Sin to neglect them, whereas to do them* now *would be a great Tranſgreſſion.* And this by the way, ſhews us the vanity of thoſe who pretend to keep a Sabbath *every Day*, and that alſo in the Secular Employments they are occupied in; which is here contradicted by God's ſecluding of ſuch works as theſe from His Sabbath: It therefore cannot be ſuch a Sabbath as he hath appointed, which theſe Men talk of. Now theſe Works are of Two ſorts,

1. THEIR *Worldly Employments*: By theſe are intended, the works of their *particular Calling*; and theſe are called *their own Works*, being for the Supply and Support of the outward Man. God hath appointed to every Man a particular Calling, for the providing himſelf with the things that are neceſſary and convenient for this Life, and hath required of him Diligence in it: But he hath Commanded him to Reſt from theſe on the Sabbath: God hath given us our Days to do theſe things upon, but He will not have us to do them on His Day, having provided another manner of Buſineſs for us to do on that Day; which their following of their Secular Employments would impede and interrupt them in. There are indeed ſome outward Concerns, or Second Table Duties which are to be done on this Day, which are pointed to in the laſt Clauſe of the *Anſwer*, which will be conſidered under the opening of it: But here in general, there is nothing to be done on that Day for worldly Gain, or the advancement of an Eſtate in the World; for that is our own work, which we may not now do.

2. THEIR *Recreations*: i. e. Thoſe that are Worldly; for the Epethet is to be applied to both. A Recreation is properly a Diverſion from the hard Labour we have been engaged in, to ſome Exerciſe wherewith we may refreſh our tired Bodies or Spirits, to fit us to return to them, with the more Vigour and Alacrity. The Lawfulneſs of which Recreations, we have ſufficient warrant for, in the Word of God; and they are indeed Neceſſary, nor could we without them ſerve God cheerfully in our Callings: Now there are Three ſorts of Recreations uſed by Men, *Natural*, *Spiritual* and *Sinful*; the laſt of theſe are at no time to be uſed: Unlawful *Games* and *Paſtime* are never in Seaſon whatſoever they may afford to our Carnal Part: God's Law is never to be broken by us to make ourſelves Sport, and thoſe that adventure on it, will procure Sorrow to themſelves by it: As to *Spiritual* Recreations, or ſuch in which we divert from the incumbrances of the World, to ſolace and refreſh ourſelves, in Meditation on the Word of God, and Communion with Godly Men in Religious Conferences, theſe are proper to the Sabbath, and ſuch Recreations the Pſalmiſt inured himſelf to, *Pſal.* 119. 24. But there are *Natural* and *Civil* Recreations, which are in themſelves lawful, and provided they are uſed to a right end, and in due ſeaſon, and meaſures, are allowed to us; but theſe muſt be avoided on God's Day, as being alien from the proper Buſineſs of it, and very hurtful thereunto. Now there is a threefold Reſting from theſe, which is here required; *viz.* In our *Thoughts*, *Words* and *Actions*: for it is a great Truth, that the Law of God, is a Rule not only to govern our *outward Converſation* among Men, but our *whole Man*, and our *Hearts* and *Tongues*, as well as our *Hands* come under the Command of it, and God, who is the great Judge, knows the one as intimately as the other. Here then,

1. WE muſt Reſt from theſe in our *Thoughts*. It is the Pſalmiſts Petition, Pſal. 19. 14. *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy ſight, O Lord my ſtrength, and my Redeemer.* And let us uſe never ſo much Circumſpection in our Words and Behaviour before Men, yet if we ſuffer our Minds to rove upon theſe things, and nouriſh inward muſings on them, all the other is meer Hypocriſy, and God who ſees in ſecret, will Judge us to be Sabbath-Breakers. That therefore is one thing required on this account, Iſa. 58. 13. *Not finding thine own pleaſure.* And indeed, if we nouriſh ſuch muſings within us, we ſhall hardly prevent their breaking forth into *Words* and *Deeds*: For all ſinful Actions have their Conception within, and their firſt *Embrio* is conceived in a *Thought*, Jam. 1. 15. And we are told, Mat. 12. 34. *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh.* If therefore any Thought offers it ſelf to us, which would draw us to meditate upon our Worldly Buſineſs, to contrive and lay out the Affairs of the Week following, to meditate this Journey, that Bargain, the other Affair that is on our hands, we ought immediately to withſtand it, and turn away from it, as that which is impertinent, and crowds in unſeaſonably, to hinder us in the Duties of the Day. We ſhould keep theſe things out, or thruſt them out, and not ſuffer ſuch Vain Thôts to lodge within us; otherwiſe we ſhall not give to God our *whole Hearts* in His Worſhip, and thereby loſe our Happy Communion with Him on His own Day: And this we ſhould do by calling in, and ſolacing our ſelves with other Thoughts which are Spiritual and Heavenly: And we muſt take a great deal of Pains with our ſelves in this regard, elſe the Fleſh that is within us, will eaſily betray us.

2. WE muſt Reſt from theſe in our *Words*. Words are a Medium by which we impart our Minds to, and ſo hold Communion with others;

and by the Art of *Speaking*, we are advantaged to maintain a Rational Society, with those of our own Kind, which is of it self a great Privilege to Man, who is naturally a Sociable Creature. But as there is a *Good*, so there is an *Evil Communication*, which we are told *Corrupts good manners*, 1 Cor. 15. 33. Now though there is a Liberty to *Discourse*, at other times, of our Affairs of the World, and entertain one another with *Civil Mirth*, in our Conferences together; yet these are to be avoided, and a Cessation from them observed on the Sabbath. No doubt there are such Discourses between Christians, which do very properly belong to, and greatly help forward the Service of the Day, and is therefore one of the Duties to be performed on it, as there is occasion; but then we must not talk of the *Asses*, but of the *Kingdom*, not of *Carnal*, but *Spiritual* things. *Vain* and *frothy* Language is to be avoided at all times, for it discovers a vain Heart, and a Mind alienated from the Fear of God; but to offer Discourse on the *Lord's Day*, which is needful at other times for the managing of the mutual Commerce between Men, by which the Affairs of this Life must be carried on, is that which *ought not to be*; and therefore such things are to be *Adjourned*, as soon as *Holy Time* begins, till it be over. And to neglect, or not be careful in this respect, will not only hurt our selves, and bring us under Guilt, but will also endanger others; by drawing them off from the better, and more seasonable Exercises, which the Time calls for, whereas the other would tend to Edification: And by this we shall grieve the Hearts of those that Fear God, and make Conscience of Duty in this regard, when they see God's Day in this manner violated.

3. WE must Rest from these in our *Actions*. And this is expresly intended in the Precept; *Thou shalt do no Work*: and this extends both to the works of *Labour* and *Recreation*, both being included in that, Isa. 58. 13. *Thine own ways*. We ought to cease and withhold our hand from every thing that is Servile, and whatsoever Worldly Business we are engaged in before, as soon as ever this time comes, we must forthwith knock off from it, and not make the Sabbath to give way to our Convenience, but Subordinate that entirely to this. We may not go into our *Shops* to buy and sell, nor engage in our Days Labour, though never so secretly: nor may we write Letters of Ordinary Business or Complement, during *Holy Time*, for that also is our own Work.

AND here also let it be observed, that it is not enough that we do thus ourselves, but it is incumbent on us to see, as far as we can, that all such as are under our Care and Charge, be thus Observant of the *Lord's Day*. The *Command* therefore saith, *Thou, nor thy Son*, &c. And this belongs, not only to the *Governors of Families*, but also to the *Civil Magistrate*, who is to be *Custor utriusq; Tabulæ*: And therefore it is added, *Nor the Stranger that is within thy Gates*: God hath made it their Duty to see, that there be an External Rest on that Day, and that, not only in the Time of Publick Worship, but in every Part of Holy Time, from all *Civil Labour*, and from all manner of *Civil Sports* and *Pastimes*, else they will bring a Guilt upon themselves, and the Places they live in. And it ought to be a prevailing Motive, on all that have any Authority in their hands, to exert it carefully, that so they may not incur His Displeasure for their neglect. Let us then take heed to ourselves and to ours in this regard; and peculiarly beware of *Two things*, viz. That we do not by our Example, in neglecting this watchfulness over *ourselves*, encourage them to take the Liberty, and allow themselves *Licentiousness* in their *Words* and *Actions* on *God's Day*, which will procure for us His *Holy Displeasure*. And hence also, That we do not by *our Command*, put any of our Children or Servants, upon things unnecessary on that Day, by which this Command will be violated, and they taken off from those Duties wherein they ought to seek Communion with God therein; as knowing, that we shall be partakers in their Sin, and bring Guilt on our own Souls; remembring that we must give an Account to God e're long, of the Souls that He hath committed to our Charge.

[DECEMBER 15. 1702.]

SERMON *CLXXII.*

II. IT follows to consider the *Things that we are to Exercise ourselves about*, in the Sanctifying of the Day. We observed, That there are not only the things that are *to be Rested from*, but also such things as we are *to Occupy our selves about*, in the right keeping of a Sabbath; and there are *Two Things* mentioned in General, which will help to point us to our Duty in this regard. 1. That we are *to spend the whole Time in Publick and Private Exercises of God's Worship*. 2. *Except so much as is to be taken up in the Works of Necessity & Mercy*. The *former* directs us to that which is the main Work of the Day, the *latter* to that which is subordinate and occasional: We may take a more particular Account of what is contained in either of these:

[1.] THE Time is mainly to be spent, in *Publick and Private Exercises of God's Worship*. The *Whole* is so to be employed, except what comes under the after consideration. Here then, let me observe these things;

1. THAT our great Business on the Sabbath, is *the exercising of ourselves in the Duties of Worship*. The *Fourth Command* properly belongs to the First Table of the Law, which bears a proper respect to *Worship*, having God nextly and immediately for the Object to which it is directed: Now that wherein this Command is accommodated to the Worship of God, is, in that it Consecrates a special Time to be employed in this Worship: Hence that in Isa. 66. 23. *From one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come*

to

to worſhip before me, ſaith the Lord. Not but that there are duties of Worſhip to be done on other days, and on all occaſions, but here the keeping of the Time it ſelf Holy, is one part of the Worſhip, as hath been formerly obſerved: As alſo, that the Time is made holy, with reſpect to the ſetting of it apart to be employed in ſuch Worſhip; and the Precept enjoyning of us ſo to employ it, this then is the next and moſt direct End of the Sabbath. As therefore we are to abſtain from ſervile, ſo we ought to engage our ſelves in ſpiritual Services on this Day; we are therefore to keep it holy, as we are enjoyned in the body of the Command, which we obſerved, includes in it ſomething Poſitive.

2. THE Duties of Worſhip to be attended by us on this Day, are either *Natural* or *Inſtituted.* The diſtinction of Worſhip into theſe two kinds, hath been already obſerved under the Firſt & Second Command: And both theſe ſorts are to be attended on the Sabbath; for the Sabbath was a ſeparated time to oblige us to a particular Attendance on Worſhip it ſelf, and conſequently involves both of them in it, for whatſoever comes under the Nature of Worſhip, and is required of us by God, is ſuted to holy Time, being holy; and we ſhall find Precepts for either of theſe, in the word of God.

1. THE Duties of *Natural* Worſhip, are ſuch as are ſuted to the Nature of Man, and flow from the great End he was made for, *viz.* Actively to glorify God. And therefore the light of Nature directs Men to Practiſe them on all Occaſions, certainly then theſe are fitted for the Sabbath, according to the End and Uſefulneſs of it. Such therefore are recommended to us in the Pſalm, which was Celebrated for the Sabbath, *Pſal.* 92 *beg.* And indeed, in theſe Duties, there is intimate Communion maintained between God and His People, which is the very End of all Worſhip, and of Days of Worſhip: And hitherto refers Praying, Praiſing, Meditation, and holy Conference, *ibid.*

2. THE Duties of *Inſtituted* Worſhip. And under theſe are contained all the Poſitive Ordinances and Sacred Ceremonies of God's Appointment. In the days of the Law there were Sacrifices appointed to be offered on theſe days, and tho' there were ſuch as were for every day, yet they were to be doubled; and diverſe other Rites to be attended, with a peculiar reſpect to ſuch days as God had ſet apart for them, as is obvious in the Levitical Law. But all theſe are now out of doors under the Goſpel, being to give place to a more ſpiritual Worſhip, which is adapted there-unto. Nevertheleſs, there are the Appointments under the Goſpel, which are Poſitive, and theſe are either the Way & Manner, in which the Duties of Natural Worſhip are to be attended, in the Publick Aſſemblies, and the Miniſtration of the Word, and Preaching of it, which is alſo required on the Sabbath; or the diſpenſation of the Sacraments of the Goſpel, which we have before taken notice of, as belonging to the Sabbath.

3. THESE Duties may come under a double Conſideration, *viz.* either *Publick* or *Private*: The former are to be performed in the Aſſemblies of God's People, wherein they were to Convene together, and joyntly to perform ſuch Duties to God; the neglect whereof is warned againſt, *Heb.* 10. 25. Chriſt therefore was wont to go into the Synagogues on the Sabbath, where there was a concourſe of the People, for Prayer and Reading of the Word. And the Apoſtles did on that Day aſſemble with the Churches to break Bread; ſee for theſe, *Acts* 13. 14, 16. 16. 13. 20. 7. The latter was to be performed, either in more private Families, or ſecret Retirements of the People of God. For there is a Service & Worſhip due to God from Men, in every Station that he hath ſet them in.

4. THAT this *whole Time is, as far as may be,* to be employed in ſome or other of theſe Exerciſes. That it cannot all of it be actually ſo attended, will be conſidered afterwards: Nevertheleſs becauſe this is the principal and direct buſineſs of the day, it is to have a very great regard had to it in all that we do. And here I ſhall only offer a few general Rules.

1. *THAT no one Duty can Ordinarily take up the whole Time in the performance of it.* What extraordinary Occaſion there may be for one more eſpecially at this or that time, as the Providence of God ſhall direct; yet in our ordinary Celebration of the day, there is a variety of Service accommodated to it, and theſe are to be performed Succeſſively one after another. There were therefore of old manifold Services laid out for the Sabbath, ſome Moral, others Ceremonial; ſome Natural, others Inſtituted: and there was the like in the practice of the Apoſtles in the New-Teſtament times, *Act.* 13. 14, 15. And herein God hath ſuited the Services to the Conſtitution of our Bodies and Spirits, which would in a while be tired out, by the long continuance of one duty, which is relieved by the Change, and paſſing from that to another, which becomes a Recreation to a gracious Perſon, and helps him with unwearied cheerfulneſs to go through the Day, and the Religious Duties enjoyned on it.

2. *IT is not neceſſary, that all the Duties of Worſhip be ſolemnly attended on every Sabbath.* Tho' there are none but what belong to, and are proper for that day, yet there is no Obligation lying upon us to go through them all every time the Sabbath recurs; but there is a Prudence to be uſed by the People of God on this account, though ſtill there are ſome which ſhould be more conſtantly attended, and others more intermittedly. And here obſerve, that there are the Duties of Natural Worſhip, which challenge the firſt Place, and more conſtant Attendance, *viz.* Prayer, and the Diſpenſation of the Word of God, and holy Meditation: Whereas thoſe which are Ceremonial, may have their particular times to be attended. Baptiſm is to be Adminiſtred only when there is a Subject that offers to partake in it, the Lord's Supper is not under a Precept of being Adminiſtred every Lord's Day, but may be

be Dispensed, either oftner or seldomer, as the Circumstances of the People concerned therein may be; nor is there any certain Prescription in the Gospel for it, only it should be frequent; and the Duties of Natural Worship should be used for our help in the other.

3. THAT *the Publick and Private Duties of Worship, ought so to be ordered, that they may help, and not thrust out one the other.* The *whole* Sabbath is not to be spent in Publick, nor yet in Private ordinarily, except when the Providence of God prevents the Opportunity of Publick Assemblies, which is won't to fall out in *Times of Persecution*; and tho' the Private is to give way to the Publick, yet the Times of it are to be accordingly laid out, so as not to interfere; because the Seasons for Publick Worship must be ordered for *Edification*, which naturally requires that all are agreed in it, else there will be no avoiding of *Confusion*; and it would be no small reproach to the Profession of a People, if whilst some are attending on the Worship of God's House, others are mean while taken up with their Private Devotions at Home, and hinder themselves thereby from giving their seasonable attendance on the other. Nor will the Sabbath on the other hand be suitably observed, if Persons through Sloth, lose the Opportunity of *Family* and *Closet Religion*, because else they should come *too late* to the Assembly. We should therefore use our Private Duties, to prepare and dispose us to attend upon, and get Profit by those that are Publick, and so to wait upon those Publick ones, as may serve to help us forward to a better prosecution of those Private ones, which we retire from the Publick to attend upon.

4. THAT *the People of God ought to endeavour after a due fore-preparation for these Duties.* It was a laudable Custom among the Jews, that upon the approach of that Day, they set themselves to make ready for it: Hence we read in Luk. 23. 54. *And that Day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on.* And though that nextly aimed at the Preparation for the *Passover*, which was a special Sabbath, yet it is applicable to all Days so appointed. But that we be not here mistaken, we are not to judge, that such a Preparation, and setting apart some time for it, is a *Divine Institution*, for then that time also would be Holy equally with the other, which it is not; but this Duty comes in upon a *Moral Account*, and stands in the same Order with Preparation for all Solemn Duties that are attended; and doubtless, the more *Solemn* the Duty is, the more need have we to make ready for it; and this is very needful with respect to the Sabbath, both because of the Holiness of the Day, and we are bidden to count it very *Honourable*, Isa. 58. 13. And in this way we do put Honour upon it; as also, because of our aptness to be entangled with, and lose our selves in the Secular Businesses of this Life, which will very much unfit us for the Holy Duties of it, unless we fix our selves to get into a readiness for the Day against it comes; which is to be attended by a seasonable knocking off from the *Affairs of this World*, and endeavouring by *Prayer* and *Meditation* to get our Hearts in a *Spiritual Posture*. Only we must observe, that tho' to neglect this, when we may get such an Opportunity discovers a low Value for the Day; yet to avoid any needful thing, that comes unexpectedly, lest we should break this Command, is *Superstition*.

5. THAT *whatsoever they do on that Day, ought to be with a suitable regard to the Holiness of the Time.* All the Duties of Worship are *Holy*, and for their *own* sake we ought to endeavour sutable Frames of Holiness, in our doing of them; but such Duties done on the Sabbath, have a further consideration of Holiness allowed them, and that is with regard to the *Holiness of the Day*; and not only so, but there are other Duties which on this Day may be necessarily performed, besides such as are *Acts of Worship*, as we shall presently observe: Now there is a regard to be had to the Time, even in the doing of them; and that is, with a due Subserviency to the Great and Principal Affair of the Day; and thus we are *to keep our feet on that Day*, Isa. 58. 13. i. e. Our *Thoughts* and *Affections from roving unnecessarily*, from the Business incumbent on us, in Sanctifying the Day: How this is to be done may be observed under the next. Hence,

[2.] THERE is an *Exception* made of so much Time, as is to be taken up, in *Works of Necessity* and *Mercy*: i. e. These may and must interrupt the *other Duties*, so far as they do intervene. And for a right understanding of this, let these things be observed,

1. THAT *the Sabbath was appointed for Man's Good, and not for his Harm.* This is a general Rule, but may be particularly accommodated with due Caution. Our Saviour makes use of it, in reflecting upon the unjust Censures of the *Pharisees* cast upon his Disciples, for gathering and eating *ears of Corn*, on the Sabbath Day: Mark 2. 27. *And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.* It was indeed to advance Man's Spiritual Interest, in giving him Opportunity to sequester himself for Communion with God in the way of Mediate Worship, but was never intended to hurt any of his Interests in this World.

2. THAT as there are *Duties of Worship to be performed on our Days*, so there are *Duties of Righteousness to be done on God's Day*. These Duties, tho' they differ in the next Object and End, the one belonging to the *First*, the other to the *Second Table*, yet they agree in the ultimate Object and End, which is God and His Glory; for this as well as that, is to be done in Obedience to Him; and when they are so done sincerely, we have Communion with God in them: The one belongs to our Duty to Man, but it is in order of Serving of God, and so they do not necessarily thwart one the other. Now that the Duties of Worship may be done on any of the *Six Days*, is indisputable; there were daily Sacrifices for *every Day*; there is the Duty of *Reading the Scriptures*, and *Prayer to God*, that cannot ordinarily be omitted one Day without

without Sin: It is lawful and convenient to Preach and Hear the Word on the Week Day; 2 Tim. 4. 2. *Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season.* Days of Fasting and Thanksgiving are to be kept on such times, when God's Providence calls for them. In like manner there are Second Table Duties that may or ought to be done on *Holy Time*; and are either stated Duties of the Day, or are occasionally called for by the Circumstances: what these are will be presently considered.

3. *IN the doing of the Duties of the Sabbath, we are to employ our Body as well as our Soul.* There are some indeed, that are more peculiarly Spiritual, *i. e.* to be performed in and by the inward Man. Such as *Meditation* and *Self-Examination*, and *Prayer* in our Hearts; but all the Institutions of the Day require the exercise of the Body: We are therefore to *offer them up to God*, Rom. 12. 1. Nor can God's People hold visible Communion one with another, without the using of their *Bodies* in it: We are therefore Commanded, 1 Cor. 6. 20. *Glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are Gods.* And the reason for it is Cogent, *viz.* Christ hath redeemed the *whole Man*; and indeed the *Body* is necessarily the *Soul's Organ* in the working of its Imperate Acts in which all outward Worship of God is to be performed by man; and therefore a pretence to a Spiritual Communion to exclude the other, is *Enthusiastical.*

4. HENCE *that the Body may be fit to Discharge these Duties aright, there is something to be done for it on that Day.* The *Body* hath a dependance on *Means* for the maintaining of the Vigour and Activity of it, whereby it may be fit to attend the Service it is appointed to, without tiring, fainting or giving in: and it stands in need of this as well for Sabbath-Service, as for the Business of this Life; for we are to do these with our might, as well as the other; whatsoever is requisite for this, must be very proper for the Day: And therefore, tho' the Israelites were not to gather *Manna* on the Sabbath, yet they were to eat it then, and accordingly, to lay in *Two Days* store the Day before.

5. AND *there are Duties which we owe to our Neighbour on the Sabbath, as well as at any other Time.* The Duty of *Loving our Neighbour as our selves*, is an abiding Duty, and uninterrupted: It is not only a Week Day Duty, and to be omitted on the Sabbath; tho' that be to Govern us in the right discharge of it: And he may, and very often doth, stand in need of our affording it to him, not only for his Soul, by Counselling and Instructing of him in the things of God; but also in regard of his Bodily & outward Concerns, which are not in themselves the Acts of Worship, but of Charity; but yet are not to be omitted, till this Day be over.

6. *THESE Duties are usually distributed, into the Works of* Necessity *&* Mercy. It is true, the Works of Mercy here called for, are such as have a *Moral Necessity* on them, arising from the *Physical Necessity* of the Subject, which makes it our Duty, if we will not bring Guilt of Sin upon our selves, to attend on: And the Works of Necessity here intended, may in a Sense be called the Works of Mercy, because they succour the Subject against that Misery which they must otherwise undergo: But we look upon them under this distinct consideration.

And then,

[1.] UNDER the head of *Necessity* we rank two sorts, *viz.*

1. SUCH as are of *Ordinary* Necessity or Convenience. For we are not to think the Precept is here tied up to things absolutely necessary; as if nothing might be done, but what the Creature could not subsist without, but such things as are needful, for the comfortable serving of God: And here belong,

(1.) A *suitable Time to Sleep.* The health and vivacity of Humane Bodies in this World, depends on it: the not taking it, would render the Duties of the Day tiresome, and destracting. The Night of the Sabbath is therefore appointed for Man's Sleep, as well as the other Nights of the Week, and that in proportion to the craving of Nature, and for the more Activity of the Body; nor doth this take away from the Holiness of the Time; but if we spend any part of the Night working, we must spend it as *Holy Time.*

(2.) A *Providing for, and taking of comfortable bodily Refreshment.* Provision for the Day is to be laid in before, at least not to be laboured for then; but the making it ready for Convenience, is Lawful and a Duty; and that not only for bare *Necessity* but *Comfort* too: There was indeed a strict Prohibition in the Old Law, that no Fire should be kindled on the Sabbath in their Tents: But it is not obliging under the Gospel; nor is Eating then restrained to preserving of Life, but may be used more liberally; therefore Christ accepted of an Invitation to Dinner on a Sabbath Day, *Luke* 14. 1.

2. SUCH as fall out *Extraordinarly*, or on *special Occasions*, which put unavoidable Necessity of intermitting the proper Duties of the Day; and if we do not attend them, we shall be further exposed. And of this sort are,

(1.) TO *Fight or Fly from an invading Enemy*: if not to be *Aggressors* on such a Day, yet to *stand on their own Defence*, when assaulted. The Law of *Self-Preservation* calls for it, and the thing it self puts by *Duties of Worship*, and if this were not a Duty, but Unlawful, we should by it become a Prey to them that hate us. And as to *Flying*, when oppressed on a Sabbath, by a prevailing Foe, against whom we cannot defend our selves, our Saviour supposeth it Lawful, tho' Afflictive, in, Matth. 24. 20. *Pray that your flight be not on the Sabbath Day.*

(2.) TO *Quench Fires that break forth, which otherwise would lay all waste before them.* That is a sudden Emergency, and was not to be seen before, and calls for speed and expedition, and the least hindrance will soon make all Attempts too late, for Miracles are not in this case to be expected. And hence any other thing of like importance, that falls out in the Day, and may not be delayed, comes within this verge.

[2.] UNDER

[2.] UNDER the head of *Mercy*, theſe things more eſpecially do come;

(1.) TO *Viſit the Sick.* That this is in it ſelf a Duty of Chriſtians, appears in that it is referred to *Pure Religion*, Jam. 1. 27. And the Reaſon of this is, becauſe their Neceſſity calls for it, and it is a *Work of Mercy* to do it, and to neglect it when needed, is inhumane: And there are Caſes in which that will ſtand; Matth. 9. 13. *I will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice.*

(2.) FOR a *Phyſician* in times of Sickneſs, to *Viſit his Patients*, and to *Adminiſter to them.* How often did our Saviour do His Cures on the Sabbath; and juſtifyed it againſt thoſe that found fault with Him for it? And that by proving it, a proper Sabbath Buſineſs.

(3.) OF the ſame Nature and Reaſon is that of *Nurſes*, to tend *Sick Perſons*, who muſt elſe Periſh. To which may be added the pulling of a *Beaſt* out of a Pit, that it occaſionally falls into, which our Saviour juſtifies the other by, in His Defence of His healing Men, from a commonly granted Truth among the Superſtitious Jews themſelves, *Luk.* 14. 5.

(4.) THE *gathering of Contributions* in the Church Aſſemblies, for the Relief of the *Poor*; which is a *Work of Mercy* for the Needy: And for this Reaſon the Apoſtle appointed this to the Church of *Corinth*, 1 Cor. 16. *beg.* So that although the Sabbath it ſelf comes under the Precepts of the Firſt Table, yet God hath ſeen meet to mix Second Table Duties, in the Works that are to be done on it, as is evident.

7. THERE *ought ever reſpect to be had to the Sabbath, in the doing of theſe things.* We have already obſerved, that the Duties themſelves of Worſhip, may be performed on other Occaſions, but there is a different conſideration to be had, of the doing them then, and on the Sabbath, in regard of the Holineſs of the Time. In like manner, tho' theſe Duties are in themſelves things which refer to the Second Table, and very proper to be done on common Times; yet when they are done on the Sabbath, we ought, even in the doing of them, to remember the Sabbath Day, and do them accordingly. And for our ſo doing, theſe few Rules are to be obſerved by us;

1. THAT we *ought to avoid making ſuch Things Neceſſary, the doing whereof will unavoidably take us off from the proper Services of the Day, which might have been prevented by a prudent forecaſt.* There are ſome of theſe things which do belong to the Day always, being made neceſſary by the Nature of Man, in reſpect of his *Body*, which will ever want it; and ſome-things that God himſelf hath choſen that Day to be a fit Seaſon for doing: But there are others which are only *occaſionally* Duties, and made ſo by the Providence of God, which are to be looked on as Frowns, and therefore not to be choſen. Now we owe ſuch a deference to the Sabbath, as to uſe Endeavours prudently to prevent ſuch things, if poſſible, and for that end to take Care beforehand, to do that which is in our Power, which may as well and conveniently be done before the Day, that we be not neceſſitated to do it then; and this belongs to the Remembrance required in the Precept; and when ſuch things as are meer Contingencies fall out, we ought to be humbled under them, as rebukes in this regard.

2. THAT we *ought to take up as* little Time *in theſe things, as the Convenience of them will allow*: We muſt Sleep, Eat and Drink, and make Proviſion for it; but we ought to be careful, that as little of *Holy Time*, as may be, be employed in it; and the reaſon is, becauſe though theſe are Duties in their Place; yet they are not the main Duties of the Day, but only ſubſervient thereto, that by them we may be the better helped in the other: They are therefore to be done, not for themſelves, but for the ſake of the other; and therefore ought not to be Prejudicial thereunto.

3. THAT we ſhould *keep up a Frame of Spiritual Worſhip in us, in the doing of them as far as we can.* And the reaſon of this, is the ſame with that of the former. When we go to Sleep, it ſhould be with a regard, to our being fit to do the Duties of the Day, and this ſhould ly down, and riſe up with us. When we are Eating and Drinking, we ſhould maintain *Sabbath Meditations* in our Hearts; and *Sabbath Diſcourſe* in our Communication with others; and when called to Divert by any Emergency, which unavoidably requires our being Thoughtful of the things themſelves, yet we ſhould have the *Sabbath Diſpoſition* in Activity, on our Hearts.

4. WE *ought to avert from the troubleſome Avocations that evene, as ſoon as they are over, to the Duties of Worſhip again.* And this is one difference between the Occaſional Duties of Faſting and Thankſgiving, and thoſe of the Sabbath; if we are called off by Neceſſity from theſe, and cannot in Seaſon return to them again, we may lawfully return to our Secular Buſineſs, and employ our ſelves in that; but not ſo on the Sabbath; but when we can, we muſt either return to the Publick Worſhip, or if that be not attained, the Private Duties of it muſt be purſued, elſe we do not pay that Honour to the Sabbath, which God had required of us, *Iſa.* 58. 13.

USE. WE might here take up a *ſad Lamentation* for the *woful Neglect of Sabbath-Duties*, which is ſo notoriouſly to be ſeen in the midſt of us. If this be to keep a Sabbath, how little is it obſerved? What a low regard do the moſt of Profeſſors ſhew to it? And doubtleſs, Here is matter of deep Humiliation to the beſt of us, to think and obſerve how far we come behind in this reſpect: And let it drive us all to ask Pardon of God, and His Grace to help us, herein to teſtify our regards to Him by our delighting in His Sabbath.

[JANUARY 12. 1702.]

SER-

SERMON *CLXXIII.*

QUESTION LXI.

WHAT is forbidden in the Fourth Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Fourth Commandment forbiddeth the Omiſſion or careleſs Performance of the Duties required, and the Profaning the Day by Idleneſs, or doing that which is in it ſelf Sinful, or by unneceſſary Thoughts, Words or Works, about worldly Employments or Recreations.

HAVING taken an Account of the Duties which belong to the right Sanctifying of the Sabbath, the way lies the more eaſy to determine what are the Sins which are proper breaches of it: And we have all along obſerved, that becauſe in every Moral Precept, there is ſomething Commanded to be done, and ſomething prohibited; there are therefore Sins both of Omiſſion & Commiſſion to be conſidered under this Enquiry: and accordingly both of theſe ly couched in the Anſwer that is before us. We obſerved under the former head, that as the Sabbath is a Day of Reſt, and therefore there are the things to be Reſted from; ſo it is an holy Reſt, and therefore there are the Sacred Works that are to be done upon it; and from the Conſideration of theſe we are to take our meaſures, in the laying open of the matter lying before us: And this may be done by reducing the Particulars, to the general heads of *Omiſſion* and *Commiſſion*, under which thoſe that are more Notorious may be conſidered. Here then,

I. *TO the head of* Omiſſion, *Three things may be referred.*

[1] THE *Omiſſion of the Duties required*: i. e. wilfully, careleſsly to neglect any Sabbath Duty. For the Sabbath was appointed for the ſolemn Performance of thoſe Duties, which are accommodated to it, elſe it were not made for the Uſe & Service of Man. Not that every Duty which belongs to the Sabbath, is neceſſarily to be attended every Sabbath Day, thô ſome are more Stated, and others Occaſional; but that the not regarding them in their Seaſon, or the total neglect of them, is here charged for a Sin. Which what they are, was conſidered under the former. And under this head, may theſe things be ranked,

(1.) *TO Forget the Sabbath all the Week long.* This Precept is brought in with a *Memento*, which intimates, that we ſhould often in the Week entertain our Minds with the fore-thoughts of it, ſo as to rejoyce in the expectation of the return of it, as an honourable & delightful Day; and maintain an habitual diſpoſition to entertain it when it comes; to let our Thoughts be all the Week ſwallowed up with Worldly buſineſs, is to diſhonour the Sabbath, contrary to the Precept, *Iſai.* 58. 13.

(2.) *TO ruſh upon the Sabbath without any Preparation for it.* And this is uſually the fruit of the former: for if Men have ſo gotten it out of their Thoughts, it will ordinarily come upon them at unawares; and they will have their hearts in a very unſuitable poſture to entertain it as becomes them; and many times they are ready to forget it wholly.

(3.) *SCRUPULOUSLY to Omit the works of Neceſſity & Mercy on it.* That ſuch works are frequently, and ſome always called for on the Sabbath, is certain, and that when they are ſo, it is our duty to do them, we have already obſerved. Hence, as to avoid them on pretence of the holineſs of the Time is Superſtitious, ſo it is a breach of the Sabbath. Chriſt himſelf hath taught us, that to heal on the Sabbath, is not lawful only, but a duty of the Day, when need calls for it, which is alſo true of the reſt.

(4.) *TO neglect Reading of the Word of God, Meditation and Prayer.* Theſe we obſerved are Conſtant Duties for the Sabbath, being Natural Worſhip: And thô Emergent neceſſity may ſometimes divert us, yet ordinarily thus to omit theſe, is a breach of the Sabbath.

(5.) *TO abſent needleſly from the Publick Worſhip of the Houſe of God.* This therefore is cautioned againſt, and the practice of it condemn'd, *Heb.* 10. 25. When God denies Men the liberty & opportunity of Aſſemblies, either by ſhutting them up in times of Perſecution, or by taking Men off by Sickneſs, or any other inevitable reſtraint, it is then their Miſery; but when they may and will not, or frame trifling excuſes to keep them away, or every little Cold or Dirty Weather keeps them at home, this is their Sin. And if they had a real love for theſe things it would not be ſo.

(6.) *FOR Men ſlightily to turn their backs upon any Goſpel Ordinance.* There is no Inſtitution of Chriſt, but is one of his Royal Gifts beſtowed on his Church: and thô Men ought to be afraid of coming Unworthily to the Table of the Lord, yet for any to pretend Unworthineſs for an excuſe, and ſo live contentedly in abſenting of themſelves, never uſing the means to get evangelically prepared for it; and preſume that by their ſo doing they pay Reverence to it, is not only a real contempt caſt upon it, but a living in the neglect of a duty which belongs to the Sabbath in the ſeaſons of it.

(7.) *THE neglecting of looking after their Families on the Sabbath.* The Precept requires, that not we only ſhould be careful to Sanctify the day, but that all under our watch do ſo too, and that we ſee to it, that they do ſo: if therefore through our ſufference or negligence, any of them be guilty in this regard, it will be ſo far charged upon us. If therefore we neglect our Family-duties, which are to be done with our Children or Servants; or if we do not call upon them, ſo to do theſe duties which perſonally belong to them, we are guilty: for we are told what belongs to heads of Families in reſpect

of the Worſhip of God, Gen. 18. 19. That they *Command their Children & Houſhold*, that they *keep the way of the Lord.*

(8.) *FOR Civil Authority to ſuffer the open Profanations of the Sabbath, & not prevent or ſuppreſs them.* This Sin is charged on a whole People, that there are ſuch among them, and is given as a Reaſon why God brings his Judgments on ſuch Places, *Ezek.* 22. 8. And this manifeſtly declares, that there is guilt lying upon thoſe under whoſe watch this Affair comes. For tho' they cannot prevent all the ſecret wickedneſs that is among a People, yet if open Breaches of God's Law be tolerated or connived at, theſe cannot be innocent: Hence that Charge upon them, 1 Sam. 3. 13. *I will judge his houſe for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth: becauſe his ſons made themſelves vile, and he reſtrained them not.*

[2.] THE *careleſs performance of theſe Duties*, alſo belongs to this Head. They may not poſſibly altogether omit them, but they do them perfunctorily, and this is little better than if they did them not at all; and indeed, there is a ſpirit of Indifferency, which Men diſcover in doing Duty, whereby they caſt as much of Reproach upon it, as if they did it not at all; for God requireth us in our Obedience to *Love Him with all our heart, ſoul, ſtrength and mind*, Matth. 22. 37. And under this Head may theſe things be ranked,

1. THE *heartleſs Performance* of theſe Duties. When Men attend on them meerly for Cuſtom ſake, and becauſe it is the practice of the Place they live in, and they ſhould loſe their Credit if they did not as others do; but their Hearts are not in them, either they do not bring them to the work, or ſend them away when their *Bodies* are engaged, and ſo they offer no more but a Carcaſs to God. God requires the Heart in all that Men do; this therefore is a complaint that is made againſt them, and their Hypocriſy is diſcovered and cenſured therein, Matth. 15. 7, 8. *Ye hypocrites, well did Eſaias propheſy of you, ſaying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips: but their heart is far from me.* And Ezek. 33. 31. *And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they ſit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they ſhew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetouſneſs.*

2. THE *indulging of a drowſy or ſleepy Poſture in the Worſhip of God.* Inſtead of giving a diligent Attention to the Service which they are called to, they grow dead, lifeleſs, and fall into ſlumber, whereby their Senſes are obſtructed, and poſſibly they fall aſleep: For tho' the beſt may, thro' infirmity, be overtaken with this, which they allow not, and Chriſt can pity them; yet when they find it, and favour it, and willingly put themſelves into a Poſture that invites it, they ſhew a low eſteem of the Worſhip of God; for if they were Zealous for it, they would take pains againſt ſuch a thing; and it is not for nothing that the Story of *Eutichus* is recorded in the Goſpel, *Acts* 20. 9, 10.

3. A *Wearineſs of the Day, and Duties of it.* I do not here underſtand the wearineſs of the Body, for this may be a Man's Affliction, and yet not his Sin, it being one of the Infirmities which are befallen Humane Nature, and ſome are ſooner Tired than others, by reaſon of their Conſtitution or Bodily Indiſpoſitions that they Labour of; but a wearineſs in their Minds, which ariſeth from a Carnal Heart, and an inward Contempt which they entertain of the Day it ſelf, and the Services appointed for it, and the prevalency of a worldly diſpoſition: This is charged on them, *Amos* 8. 5. *Mal.* 1. 13. They think the Time which God hath ſet apart from other, to be devoted to Religious Worſhip, is loſt time, and finding no reliſh in the Holy Duties, which are to be their Employment on it, they think an Hour a Day, and a Day a Year, till they can get it over; and no matter how it be ſpent, ſo it may be done, and they may get again to the World, where their Hearts are: Their Care is not how they may improve it well, but how they may get it off their Backs, and be diſcharged of it.

[3.] THE *Profaning the Day by Idleneſs.* I reckon this among the *Negatives*, tho' others rank it with the *Affirmatives*, becauſe altho' ſome reckon to it in it's latitude, the doing of the things which are no way profitable, yet it nextly and more probably intends the neglect of Buſineſs, or doing of nothing: We obſerved, that tho' it be called a *Day of Reſt*, and there be the things that are to be Reſted from on it, yet it is alſo a *Day for Buſineſs*; and there are the Works which belong to it, which are enough to keep us buſy: And here theſe things come under the Breach of this Command,

1. THE *ſpending more of the Day than is needful in our Beds.* We obſerved, that bodily Reſt is allowed, and neceſſary to be taken on this, as well as on any other Day, without which our outward Man would be very unfit to a lively Performance of the Religious Worſhip, which is mainly to be attended on it; but for Men to take more Allowance for this on the Sabbath, than they do ordinarily on their own Days, and ſo loſe more of their Time from the Holy Duties of it, on pretence that they may better indulge themſelves on this Day than another, is ſlothfulneſs, and caſts diſhonour on it; and Men do, by ſo doing, practically ſay, that the Concerns of the outward Man are of more worth, and greater moment than thoſe of the Soul.

2. THE *loytring away of the Time*, without regarding or engaging diligently in the Duties of the Day: Many, that will not employ themſelves in any Secular Buſineſs on that Day; pretending Conſcience of it's being forbidden them, will yet Profane it, by doing nothing at all, of the proper Work of it: either they come not at all to the Publick Worſhip, tho' there is nothing neceſſarily to hinder them, but ſit ſtill at Home, and neither Read the Word, nor Pray, nor Meditate on Spiritual things; or walk abroad into the Fields, and ſo wholly loſe the Time: or if they give a bodily

bodily Attendance upon the Means, yet they mind not what they come for, nor ſeek Acquaintance and Communion with God, but ſuffer their Eyes and Thoughts to wander upon things impertinent: This is contrary to the Pſalmiſts enquiry, *Pſal.* 27. 4, 5. And every Hour ſo ſpent, is a Profanation of the Day: And let Men think what they pleaſe, they break the Precept, and provoke God as really by Sins of Omiſſion, as by thoſe of Commiſſion; and the Authority of God is as much diſregarded by theſe, as by thoſe.

II. *THE Sins againſt this Command, which refer to the Head of* Commiſſion, *are by our* Catechiſm, *put under a double Conſideration*, to which generally, ſeveral particulars may be reduced;

[1.] THE *doing of things which are in themſelves ſinful.* By which we are to underſtand, all thoſe things which are directly and inconditionally forbidden, under any of the Commands of God. It is to be remembred, that it is a Rule given by Divines, that Negatives do always bind the Conſcience, whereas Affirmatives may ſometimes, on occaſion be intermitted without Sin in us; ſo that every ſuch intermiſſion, cannot truely be called a *Sin of Omiſſion*; and it is here to be remarked, that whatſoever would be a Sin at another time, becauſe it is a Tranſgreſſion of a Negative Precept, becomes an aggravated Sin, by being committed on the Sabbath; becauſe beſides the breach of the particular Command, which the Sin it ſelf militateth againſt, there is ſuperadded, a violation of the *Fourth*; as alſo becauſe it argues greater Audaciouſneſs in ſinning, when we have no regard to the Holineſs of the Time in which it is perpetrated: For this reaſon the Spirit of God puts Emphaſis on the Charge laid upon that People from the conſideration of the Time when they did ſuch things, Ezek. 23. 38, 39. *Moreover, this they have done unto me: they have defiled my ſanctuary in the ſame day, and have profaned my ſabbaths. For when they had ſlain their children to their idols, then they came the ſame day into my ſanctuary to profane it; and lo, thus have they done in the midſt of mine houſe.* And hither may be referred the Breaches of every other Precept, ſo far as they are made on the Lord's Day: Thus vain Swearing, Curſing, keeping of vain Company, wicked Diſcourſes, Railing, Exceſſive Drinking, lacivious Language, Whoredom, Stealing, Lying, *&c.* are all of them horrid Breaches of this Day, when any part of the Time is taken up with any of them.

[2.] THE *allowing of themſelves in unneceſſary Thoughts, Words and Deeds, about worldly Employments or Recreations.* We are here to call to mind, what hath formerly been touched at, *viz.*

1. THAT there are the things which are *Lawful on other Days, which are forbidden on the Sabbath.* They who think the Sabbath to be only a Spiritual Reſt from Sin, *i. e.* Things forbidden by the other Precepts, do hereby take away the difference between the Sabbath, and the other Days of the Week, for it is not lawfull to Sin on any Day; whereas by this Precept, there are the things which become Sin on the Sabbath, which are not ſo at other Times.

2. THAT theſe *Lawful* things come under theſe two Heads of *worldly Employments & Recreations.* The *Former* of theſe are not barely lawfull, but in themſelves Duties, for they belong to thoſe particular Callings, which God hath appointed Men, to ſeek the honeſt ſupport of the Concerns of Life and Time, by a diligent Attendance upon; which diligence is therefore often commended in the Word of God, and the neglect of it charged to be Sin. The *Latter* is an indulgence allowed to Man, to mitigate the Fatigues of his Labour, and refreſh his Body or Mind withal; and theſe alſo may become Duties upon ſeveral occaſions offered in the Providence of God.

3. THAT ſome of theſe things may be *Morally Neceſſary to be done on the Sabbath.* By being Morally neceſſary I intend, they may be our Duty to do them; either the Nature of Man requires them, or the Circumſtances of Providence may call for them: What theſe are we have formerly taken the Account, and ranked them under the Works of Neceſſity and Mercy; where we have alſo taken Account of the reaſon why they are to be done, either as ſtated Duties on that Day, or as ſuch as evene occaſionally and unavoidably.

4. THAT *the doing of theſe things, where no ſuch Neceſſity calls for it, becomes a Sin againſt this Command.* Nor will the Lawfulneſs of the things themſelves take away from the ſinfulneſs of thus doing them. Nor will it excuſe Men from the Guilt of Sin on this Account, that they have by their forgetfulneſs of the Sabbath, and their own inadvertency, brought ſuch a Neceſſity on themſelves, which by due Precaution, they might have as well prevented: And tho' by reaſon of this Neceſſity, they cannot avoid doing that thing, yet it ought to humble them to think, that it was becauſe they did not remember the Sabbath Day.

5. THAT *Sin may be committed, either in Thoughts, Words or Actions* For, becauſe the whole Man is obliged to be engaged in the Sanctification of the Sabbath; and therefore the Heart, the Tongue, and the whole Body, is to be devoted to it; this Command may be violated by any one of them; and therefore all theſe are comprehended in that Prohibition, *Iſa.* 58. 13. And under theſe Three, many particulars are contained.

(1.) THE Day is broken by allowing or nouriſhing *Thoughts* about theſe things: And theſe whether deliberative, or ſpeculative; not only when they allow their roving Minds to run upon things that are vile, either in pleaſing Contemplation of former Villanies, or in the projecting of wickedneſs to be done, as ſoon as they have Opportunity; but to Recreate the Mind, with thinking of this Bargain, that Succeſs, and how the other ſecular Buſineſs hath been managed; or in plotting and laying out Buſineſs or Sport for the Week following, in order to the being more prepared to purſue it. Theſe things

may be matters of Prudence on other Days, but are Sin on this Day, and a Profanation of it. Theſe are Mens own Thoughts, which are not allowed them upon God's Day, and the Iniquity of them is the greater, becauſe by allowing of ſuch wandrings of the Heart, the Man is much indiſpoſed and unfitted for all the Duties of the Day, and his Communion with God in theſe Duties is hindred: This is called the *wandring of the heart after Covetouſneſs*, Ezek. 33.31.

(2.) THE Day is horribly profaned, by Mens giving Liberty to their *Tongues*, on ſuch Words and Diſcourſes. And indeed, the *Tongue* is but the Index of the *Mind*, and where that hath a Liberty allowed to it, this will hardly be kept in; and the Tongue being the Inſtrument of Humane Society, by the allowance that Men give to this, they not only Profane the Day themſelves, but draw others into fellowſhip with them, who either joyn with them in maintaining ſuch Conferences, or contentedly lend an Ear to ſuch unſeaſonable Diſcourſes; and hitherto belongs, not only *Pibaldry* talk, but all *common* language; all Conference about the *Aſſes*; telling of this Buſineſs and that Succeſs; asking Advice about the management of any outward Affair of this Life; telling Stories of this or that Concern; telling merry Tales; and making Bargains; and that not only in the Time of Publick Worſhip, by whiſpering together, as the manner of ſome is, whereby they unavoidably hinder their Profiting by the Ordinance; but alſo in the times of Intermiſſion, when they are Eating and Drinking for their comfortable Relief, by running out to theſe things at their Tables. Theſe things ſhew, that Men forget the Time is *Holy*; and inſtead of fitting themſelves for the better Performance of the Religious Duties incumbent on them, they more indiſpoſe themſelves for them.

(3.) THIS Command is alſo thus broken, by Men's *Actions*; and that in many reſpects: Some of the more notorious whereof, may here come into Conſideration;

1. WHEN *Men ſpend more Time than is convenient, about their outward and bodily Concerns.* That ſomething is to be done, and that both for *Neceſſity* and *Comfort* or *Convenience*, hath been obſerved: But when Men cut out too large Thongs of Time for this, and ſo overmuch Curtail the ſpiritual Services incumbent on them, they herein Tranſgreſs. Thus, when too much Time is occupied in Dreſſing up the Body, ſo that other more weighty Duties are crowded out, or done in a hurry; this is to be blamed for an abuſe: Or, when there is more ado than needs in making Proviſion for the Body, and Perſons are needleſly hindred thereby from attending either Publick or Private Services of the Day: This is to neglect the great things of the Law on this Account. Thus alſo, When Perſons take up the Time which ſhould be for more private Devotion, by themſelves, or with their Families, in meer civil and unneceſſary Viſits, and common Talk, it is not to Sanctify the whole Day, according to the Precept.

2. WHEN Perſons think it ſufficient, *That they have attended on the Publick Worſhip of God's Houſe, and allow themſelves in any Secular Buſineſs, after that is over.* They think that either *before* the Meeting begins, or *after* the Aſſembly is broke up, they may employ themſelves in any *common Things*, without danger. Theſe forget that the Time it ſelf is made Sacred by the appointment of God; and becauſe none of it is *common Time*, it ought not to be made ſo by the Employments that Men occupy themſelves in. Thus for Men to do any of the Work that belongs to their particular Callings on this Day, which is called, *doing their own Work*, is a Profanation of the Time. Thus for Men to write Letters of civil Buſineſs or Complement, is chargeable for a breach upon God's Authority. Thus for Men to begin Journeys on the Sabbath, or purſue them; or not Reſt on that Day, when Neceſſity doth not call for it, is to be condemned. Thus for Men to Poſt their Books, or draw out their Accompts, or open their Shops to buy and ſell, and ſo to get Gain; or for *Labourers* to work for Wages, even in things neceſſary to be done, comes within the verge of the *Negative* part of this Precept. And there are many other things of like Nature, that come under this Head, being *our own* Buſineſs, and ſo not to be done on *God's Day*.

3. WHEN *Men ſpend any part of the Time in Civil Sports or Paſtimes.* Many that think it a Crime to *Work* on the Sabbath, yet count *Plays* and *Recreations* to be proper to it, and reckon them to belong to the Reſt of the Day; and therefore when they are tired with the *Religious Duties* of it, they muſt refreſh themſelves with their *Diverſions*, which poſſibly are Civil in themſelves, and would deſerve no Reprehenſion at another time, yet are Aliene from the Buſineſs of the Sabbath, and cannot be attended on without Sin, however pleaded for by ſome, and too much practiſed by many. How much more vile then, and wicked, is it, to *Play* in the very Place and Time of Publick Worſhip, when they ought with greateſt Reverence and Diligence, to attend upon the Ordinances, and hear what God hath to ſay to them: And doubtleſs *Plays* and *Sports* on the Sabbath, are not leſs Criminal than *Labour* upon it, if not much more; *Iſa.* 58. 13.

4. WHEN *Men do not improve their Authority, in bearing due Witneſs againſt theſe things in others; and giving Check to every thing that tends to the growth of ſuch Profaneneſs.* This was touched at under the Head of *Omiſſion*; but there is often alſo a *Commiſſion* in this regard; and that is when they practically give *Allowances* to ſuch things; when they employ *others* under their Charge in ſuch things as theſe, when there is no need of it: And when by not taking heed to themſelves, they ſet an evil Example before their Inferiours; and by their undue Connivance at ſuch things, encourage vain Perſons in their licentious Courſes on the Sabbath.

THESE are ſome of the things which are forbidden in this Command, and many more of the like import might have been named, but theſe may ſuffice now to be mentioned.

USE.

USE. AND may we not, by a due Reflection upon these things, be convinced of *one great Reason of the Judgments of God that are brought upon this sinful Land.* How often do we find this to be one Article, which God puts into the Indictment, when He gives the Reasons of his Controversy with a Professing People, and chargeth Apostacy upon them? *Jer.* 17. 20, *&c. Ezek.* 22. 8, 20, 23, 24. And he gives a Reason for it, *Ver.* 12. Time was, when God's Holy Sabbaths were had in Reverence; and the Day which he hath Sanctified was accounted Holy and Honourable: When Holy Time was spent in Holy Duties, and all the open Profanations of it, were strictly testified against: How far otherwise it is at this Day, let all Judge, who have any Thoughtfulness in them: And let it awaken us to Repentance, as we would be atoned to God, and obtain His reconciled Favour. And mean while, Let all true Mourners in *Zion*, bewail this Apostacy, and tremble before this Holy God, who will not bear to have His Name dishonoured, and Sabbaths polluted: Let such be more watchful over themselves and theirs, that they may at least save their own Souls.

[FEBRUARY 9. 1702.]

SERMON *CLXXIV.*

QUESTION LXII.

WHAT are the Reasons annexed to the Fourth Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Reasons annexed to the fourth Commandment, are God's allowing us Six Days of the Week for our own Employments, His challenging a special Propriety in the Seventh, His own Example, and His Blessing the Sabbath Day.

THE Law of God is grounded upon the highest Reason; and altho' there is a difference between the Reason of such Commands as are purely *Moral*, and such as are *Positive*; the Reason of the *Former* being rooted in the Nature of the things; and that of the *Latter* in the Sovereignty and Wisdom of the Lawgiver; yet in both there is a most convincing Evidence of the Obligation lying on us to Obedience: It is therefore called a *Reasonable Service*, Rom. 12. 1. If therefore Man be a Reasonable Creature, every Reason which is given to enforce a Duty, should be entertained by him as a strong Motive, to put him upon the Practice of it. Now we observed, in the opening of this Command, that there is in it something *Natural*, and something *Positive*: The Duty of keeping a Sabbath is to be read in the Light of Nature, tho' the Assignation of the Time, be a Divine Prerogative, which doth not in the least derogate from the Morality of the Precept. Now the Reasons which God urgeth this Precept by, are put into the body of it, and are reducible to *Four Heads*, which are more than are put to any other; thereby insinuating into us, the natural Propensity in sinful Men, to neglect Obedience to this Command; it is therefore bound upon us with a *Fourfold Cord*: As also to give us to understand, that God insists much upon our Conformity to His Will in this regard; and that our violation of it is not so slighty a thing, as too many make of it. Let us then take a brief Account of the weight of each of these Reasons, thereby the more to Solemnize our Tho'ts about it, and bind us to the greater Care and Cautiousness to the Performance of it.

These Reasons then are,

I. GOD's *allowing of us Six Days in the Week for our own Employments.* This is expreſt, *Six Days shalt thou labour and do all thy Works.* This we may take either for a *Concession* or *Injunction.* As it is a *Precept*, so it belongs to the *Eighth* Command; as it is an *Indulgence*, so it contains an Argument to enforce the Duty of the *Fourth*; and we may take it up in a few particulars,

1. THAT *GOD is the Lord of our Time.* Time in it self considered, is the measure of the Creature's Duration; but more peculiarly with respect to Man, it is usually put distributively with that Eternity which he must after a while pass over into: And contains in it, the Bounds which are set for his abode in the present Life, and is finished by his Dissolution. Now this Time is Man's Opportunity, given him to do his Work in; for we are advised, Eccl. 9. 10. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest.* Now Man, as he is a Creature, is altogether at God's dispose, in respect of his Time; *Psal.* 31. 15. And as he is a Reasonable Creature, he is under the Law of special Government, in which God hath a Supream Right to Order him how he shall employ his whole Time in this World: and to lay out for him his whole Business in it.

2. THAT *there are Two Callings, in which God hath appointed us to occupy our Time, viz.* General & Particular. This distinction of Callings, is not with respect to Man's *Last* End, for that is but *One*; and it is his Duty to employ himself in every thing that he doth with respect to it; 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. But it is with regard to the *next* and immediate End or Design: There are Duties which are common to all Men, in whatsoever particular Post they are set by God's Providence: And there are the Duties which belong to Men in respect of this or that Station

Station and Relation they are in, in this World. Now in both of these, Men are to lay out such Portions of Time as are requisite for the due discharge of them; for it is necessary that he have Time to do all his Works in; and we are told, that there is not only a Time, but a *Season for every thing*, Eccl. 3. 1. And Man cannot Serve God as he ought in his Generation, unless he observe his Seasons: Hence that, Eccl. 8. 6. *Because to every purpose there is time and judgment: therefore the misery of man is great upon him.*

3. THAT *in the Duties of our Particular Callings, we nextly & immediately serve our selves, and our outward Man.* It is true, We are ultimately to Serve God in these, and if we terminate these in our selves, we put our selves out of the right Order: But our next Concern in these, is the Supplying and Supporting of our outward Man, for the present Life: In order to which God hath made it our Duty to follow some honest and lawful Calling with Diligence; hence that, Prov. 27. 23. *Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds.* Now this is that which our Catechism calls *our own Employments*, to distinguish them from the Duties of Worship, which do immediately terminate on God, as the Object of them; whereas our next Object in these, is our selves; and it is our outward Man that is properly cared for, and our temporal Life which these things are accommodated for; and because it is to be maintained by Means, a great part of our Time, is to be taken up in the using of them.

4. THAT *God hath taken but One Day of Seven to be devoted to those Services of Worship, which belong to our General Calling.* This is not to be understood, as if we were to dismiss all Religious Services from one Sabbath to another, and have no regard to them all the Week long; there are such Duties incumbent on us every Day; there were the Morning and Evening Sacrifices, never to be Omitted by the People of God. Nay, we are to do nothing in our Particular Callings, without an eye and aim at our General; nor can we do any Duty to God's acceptance without this. But there is no other or more Time under the Gospel, which is Sanctified by God, and Consecrated to this Business, but *One* Day of *Seven*. And this carries great Obligation in it, to move us to be very careful in our improving of this whole Time in the Work appointed for it. For if God had sequestred Six of the Seven to this end, and allowed us but One for the other, it had been our Duty to comply with Him, and acknowledge His Authority in so doing: How ingrateful then, as well as disobedient, must we shew our selves, if, when He hath taken but One, we think it a burden and a weariness, and allow our selves our own Thoughts and Words, and Pleasures upon it?

5. THAT *this also He hath done, not for His own need, but for our Good.* It is certain, that God hath no need of any Creatures, or their Services: He made them indeed for His own Glory, but it was not because He had not been God blessed for ever without them: Hence that, Job 22. 2, 3. *Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? or is it any gain to him, that thou makest thy ways perfect?* And it is certain, that God appointed the Sabbath for Man's Advantage: Our Saviour tells us, Mark 2. 27. *The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.* Man hath a Soul to take care of as well as a Body, and the Concern of it is of Infinitely greater moment than the other; and he is in Duty bound to seek for the welfare of that, as the Principal thing; hence that, Matth. 16. 26. *For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?* Now there are Means to be used by us for our Souls Supply, as well as our Bodies, and our Industry is required in the Use of them. It is therefore a very great Kindness to be called off from the encumbrance of Worldly Business, which too aptly draws our Hearts after it, that we may sequester our selves to such things as may greatly advance our Communion with God, in which our Spiritual Profiting is promoved: And for this the frequent returns of the Sabbath, are very rationally accommodated; so that we not only dishonour God, but hurt our own Souls, and hinder the advancement of our Spiritual Growth, and Eternal Salvation, if we are negligent in this great Duty.

II. HIS *Challenging of a special Propriety in the Seventh.* This Reason is indeed but a Branch, or the other part of the former; however, it will admit of a distinct consideration, the force of *That* being in the Condescention of God to our Temporal Necessity, noting the unreasonableness of our denying to pay Him this Quit Rent; whereas the strength of *This* is taken from the stamp of Divine Authority, which there is upon the Day; or the special Interest which God hath claimed in *This Day*. This is not to be understood, as if God were not alike the Owner and Sovereign Lord of *every Day*; but because he hath seen meet to take this *One Day* out of the *Seven*, and set His own Name upon it, to be His, by a special Designation; intimated in these Words, *The Seventh Day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God*: The force of this may be considered in a few Things;

1. THAT *God hath an Authority to seperate what Day He sees meet, to Sacred Use.* Doubtless the Divine Prerogative is indisputable: Time, and all things of Time, are under His Command: If therefore He pleaseth to put a stamp of Holiness on any Day, by commanding Men to observe it as Holy, it is the highest Reason that He be obeyed; for as no Time is of it self more Holy than other, so any Time which hath such a Relation put upon it, is thereby made Relatively Holy; and thus were all the stated Days of Old, under the Law, equally with the Sabbath.

2. THAT

2. THAT though the reason of a Sabbath be in the Law of Nature, *yet the designation of it depends on God's Positive Command.* This hath before been considered in the Explication of the Precept, and must needs follow from the former Conclusion: for if all Time be in it self alike, the difference that is made between one part and another of it, must arise from a lawful Authority, which had right of Jurisdiction over it, and that could be no other than God himself. He therefore calls them His Sabbaths, because He not only made the Time, but made it holy by His Precept, *Lev.* 26.2. *Ezek.* 22. 8. Reason it self saith, that it is fitting that Man should keep a Sabbath to God; but God's own Prerogative saith, That is the day which I require to be kept Sacred to Me.

3. THAT GOD hath not only separated One Day of Seven to be holy to himself, but also signified *which of the Seven He will have to be observed.* He hath not left it to Man to pitch and chuse according to his Arbitrement, this or that, but hath said, This is the day. It is true, as hath been observed, He hath Changed the day in Gospel times, from what it was under the Law; from the Last to the First of the Seven, as hath before been proved, but this very Change depended on His Authority, and is to be reckoned holy for that reason; and to assign it to any other reason but that, is indeed to vacuate the holiness of it.

4. THAT *the Stamp of Divine Authority upon it, is our indispensable Obligation to keep it holy.* We observed, under the Second Command, That Instituted Worship doth equally oblige to Obedience, with Natural, and that, because, although the light of Nature doth not discover to us the particular Duty, yet it tells us, that God is our God and Lawgiver; that we are under His special Government, that He is Holy and Just, and Good: and that as He cannot command us any thing but what is Holy, Just and Good, so if He do Command, it is our duty to obey Him without disputing any of his Injunctions: And although His Infinite Wisdom cannot suffer Him to enjoyn us in any thing but what is reasonable, yet He is pleased to put no other Seal, on many of His Divine Laws, but, *I am the* LORD; and it becomes us to believe that there is good reason for all His Commands, because they are His, thô we for the present do not see into the Rationality of them: Thus therefore the Psalmist subscribes, *Psal.* 111. 7. 19. 8.

5. THAT hence, *for us not to Sanctify the Day to God, is an act of Notorious Rebellion.* And indeed, God is pleased peculiarly to try Men's Obedience to Him, by His Positive Commands, as is every where obvious in the Scriptures; these are, as it were, a Test by which God proves Mens Allegiance to Him: As Ezek. 20. 12. *Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the* LORD *that sanctifie them.* And for this reason we have this so often brought in, as a great Article in the Indictment drawn up against Israel, that they had profaned & despised His Sabbaths: And if we put this reason to the former, it will appear horrible Sacriledge for Men to neglect the Sanctification of the Sabbath, and divert any part of it to their own Works or Recreations. What more unreasonable and bruitish, than when God hath said to us, There are Six days in the Week which I allow you for your own business, to employ your selves in your Secular concerns, but I challenge this One Day to My Self, who am LORD of every day, and expect that you dedicate it, and your selves in it, to my Worship; and yet they regard Him not, will not allow it Him, but do their own business on it? Surely then, such must needs expose themselves to His Anger, and have no cause of wonder, if they be made to feel the Effects of it in His awful Judgments inflicted on them: And if this were well thought of, it would serve to make us more careful to our selves in our Sanctifying of God's Day. And doubtless it calls us to examine our selves on this account, as well as other things, whether we have not prevaricated in this respect.

III. *HIS own Example.* This is expresst in those words, *For in Six Days the Lord made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all that in them is, and rested the Seventh Day.* The Law that was given at Mount Sinai, was at such time as the Church of God, were under a more legal dispensation of the Covenant, so that in it, there was a revival of the Law given to Man at his Creation: And because there was here a renewal of the Sabbath which was at first appointed to Man, which was the Seventh day, in which Man was to contemplate the Works of Creation; the reason is accommodated to the Example of God, in His making of the World, in which work He took up Six days, and rested on the Seventh, as *Gen.* 2 1, 2. This reason therefore had a next respect to the Seventh-day Sabbath, and is therefore improved by such as are still for that day, to fortify their Opinion. But we are here to observe, that God's meer Cessation from the works of Creation, was not that which it self made the Seventh day holy, but His pleasure to separate that day for this use: but only this putting an End to that work in such a space of time, was given as a reason why Man should celebrate the day in Commemoration of the Antecedent work: Nor are we to suppose that God Himself kept that day as a Sabbath in particular; for His own Rest is Eternal as Himself is; and thô the work of Creation was then finished, yet the work of Providence which never ceaseth, or intermitteth did immediately succeed, and therefore Christ saith, Joh. 5. 17. *My Father worketh hitherto*: But God saw meet, to make this finishing of this work, and the Cessation upon it, to be both a reason of the Institution, and an Instruction to Men: and there is a like reason of the Christian Sabbath; for as the First Sabbath was to be a Commemoration of the work of Creation, so the Second was to be a Celebration of the work of Redemption wrought only by Christ, which being most glorious in it self, and of Infinite concernment for the Posterity of fallen Adam, God would have it Celebrated by His People, from the Resurrection of Christ, till

Time

Time be no more: He therefore requires that an *equal Honour be paid to Christ*, Joh. 5. 23. And for that reason, Christ's Example is proposed to us as a Reason of our keeping the Christian Sabbath, as is evident to such as rightly understand the meaning of the Apostle's Discourse, *Heb.* 4. 10. And here let us observe, that tho' all God's Works are not imitable by us, but He is to be adored for them, yet the Divine Moral Perfections are offered to us for our Imitation: Hence that of our Saviour, Matth. 5. ult. *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.* And of the Apostle, 1 Pet. 1. 16. *Be ye holy, for I am holy.* And indeed, the Image of God, which was put upon us, requires of us such an Imitation; that so we may thereby make it appear, that we are the Children of such a Father: And let us remember, that God's resting on the Seventh Day, was not for Himself, but for us; and therefore our neglect of so improving His Example, is to despise the very Design of it.

IV. HIS *Blessing the Sabbath Day.* This is expressed in those Words, *Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath Day, and hallowed it.* And here we may by the way observe, He alters the Terms, from the Seventh Day, to the Sabbath Day: And there seems to be a Mystery in it, to give us to understand, that not only the Seventh Day from the Creation, had this stamp upon it for the Time being, but that whatsoever Day God should please to appoint to be a Sabbath, should be under the same Consecration & Benediction.

HOWEVER, There are Two things contained in these last Words of the Command, tho' our Catechism only mentions the former of them, *viz.* His Blessing & Hallowing of it: tho' probly they include the last of these under the *Second Reason*, viz. His challenging a special Propriety in it, which He signified to Man by His *Hallowing* of it. Here then observe,

1. THAT GOD is then said to *Hallow the Sabbath*, by *His putting a Relative Holiness upon it.* The word, in it's largest sense, signifys the fitting or preparing of a thing, for the Use or Service which it is designed unto; But in an appropriate sense, and most frequently in the Old Testament, it is used for the separating of a thing from Common, and consecrating it to Sacred Use. It is therefore translated, *Sanctified it*, Gen. 2. 3. And this God hath done by giving a Positive Precept concerning it, that it shall be employed by us in Holy Duties, with a regard to the Sanctification of it, by Him to this end; and so *This* Reason explains and enforceth the *Second.*

2. THAT GOD is said to *Bless the Sabbath, by making it to be a Holy Medium of Spiritual Good to His People, who rightly Sanctify it.* The word *Bless*, signifys both to speak well of, to wish well to, and to do well to one: And when God is said to Bless a Person or thing, it includes both His Promise of Good to it, and His Performance of that Good effectually: And we may take up the meaning of God's Blessing the Sabbath, in a few particulars:

1. *THAT GOD hath appointed the Sabbath to be a Medium of our Communion with Him, in this Life.* There is a fellowship to be had with God, by His People before they come to Glory: The Apostle could say, 1 Joh. 1. 3 *Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* Now this is mediate; God manifests Himself to and in them, by His Ordinances and Providences, so that these Media are manifold; and among others this of the Sabbath is one, and none of the least: And this is one reason why the Sabbath is called *a Sign*, Ezek. 20. 12. *viz.* It was a Note that God had taken them to be His People, and was near to them, above all the People in the World: And doubtless, it is one note of a People in visible Covenant with God, that they have His Sabbaths among them, and do profess the Holiness of them, and accordingly maintain the outward respect due to them.

2. *THAT GOD hath appointed the Duties of the Day in order to their enjoying of this Communion.* That there are such Duties or Ordinances, and what they are, we have before taken Notice of; and indeed, without them, the Day it self would be of no use to the End that it was Ordained for. For Man is treated as a Cause by Counsel; and the Benefit he hath by such a Day, is by the Employment which he is called to occupy himself in upon it: Now these Duties are excellently suited for this Communion; they are spiritual Services, and very well accommodated to our further acquainting our selves with God; and they are the Exercises of God's Worship, which are the main things required of us; and it is certain, that in Worship we have nextly to do with God, and therefore are said to draw near to Him in them: Such is *Prayer*, in which we present our Desires to God; such is *Meditation*, in which we apply ourselves to the *Contemplation* of the Being and Perfections of God, and His glorious Works, especially that of *Redemption*; such is the Preaching and Hearing of the Word, in which God imparts His Mind to us; and the *Sacraments* which are *Seals of the Covenant*, &c.

3. *THAT GOD hath accordingly promised, that he will hold this Communion with them, who do truly keep this Day to Him.* This Promise is necessarily implied in the general Encouragement which He hath given them, that He will be among them, to Bless them, in their Religious Attendances upon His Instituted Worship; Exod. 20. 24. *In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.* And the Promise of all sorts of Blessings to those who do carefully observe His Sabbaths; *Jer.* 17. 24. *Isa.* 5. 29, *&c.* And it must needs be so, because, this is one Article in the Covenant, in which the Promise of His special Favour to His People, that keep Covenant with Him, is contained.

4. THAT by this Communion, *He conveys all Spiritual and saving Blessings, to the Souls of His People.* In this way He performs the Promise made to them. Our Happiness is in Communion with God, and He Blessed the

Sabbath

Sabbath for Man's ſake becauſe He made it for Man. Beſides, this is not meerly His Eſſential, but His Gracious Preſence with them, which is intended in the Promiſe; the Efficacy whereof is in advancing them in Grace, helping them in Serving of Him, and furthering them to a meetneſs for the happy enjoyment of His Glory, when they ſhall enjoy an Eternal Sabbath. This reaſon therefore is taken from our benefit; this is the way for us to profit, to grow in Grace, to derive from God the promiſed good: and from all put together, we are aſſured both of the Equity of the Command, and the Benefit which derives from our ſincere Obedience to it.

USE. LET it then ſerve to quicken us all, to a more diligent endeavour, to ſee to the Sanctification of the Sabbath, both by our ſelves, and by all ſuch as are under our watch. And the rather at this Day, wherein God's Sabbath is in ſo little Requeſt among Profeſſors, and which is ſo wofully Neglected and Profaned by Multitudes. Do we not ſee how all Religion goes to decay with this? Have not God's awful Judgments been upon us? And have we not reaſon to confeſs this to be One of the Controverſies which He hath with us? And can we hope for better Days or Things, ſo long as it is thus? There are many other things amiſs among us, that call for Reformation, but this is not to be neglected, if we expect that God ſhould reſtore His gracious Preſence to us, and Bleſs our Land, with New-Covenant bleſſings. Let us mourn for the decay of Godlineſs, and return to God in good earneſt; ſo will He be jealous for our Land, and delight to do us good.

[MARCH 9. 1703.]

SERMON *CLXXV.*

QUESTION LXIII.

WHICH is the Fifth Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Fifth Commandment is, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy Days may be long upon the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*

WE have formerly obſerved, That the Ten Commands, are diſtributed into Two Comprehenſive Parts according as God Himſelf was pleaſed to write them, in Two Tables. The *former* directing us to the Duties of Worſhip, and the *latter* to Duties of Charity. Which diſtribution our Saviour gives Countenance to, in that He reduceth all Moral Obedience to theſe two heads, Matth. 22. 37, 38. *Jeſus ſaid unto him, Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy mind. This is the firſt and great commandment.* This alſo is favoured by the diſtributing the Principle of Obedience, into *Holineſs* and *Righteouſneſs*, *Eph.* 4. 24. The one ſerving to firſt Table, the other to ſecond Table Duties. The reaſon of this Partition, is warily to be obſerved. Let us then here remember, that God is the Laſt End and Supream Object of all our Obedience, nor will it be accepted by Him, except we terminate it in Him: for every Command in the word of God, belongs to Religion, which muſt have Him for its Object, elſe it cannot be reckoned to be Religious. But we are to conſider this Obedience with a diſtinct and diverſe reſpect, which it bears to the Object of it, which gives the reaſon of this diſtinction, *viz* in reſpect of the next and immediate Object, which our Obedience is directed to; God is the next or immediate Object of all firſt Table Duties; for theſe all point us to Religious Worſhip, which cannot be performed to any other but Him, Matth. 4. 10. *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve.* It is therefore Idolatry to pay it to any other: Whereas Man is the Immediate Object of our Charity, or of ſecond Table Duties, tho' all muſt ultimately terminate on God. All Obedience is called *Love*, 2 Tim. 1. 13. But then it is divided into the Love of God, and of our Neighbour; and we are to remember, that we are to Love God for Himſelf, but to Love our Neighbour in and for God. It is not enough that we Love Him, but we muſt take the meaſures by which we regulate this Love, from the Mouth of God; and for this reaſon, this Love is in Scripture frequently called *Righteouſneſs*, becauſe when we do them Juſtice, we then Love them; if otherwiſe, we do not Love but hate them. Hence that, Lev. 19. 17. *Thou ſhalt not hate thy Brother in thy heart.* Our Saviour ſums up all Second Table Duties in that One, Mat. 22. 39. *Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thy ſelf*: And He giveth that gloſs upon it, in Math. 7. 12. *Therefore all things whatſoever ye would that men ſhould do to you, do ye even ſo to them: for this is the Law and the Prophets.* I ſhall here only further remark, that as we formerly took notice, that the Firſt Command in the Firſt Table comprehends the ground and reaſon of all the other Precepts relating to Worſhip, ſo this Fifth, which is the Firſt in the Second Table, is the foundation of all that follow, and they may be reduced to, and inferred from it: Nevertheleſs, God hath ſeen meet to divide theſe Duties under ſeveral heads, which contain ſo many particular Precepts for our better information, and therefore there is ſomething peculiar in each of them, which we may take up in their Order: We may therefore proceed to conſider this, in the ſame Method which our Catechiſm layeth down, and which hath been obſerved in thoſe which went before.

HERE then,

Question LXIV.

WHAT is required in the Fifth Commandment?

Answer.

THE Fifth Commandment requireth, the preſerving the Honour, and performing the Duties belonging to every one in their ſeveral Places and Relations, as Superiors, Inferiors, or Equals.

THAT we may take right meaſures in laying forth the mind and meaning of this Command, and conſider the juſt Comprehenſion of it, let us in general Obſerve, That the Fifth Commandment hath a proper reſpect to the Order which God hath placed among Mankind; and the Relative Duties which do flow from the Nature of that Order. Only it muſt be conſidered, that all Relations, and the Relative Duties which ariſe from them, do not ſtrictly belong to this Precept, as it is diſtinct from thoſe which follow; tho' we obſerved, they may be reduced to it: For it is a Truth, that every Duty hath it's Duty founded in ſome Relation, which we bear to the Object of it; and therefore there are Relative Duties belonging to every of the Precepts. But that which this Command deſignedly hath reſpect to, is the Order it ſelf which God hath in Wiſdom ſeen meet to place Mankind in; which cannot be orderly maintained without ſome ſtated Rules for the upholding of it. That therefore we may come at the things contained in the *Affirmative* part of the Command, let us in general obſerve,

1. THAT *GOD hath appointed that there ſhould be ſeveral Ranks & Orders among Mankind in this World.* That there are ſuch Orders, *de facto*, cannot be denied, becauſe we ſee it every where; and tho' ſome barbarous and bruitiſh Nations have but little of it; yet they have ſo much as will witneſs, that there is a Principle rooted in the Nature of Man, that there ought to be ſuch a thing: And that it is of God's Ordination, that there ſhould be ſuch Orders, is certain, not only becauſe the Light of Nature convinceth Mankind of the Neceſſity of it, and without it the World could not be kept in Order, but would forthwith run into Confuſion, and fall into a Rout; but alſo God hath told us His mind in this regard in His Word; and the ſeveral Rules there laid down for Men's Carriage therein, fully proves it; as will afterwards be more particularly conſidered. Nay, this Order was neceſſary during Man's Integrity, much more under the Apoſtacy. One part of the Harmony in Heaven, is the Order there is among the Angels; and were there not ſomething of it upheld among the Rebel Rout of Devils, Hell muſt disband. And tho' all Orders which Men may ordain, are not approved by God; yet that there ſhould be Orders is His revealed Will and Pleaſure: Rom. 13. 1. *The powers that be are ordained of God.*

2. THAT *GOD hath ſuited Duties to the ſeveral Orders, which He hath placed Men in.* The neceſſity of this appears, from the End of their Appointment, *viz.* For the Good of Mankind, and the maintaining of Peace and Society among Men: Now this End cannot be attained but by ſetting the due bounds and limits to theſe Orders, and accommodating of Duties to the ſeveral ſorts and ends of them. Theſe Rules were at firſt written upon Men's Hearts, and Man wou'd have known his Duty by the Nature of the Station which God had put him in; but the Apoſtacy hath much blurred theſe Rules, ſo that Men's Conſciences labour of Error about them; and beſides there is a diſorderly Diſpoſition in Men, by reaſon of Carnal Luſts, which makes thoſe in Superiour Order apt to be Boundleſs and Arbitrary, and ſo Tyrannical; and ſuch as are Inferiour to be uneaſy, and not willing to bear the Yoke, or be under any Command. Now to rectify both of theſe diſorders, God hath laid down Precepts in His Word, by which he hath ſet bounds to both theſe Exorbitancies; as will alſo afterwards be conſidered.

3. THAT *theſe Duties cannot be mutually diſcharged, as they ought, without a due reſpect born each to other, according to the Order wherein they ſtand ſo related.* A due reſpect entertained in the Heart for others, according to the Station which God hath ſet them in, is abſolutely neceſſary for the Obedientiał diſcharge of the Duties which the Precept obligeth us to them in. For tho' if we outwardly carry it to them very fairly and plauſibly, they may be ſatisfyed, becauſe they do not know our Hearts; yet it is no Act of Obedience to God, any further than we have a due regard to His Command, which requires, not Complemental, but Cordial Carriage in all our Duties towards Man; as, 1 Joh. 3. 18. *My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.* And as God calls for it, ſo He knows the Heart, and will judge of our Carriage by it. Beſides, if we do not maintain this reſpect in us to them, there will be the contrary Contempt, which will notwithſtanding all our cunning to diſſemble it, ſome way or other diſcover it ſelf, and make us often Tranſgreſſors. It will make the Yoke of Obedience that God hath laid upon our Necks uneaſy, which would otherwiſe be delightful, and ſo prompt us to break all Order.

4. THAT *all theſe Orders, together with the Relative Duties belonging to them, and the Principle from which this Obedience muſt flow, belong to this Command.* This indeed is generally denied by the *Socinians*, and they will allow nothing more to be intended in it; but the Duties ariſing from the Relation there is between Parents and Children: And the ground of their denial is, becauſe they would introduce their Natural Religion, as that which is more perfect than that which is laid out in the Scriptures: And for that reaſon would perſwade

ſwade us, that there are more Moral Duties required of Men, than are comprehended in the *Decalogue* or *Ten Commandments* given on Mount *Sinai*. That there are ſuch Duties required of Men, in regard of theſe Relations cannot be denied, for in other Texts of Scripture they are expreſly laid. Here therefore to clear this matter, let us obſerve,

1. THAT *all the Duties both Moral and Poſitive, which are required in the Word of God, are reducible to one or other of the Ten Commandments.* When therefore our Saviour had given the Sum of them, as comprehended in the *Two Tables*, he adds Matth. 22. 40. *On theſe two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.* i. e. All the Precepts which are to be found in the whole Scriptures, are but *Commentaries* on theſe *Two*, and are therefore methodically to be referred to one or other of them. For this reaſon the *Two Tables*, or the Precepts therein contained, are called the *Covenant*, Deut. 5. *beg.* Now this Covenant conſiſted of *Two* parts, *viz. What God was, or would be to them*, contained in the Preface; and, *what He expected they ſhould be to Him*, expreſt in the Commands themſelves; ſo that all Moral Obedience, or all that He requires of a People in Covenant with Him, is ſummarily contained in them.

2. THAT *the ſeveral Orders which God hath placed Men in, and the Relative Duties referring thereto, are reducible to no other Command in the Decalogue, but the* Fifth. That they muſt be reduced to one or other is evident, becauſe elſe the Decalogue would not be a perfect Rule of Manners or Moral Obedience, which would be to Charge God with imprudence or inadvertency, which is highly derogatory to His Glory. That they do not belong to any of the Precepts of the Firſt Table, is therein manifeſt becauſe all of them are reſtrained to Religious Worſhip, which hath God for it's immediate Object; whereas theſe Orders are placed between Men, and are therefore nextly to be applied to them, as their immediate Objects. Nor can they be reduced to any of the other Precepts in the Second Table; becauſe thô they ſuppoſe ſome Relation that Men ſtand in one to another; yet they do not reſpect the different Orders of Men, but concern the Common Affairs of Mankind, as they ſtand in a Level, with regard to the Duties therein enjoyned; as will appear when we come to take them under a diſtinct Conſideration; it therefore remains that they belong to this. Hence,

3. THAT *a right taking up the meaning of the Words of the Command, according to Scripture, and Application of the general Rules, formerly given for the Underſtanding of the Decalogue, will clear up this matter to us.* I ſhall not here repeat the Rules which were laid down, in the *Expoſition* of the Forty-firſt *Queſtion*, where we had *Nine Rules* given for our Direction in this Affair. But we may here take an Account of the Preceptive part of this Command and the import of the Words, in which it is expreſſed. The Command it ſelf conſiſts of *Two* parts, 1. A Precept, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother.* 2. A Motive to urge it by, *That thy Days may be long upon the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.* And it is the former of theſe that we have preſent Concern withal: And we are to obſerve, that the Precept is laid down Affirmatively, whereas all the reſt are laid down only Negatively, except the *Fourth*, which is expreſſed in both ways: But we have formerly obſerved, that when any Duty is enjoyned, the contrary Sin is forbidden, *e contra*; for in regard to every Command, it is capable of being Sinned againſt, either by Omiſſion or Commiſſion: Nor need we over-curiouſly to ask after a Reaſon why God expreſſeth ſome Affirmatively, others Negatively, only it may ſuffice, that God would have us to know, that it is not enough to abſtain from the more groſs violations of his Commands; but that He alſo expects that we do carefully Conform to the Practice of the Duties required in them. In the *Precept* it ſelf, *Two things* are to be obſerved,

1. THE *Thing required* with reſpect to theſe Orders of Men; *Honour*. The word in the firſt Conjugation ſignifies to be *Heavy*; but in another, to *Honour*: Metaphorically intimating, that the root of Honouring another, is in the *Opinion* we have of them, which is *heavy* or *ponderous*; and hence on the other hand, to *Contemn* is a word which firſtly ſignifies *Light*, and therefore it is Metaphorically ſet forth, by being *lightly eſteemed*, 1 Sam. 2. 30. And tho' Honour nextly points to the reſpect and deference which is paid by an Inferiour to a Superiour; yet it is here extendible to all the Duties, which are mutually to be performed by all Orders, one to another; in whatſoever Rank they ſtand related each to the other: And this is explained in the Catechiſm in *Two things*;

(1.) THE *Preſerving the Honour. Honour* in propriety of ſpeech, intends, the inward *good Eſteem* that we have of one for any Eminency or Excellency we obſerve in him; or for any Dignity which God hath in His Providence put upon him: Now the preſerving this Honour comprehends *Two things* in it, 1. The *maintaining of this Eſteem in our Hearts.* 2. The *endeavouring to upbold it in our Carriage or outward Converſation among Men.* But theſe things will come to be diſtinctly and ſeverally laid forth afterwards.

(2.) THE *Performing of the Duties* which belong to them: for then we practically Honour a Perſon, when we carefully diſcharge the Duties we owe to him, according to the Station which he ſtands related to us in. It is not enough to maintain an inward eſteem of them, but it muſt be manifeſted in a way wherein it may be duly teſtified: And it muſt be only the Duties which belong, or which we owe to Him on the account of the *Poſt* which he is in: To do leſs than this, is to diſhonour him; to do more argues either groſs Ignorance, or vile Contempt, or ſordid Flattery. What theſe Duties are, may alſo be referred to their proper place.

2. THE *Object* of this Duty; *thy Father and Mother.* Our Catechiſm expounds it, *Every*

one in their ſeveral Places and Relations: But this needs to be explained. We have before been told, that this Precept doth not engroſs all the Relations in which Mankind do ſtand concerned one with another: But only thoſe of Order; and therefore we are to underſtand the following Words in the Anſwer to be Exegetical and Inſtructive of the former, viz. *Whether Superiours, Inferiours, or Equals.* The Words in the Command are Emphatical and Comprehenſive, and are to be underſtood both properly and tropically.

1. *PROPERLY*; and ſo it intends, the Immediate Parents of a Perſon; and are therefore particularly mentioned, becauſe this Order is moſt Natural, (as we ſhall have occaſion to obſerve,) and therefore are moſt fit to be mentioned, nothing being more convincingly evident by the Light of Nature, than that ſuch a reſpect is due from Children to their Parents. *Father* and *Mother* are the common Root from which Children ſpring; and hence the reaſon is elſewhere given, Prov 23. 22. *Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and deſpiſe not thy mother when ſhe is old.* And to this Head do alſo belong all Progenitors in a direct Line, as Grand Parents, and all aſcending; becauſe we are lineally deſcended from them: And for that reaſon they are called our *Fathers* and *Mothers* in Scripture Language.

2. *METAPHORICALLY*; and ſo the word is often uſed in the Scripture: And ſo it comprehends under it, all Superiours, in what reſpect ſoever: We ſhall therefore find this Title given to Kings; it was a common Title put upon the Kings of the Philiſtines; *Abimelech*, which ſignifies, *My Father the King*; and the Servants of *Naaman* addreſſed him with this Title, 2 *Kings* 5. 13. Thus the Prieſts were entituled by the People; hence that, Judg. 17. 10. *Dwell with me, and be unto me a father and a prieſt.* Thus was the Prophet accoſted by the King, in, 2 *Kings* 6. 21. 13. 14. Thus *Paul* applies himſelf either to the Elders or Ancient Men in *Jeruſalem*, Acts 22. 1. And in all theſe reſpects it is to be underſtood in the Command.

3. *SYNECDOCHICALLY:* For as we have obſerved, all the Duties which are mutual between Perſons in reſpect of the Order they ſtand in, are here to be underſtood. It is certain, that from all the Relations that Men bear each to other, there are reciprocal Duties incumbent on them; and there are Precepts given in the Word of God for them, on both ſides, and they cannot be ſo properly referred to any other Command. So that as the Duties to Superiours is in the firſt place pointed nextly to, which is to be paid them by Inferiours; ſo there is to be conſidered under this Precept, the Duties which Superiours do owe to Inferiours; for they are no more left by the Word of God to be *deſpotical*, than the others to be *diſobliged:* And we have before obſerved, that this latitude is neceſſary to be allowed, to the right underſtanding of the Law. So that, both *children* with reſpect to their Natural Parents and Progenitors; and all *Subjects*, in whatſoever kind or degree of Subjection they are placed among Men, are here to be taught and inſtructed in their Duty which they owe to ſuch as are Superiour to them. And our Catechiſm alſo brings in *Equals*; for there are ſome who ſtand on even Ground, and in the ſame Rank with others, to whom alſo they owe a Duty in that Order. Now, though it is certain, that the Duties are mutual, yet they are not the ſame between Superiours and Inferiours: There is one ſort of Duties, which God hath laid upon thoſe whom he hath placed above others in Dignity or Authority; and another ſort of Duties required of ſuch as God hath put below others; and made to owe Submiſſion or Subjection to them: And there are Duties diſtinct from either of theſe, which are incumbent on Equals, as ſuch, between themſelves; and therefore all of theſe are to be taken apart, and handled by themſelves ſeverally. If therefore we would underſtand the Mind of this Command in the Latitude of it, our way is to enquire after the ſeveral Orders which God hath placed among Men; and then enquire, what is the Expreſſion of Honour which is appropriated to each of theſe, under the conſideration of their ſtanding ſo related, one to the other: And for this the Word of God is to be conſulted; and we muſt warily obſerve what Duties are common to *All Men*, as they are Men; and what belong to the ſeveral particular reſpects which they bear one to another, with reſpect to Dignity, either Equal or Unequal: And here it may be obſerved, that one and the ſame Perſon, may bear divers Relations of Order, with regard to others, and that either to different Perſons; or ſometimes to the ſame Perſon: Thus a *Queen*, may be both a Wife and a Subject to the *King*: A *Man* both a Husband and Subject to a *Queen*: A Man be both a Brother and a Servant to his Brother: Yea, One Man may be both Superiour and Inferiour to another, according to the different Order he ſtands in: Thus a Man, who bears no Office of Civil Authority on him, may be a Father to one who is in great place of Dignity; and yet it is certain, that each of theſe Relations, hath it's Duties inſeperable from it; and the one doth not diſannul or diſcharge from the other, but each ought in it's place duly to be obſerved. In the Inveſtigation of theſe Duties, we muſt in each of them conſider the *Relate*, and the *Correlate* in Conjunction; becauſe their mutual Duties do infer each other: And we may begin with thoſe that ſtand in an *Inequality*, viz. *Superiours* and *Inferiours*; becauſe theſe are nextly and immediately pointed at in the Command. Now as the ground of the different Orders among Men, is for the due maintaining of Humane Societies, that they may be kept in a good State, and not be turned into a Rout; Man being made a Sociable Creature, and his outward Happineſs having a neceſſary Dependance on the Peaceableneſs of this Society; it is therefore fit that every one do know his Rank and Station in it:

ſo

ſo there are ſeveral Orders between Men, made and appointed by God, the principal whereof, may be reduced to two heads, viz. *Natural*,and *Political*. I know others generally diſtribute them, into Œconomical and Political: But tho' I liſt not to contend about Terms, eſpecially when the things themſelves will amount to the ſame in the iſſue; yet I chuſe rather to follow it, under this diſtribution. A brief account of each of theſe, may be taken in the further Proſecution of the Duties required by this Command; and Firſt of the *Natural*.

[MAY, 4. 1703.]

SERMON *CLXXVI.*

Firſt. I Shall begin with that Order which God hath placed between Mankind, that is *partly Natural*, and this is that which is placed between *Parents* and *Children*; and this may be called Natural, not only becauſe the light of Nature diſcovers the RelativeDuties between theſe, for ſo it doth in all the reſt, and they are to be read in the Nature or Quality of the Relations; but alſo becauſe Nature it ſelf hath made this Relation, and it abides the ſame Immutably in all Ages and Generations of the World: Nor can the intervention of any other Occaſional and Political Relations cut off the Obligations that are fixed in this. Parents owe it to their Children, and Children to their Parents, as long as they live; and this may be the reaſon why it is expreſsly mention'd in the Command, rather than any other; it being a Pattern for every other; and the nearer reſemblance they have to it, the more deſireable and laudable: And for this reaſon all other Relations of Order,in which their is a Superiority and Inferiority, are ſo frequently ſet forth in the word of God,under theſe Titles, as we have before obſerved. Now tho' theObedience ofChildren to theirParents,is only mentioned in the Command, yet becauſe there are Reciprocal Duties between them, and the word of God hath laid down thoſe as well as theſe, we may conſider them ſeverally: And here we may take a diſtinct account of the Honour which is due,and the Duties in which it is to be expreſſed between theſe. And tho' the neglect of Duty on one ſide, doth not diſcharge the other,becauſe all Obedience is ultimately to have reſpect to the Authority of God; yet becauſe there is great influence, by the ſuitable behaviour of one to the other, to draw forth a Reciprocal due carriage: And becauſe the Superiours or Parents are ſuppoſed to have more Prudence in them than their Children, I ſhall begin with theſe. Hence,

I. *PARENTS owe an Honour to their Children*, and they are to manifeſt it by the diſcharge of Parental Duties to them. I uſe the word *Parents*, becauſe the Command ſaith, *Thy Father and thy Mother*; and becauſe Children do derive from both, as the Common Root or Stock, whereof they are the Branches. And therefore the Natural ground of the Relation, and the Superiority over Children by vertue of the Relation, is in both joyntly. And becauſe they are but One in making the Relation, yet are Two diſtinct Perſons, they are to be particularly referred to in this. For which reaſon the word of God mentions them ſeverally, as in the Command,ſo elſe-where frequently. And becauſe Children are too apt to ſlight their Mothers Authority, this is not put in Conjunction only, but ſometimes mentioned Emphatically, *Prov.* 6. 20. *Lev.* 19. 3. Hence alſo Mothers have charge given them, and are reproved for neglect, and commended for fidelity in this regard, 2 *Chron.* 22 3. *Prov.* 31. 1. Now that we may take up a right conception of the Duties here peculiarly concerned, we may begin it at its riſe,and ſo purſue it to the particulars, in the following Conſiderations,

1. THAT *the foundation of this Relation, is Natural Generation.* For it is by vertue of this that it is brought about, and that which makes theſe to be Father and Mother, and thoſe to be their Children, is becauſe thoſe were begotten and born of theſe: ſo that this Natural Relation extends no further, or cannot be brought about in any other way; nor is it in the choiſe of Men, on either hand, to put off this Relation each to other, whilſt both the terms of it do exiſt; this therefore is fully expreſt in, *Prov.* 23. 22, 25.

2. THAT hence *there is a peculiar Love Naturally deriving from Parents to their Children.* There is a love to all Men, which is required of us, and without it we can diſcharge no Duty to them aright; hence it is the Sum of all Obedience, Rom. 13 9, 10. *Love is the fulfilling of the Law.* But the Love of Parents to their Children is ſuch as admits not of ſuitable words to expreſs it, it being ſo intenſe and influential: ſo that God himſelf is pleaſed to reſemble His Love to His Children by this, there being no Compariſon that better reſembleth it, *Pſal.* 103. 13. *Iſai.* 49. 15.

3. THAT from this Generation there flows a *Natural right of Government unto Parents over their Children.* This very thing gives them a claim to it, according to the Dictates of right reaſon. And on this account the Heathen Moraliſts were wont to place the reverencing of Parents next to the worſhipping of the Deity in their Natural Theology; accounting theſe two to be the prime and moſt radiant dictates of Mens Conſciences, being written with Sunbeams in their hearts. So that as God challengeth Service from Men by the right of Creation, *Pſal.* 100. 1, 2 *Deut.* 32. 6. In like manner the Duty of Obedience to Parents, is inculcated from their being ſo, *Prov.* 31. 2. Yea,God himſelf argueth with His People from this compariſon, Mal. 1. 6. *A ſon honoureth his Father, and a ſervant his Maſter: if then I be Father,where is mine honour?*

4. THAT from the conſideration of both theſe joyntly,there ariſeth *a double ſort of Duty*, which Parents owe to their Children, *viz.* the *Proviſion* which they are to make for them,and the *Government* which they are to exerciſe over them.

them. And to theſe two may all the ſeveral Duties of Parents in that Relation be reduced, of which we may take a brief account :

[1.] IT *is the Duty of Parents to make Proviſion for their Children.* And for this it is, that God hath put thoſe Natural Affections into them, which may prompt them ſo to do ; that they may with more delight, diſcharge the Obligation lying upon them on this Account : And not to do it, is worſe than bruitiſh ; hence that Complaint, Lam. 4. 3. *Even the ſea monſters draw out the breaſt, they give ſuck to their young ones ; the daughter of my people is become cruel, like the oſtriches in the wilderneſs.* And this Care is to be uſed for them, both with reſpect to their *Outward* and *Inward* Man : Their *Bodies* and *Souls* belong unto this Charge incumbent on them.

(1.) WITH reſpect to their *Bodies* or outward Man : And the principal Duties here are,

1. IN *their Infancy tenderly to nouriſh them, till they are capable of providing for themſelves.* Children are in their *Minority* altogether uncapable of looking after themſelves : There are no other ſorts of Creatures equally ſhiftleſs, ſo that they muſt needs periſh without a Compaſſionate looking after ; and for this God hath given Parents in Charge to do all the Offices of Love to them : We read, 1 Tim. 5. 8. *But if any provide not for his own, and ſpecially for thoſe of his own houſe, he hath denied the faith, and is worſe than an infidel.* They are to carry them in their Arms, lay them in their Boſom, ſupply them with ſuitable Food and Raiment, watch to defend them from Miſchief ; and to take care that they may want nothing for their ſupply of Food or Raiment, according to their Ability ; and all this with greateſt tenderneſs ; 1 *Theſ.* 2. 7.

2. AS ſoon as may be, *to take care for their bringing up, to befit to Live in the World when Adult.* Children are not always to hang on their Mothers Breaſts, and be nouriſhed from their Father's Table, but to be uſefull for their Own and the Publick Good ; as thoſe who may in time be Parents, and have a like Charge. And it is a great Duty on Parents to ſee that they be fitted for this, that when they come to be for themſelves, they may not be a Burden, but a Bleſſing to the Places they are in. For this reaſon early Endeavours are to be uſed with them : It is a Rule, Prov. 22. 6. *Train up a child in the way he ſhould go : and when he is old he will not depart from it.* And the *ſooner* this is done, the more likely are they to do it well, and much evil will be prevented. Whatſoever therefore is fit and needful to prepare them for ſome Calling, is firſt and early to be taken care for ; and the leaſt that can be is to ſee that they be taught to Read and Write, before ſuch Time as they are of Age to be put out to a particular Calling, without which they cannot well engage in any ; and when they are ſo prepared, to provide ſome honeſt Occupation for them, which they may be Inſtructed in, that ſo they may have a Calling to Live on, without which none can Live honeſtly : And becauſe there are many Callings of Uſe for Mankind, ſome more Liberal, others more Servile ; but all Commendable in themſelves ; ſome one is to be choſen for them, which may beſt ſuit to their *Genius*, and the *Poſt* they bear among Men. And thô Parents are prudently to obſerve the Inclination of their Children, and conſider their Capacity ; yet they ought to have an over-ruling influence in this Affair : However, no Child is to be brought up without ſome Employment, by which he may be Serviceable ; for the Law ſaith, 2 Theſ. 3. 10. *That if any would not work, neither ſhould he eat.*

3. WHILST they are under their Wing, and at their Providing, *to allow them according to their Rank & Ability.* Theſe *Two* muſt go together ; for God's Providence is to be obſerved and comported withal : Thô Parents have a right to diſpoſe of, yet Children have a right in their Eſtates, whereof God hath made Parents the Stewards ; and their Allowances to their Children, ought to be ordered with Diſcretion. Now God's Providence hath ſet Men in divers Stations among Men, and hath variouſly diſtributed of the things of this Life : And as it is a Sin and Folly for Men to live above their Ability, whatſoever Place they bear ; ſo it is a Duty to bring up Children ſuitably to their Rank, provided they keep within the compaſs of their Ability ; and for this end, they ought to keep a due Medium between ſordid *Penurioufneſs*, and profuſe *Laviſhneſs* : And this Care is ſpecially to be uſed by Parents in laying out according to their Ability, for the good Education of their Children, that they need not want it, by reaſon of their Covetouſneſs.

4. THE *allowing of them a ſuitable Portion of their Eſtates.* It is the Duty of Parents to *lay up for their Children*, 1 Cor. 12. 14. And tho' God orders this as He pleaſeth, and it is the Duty of Parents, to take care that they lay up nothing for their Poſterity, but what is honeſtly gotten, leſt they provide a Curſe for them, and not a Bleſſing. Nevertheleſs, Parents ought by Frugality and Prudence, to lay by a Part of what they Gain, for their Children ; and diſtribute it to them according as there is Occaſion : More particularly, when they diſpoſe them in Marriage, that they may have ſomething to begin upon : And when they come to Die, by diſpoſing by *Will*, a due Proportion to every one of them, who have not before had it ſet off to them ; nor ought they to ſhew Partiality, much leſs to Diſinherit any, upon any light occaſion.

(2.) WITH reſpect to their *Souls* or inward Man. And this ſhould be the main Care, tho' the other ought not to be neglected ; nor can their Love be regular, if they take up with the *Former*, and neglect *This*. And the Things that are mainly here to be obſerved are,

1. TO *take care that they be Baptized in their Infancy.* Baptiſm is a Seal of Initiation in the Covenant of Grace, and tho' it be an External Seal, and the Efficacy of it depends upon the free Grace of God ; yet it is the Duty of Parents to ſeek this for their Children, becauſe God hath

hath required it; and hereby they are openly dedicated to God, and brought under the Duties and Priviledges of the New-Covenant: We are assured that Baptism comes in the room of Circumcision, Col. 2. 11, 12. *In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.* And we find how strict God's injunction was for that, in Gen. 17. 14. *And the uncircumcised man-child whose flesh of his fore-skin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people: he hath broken my covenant.*

2. TO *be early instructing them in the ways of God, and counselling them about the Affairs of their* Souls. And in nothing can they more shew their true Love to them; and all their Care for their Outward Man is little in comparison of this, and insignificant without it; so true is that, Matth. 16. 26. *For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?* Children are born without any seeds of the knowledge of the true Religion in them; yea filled with corrupt Principles of Error, Ignorance, and Enmity: Parents therefore ought to begin betimes to instill into them the knowledge of the Truths of the word of God, and tell them their natural miserable Estate; and use earnest endeavours to perswade them to seek God early, that if possible they may be Converted to God in their Infancy: We read, 2 Tim. 3. 15. *And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation.* And doubtless this was by the careful Instruction of his Parents: Hence that, Chap. 1. 5. *When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am perswaded that in thee also.* And herein Parents ought to suit their Instructions to the Capacity of their Children; 1 Cor. 3. 1, 2. And this is to be done on all suitable Occasions; see, Prov. 4. *begin.*

3. CAREFULLY *to set before them a good Example,* both in *Words* & *Carriages.* Examples have a great influence upon Men, especially of such whom they have a particular respect for. And Children in their Minority, ordinarily observe none more than their Parents, and will readily learn of their ways: And tho' it is true, that they will more readily learn Sin than Holiness, it being that which the Corrupt Nature byasseth them to; yet God ordinarly blesseth this cautiousness to good Effect; and Parents will have Peace in this at last, whatsoever the event be.

4. TO *be ever Commending them to God,* by incessant and importunate Prayer. This should attend all their other Endeavours with and for them, inasmuch as the Success entirely depends on the Blessing of God for them, which they ought thus to commend to him: They should Pray with them on this account; and endeavour to let them see how deeply their Souls are concerned for them, as well as thus set them a good Pattern of Prayer, and in their secret Applications to Heaven, to carry them to God, and with greatest wrestlings to strive for a Blessing on them; to be often Praying for every one of them, and saying to God as *Abraham,* Gen. 17. 18. *O that Ishmael might live before thee!* And such ought to be their sollicitude on this account, that whatsoever slip their mind in particular, yet this may be never forgotten that God would Bless their Children, and derive the Everlasting Blessings of the Covenant to them, according to the Promise, Psal. 103. 17, 18. *But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him; and his righteousness unto childrens children: To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.*

[2.] IT *is the Duty of Parents to exercise a* Parental Government *over their Children.* That God hath committed such a Government to them, and requires it of them, the Scripture abundantly testifies: Nay, the very Light of Nature discovers it, and their Necessity calls for it: And this is distinct both from Civil and Ecclesiastical Government, tho' there be a resemblance between them. That this Government is not Despotical or Arbitrary, is certain; for tho' they are more left at liberty to exercise their Prudence in the Administration of it; yet there are Limits set to it in the word of God, and Rules laid down, which prescribe the Duties of it, in the Compass whereof they are to contain themselves. And here let us observe, that this Government peculiarly respects their Non-age, or the time wherein they are not come to govern themselves, and set up Families of their own; tho' then also they are to exercise a suitable Parental Authority in some Cases. And here two general Rules may be offered,

(1.) THEY *ought to maintain their Authority, by avoiding the extreams of Rigour & Indulgence.* As Children are not to be treated either as Brutes or Slaves, so neither with over-fondness, and letting them enjoy their Wills in every thing: hence that Rule given, Eph. 6. 4. *Fathers provoke not your Children to wrath.* They are so to Love them, as to let them know their Place; and so also to Rule them, as to let them know their Paternal Affection to them. They must be neither too *Familiar* with them, lest they despise their Authority, and wrest it from them; nor too much *Estrange* themselves from them, lest they be discouraged; and think themselves Disregarded: And great Discretion is here to be used, according to their divers Tempers and Dispositions.

(2.) THEY *ought to attemper their Government according to the Age and Capacity of their Children.* There is a Childish Age, in which they are not arrived at the use of their Reason with Discretion, which afterwards they arrive to, and they are to be Governed accordingly: This is plainly intimated in *Gal.* 4. *beg.* And indeed they will never be so fit to Govern their Children,

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if they be not taught to obey their Parents. There is Inſtruction which is accommodated to their rational Powers, and Correction which is to be applied to their Senſes; and there is great Prudence here to be us'd. Correction is never to be adminiſtred without Inſtruction, for then it will likely loſe the End of it. Hence the *Hebrew* and *Greek* Language have one and the ſame Word for both, both being deſigned for Reformation. Correction is not ordinarily to be uſed, when Conviction by reproof, will as well obtain the End. Horſes, Aſſes, and Fools, are the proper ſubjects of ſuch Diſcipline, *Prov.* 26. 3. Though in ſome Notorious faults it is to be applied, for the warning of other Children to take heed to themſelves. Inſtruction is oftner to be applied than Correction. It muſt not be always a Word and a Blow: Nor may Correction be adminiſtred in a Paſſion, but with a a Meek and Sedate Spirit, that they may be made to read Love in it, and know that it is done for their good, and upon neceſſity. As therefore they grow up to a Capacity, they are to be treated more with reaſon, unleſs they remain fools and incorrigible, without Severity.

NOW the things in which Parents are more particularly, to exerciſe their Authority over their Children, whilſt they are under their Watch, are ſuch as theſe,

1. *THEY are to regulate them in their Works and Recreations.* They are to be fitted for, and brought up to ſome Calling, that they may be uſeful in their Generation; and yet there are Recreations, to be allowed them for Diverſions. Hence that is promiſed as a bleſſing, Zech. 8. 5. *And the ſtreets of the city ſhall be full of boys and girls playing in the ſtreets thereof.* But Children have no deſcretion to order themſelves in this regard, and therefore are to have their Parents order in it; and that there are ſo many Children brought up in Idleneſs, and ſpend their whole time in Play, is the Parents fault, and a neglect of the Authority which God hath veſted them withal. They are to ſet them their buſineſs, and ſee that they attend it; whether in attending Schools for their Inſtruction, or applying themſelves to labour, when fit for it; or in putting them out to ſuch Callings, as they judge moſt convenient for them; this is implied in, *Prov.* 23. 6.

2. *THEY ought to compell them to keep Family Order.* There muſt be Orders in every Family, where there are Parents and Children, elſe God will be diſhonoured by them: and no Child in a Family, of what Age ſoever, is to think himſelf diſcharged from them. One ſuch Perſon in a Family, will put all into a rout. Parents themſelves ought therefore to be exemplary to their Children in this, elſe they will teach them diſorder. There are ſeaſons for the Worſhip of God, ſeaſons for Meats, ſeaſons for Natural Reſt, and preparing themſelves for it. And Parents ought not to indulge their Children in a practical neglect of theſe; but to appoint the Ordinary ſeaſons for theſe things, and uſe their Authority over their Children for complying there-with-all.

3. *THEY ought to exerciſe Authority over them, in regard to their Company.* As Man's Nature enclines him to be Sociable, ſo the Connate Corruption in fallen Man, diſpoſeth him to evil Society; and Children early diſcover the Naughtineſs of their hearts in this regard, by aſſociating themſelves, with ſuch as are lewd; and are apt, very uneaſily to ſubmit themſelves to be under reſtraint in this regard: But as Parents have an Authority, ſo in nothing can they more expreſs their Love to their Children, than in uſing it to lay a reſtraint upon them. We read, Prov. 13. 20. *He that walketh with wiſe men, ſhall be wiſe: but a companion of fools ſhall be deſtroyed.* How watchful therefore ought they to be in this regard? Hence the ſolemn Charge given to a Son, Prov. 1. 10. *My ſon, if ſinners entice thee, conſent thou not.* And 23. 19, 20. *Hear thou, my ſon, and be wiſe, and guide thine heart in the way. Be not amongſt riotous eaters of fleſh.* And as theſe Inſtructions are given with Authority, ſo that Authority is to be uſed in Proſecution of them.

4. *THEY ſhould alſo govern them in their Attendance upon the Publick Ordinances of Worſhip.* As their principal Care ought to be for their Souls; ſo, becauſe God hath ordained the Ordinances of His Houſe, to be the ordinary Means of Salvation, it is their Duty to Command them, and ſee that they are Obeyed in this Matter. Hence that, Gen. 18. 19. *For I know him, that he will command his Children and his houſehold after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord.* And here, as they are to ſee that they do attend, and not keep from the Ordinances, (for which reaſon it is moſt convenient, that they frequent the ſame Aſſembly with their Parents, eſpecially till they come to be at Diſcretion to make a wiſe Choiſe for themſelves,) ſo they ought carefully to reſtain them, from ſuch Aſſemblies, where Heretical Doctrines are taught, or Superſtitious Worſhip is practiſed; that ſo they may not imbibe thoſe things in their Youth, which will be hard to eradicate afterwards.

5. *THEY ought to exerciſe a prudent Authority in the diſpoſal of them in Marriage.* This is the moſt Momentous Change, that befals Perſons in their whole Lives: And that Parents have right in the Ordering of it, the very Moral Heathen were perſwaded, by the light of Nature. The care of *Abraham*, and of *Iſaac* and *Rebecca* upon this account, are commended to us in the Word of God, for our Imitation: And tho' neither Reaſon nor Religion allows Parents to put a force on their Children in this matter, inaſmuch as they cannot put Conjugal Affection into their Children, without which that Relation will not be an Happineſs, but a *Miſery*; yet their *Advice* and *Direction* is to be uſed, and their *Conſent* is to be had ordinarily, except by their ſordid and brutiſh Carriage, they neceſſitate their Children to ſeek redreſs from higher Powers. And more peculiarly are they to exert this Authority in forbidding, and as much as in them lies preventing, their being unequally yoked with Perſons that are of *another Religion.*

Religion. There were therefore a Moral Reaſon in that Law given by *Moſes*, Deut. 7. 3, 4. *Neither ſhalt thou make Marriages with them; thy Daughter thou ſhalt not give unto his Son, nor his Daughter ſhalt thou take unto thy Son. For they will turn away thy Son from following me, that they may ſerve other gods: ſo will the anger of the Lord be kindled againſt you, and deſtroy thee ſuddenly.* And to one of the fore-cited Heads, may be reduced, whatever particular Precepts are given in the word of God, on this account.

USE. AND to quicken Parents to theſe Duties, Let us conſider that God requires it of our hands, and will call us to an account for the Children ſo put under our Charge: Their well-being in this World, and another, hath no little concern in it: and our own Comfort or Sorrow in them. God is wont ordinarily to bleſs faithfulneſs in this regard with good ſucceſs, and we may hope to live in them honourably when we are gone, and to meet them again with Joy, in the Great Day.

[JUNE, 1. 1703.]

SERMON *CLXXVII.*

II. THERE *is an Honour which Children do owe to their Parents*, which God requires of them, and the bonds of Nature do oblige them to pay. And the ſame reaſons that prove and confirm the Superiority of Parents, equally ratify the Duty of Subjection lying upon Children, and that becauſe the Reaſon of the Duties is founded in the Relation, and therefore they are adapted to it. Now the Duties of Honour due from Children to their Parents, will come under Two general Heads, *viz.* 1. A due *Subjection* to their Authority. 2. Affording them *needful Succour* in their Neceſſity. And to one of theſe are all the particular Duties to be referred.

[1.] *A due Subjection to their Authority.* That Parents have an Authority over their Children, was obſerved in the former, and if theſe are not to pay Subjection thereto, that would be in vain and fruſtrated. Now the general and comprehenſive Duty here is, that they yield Obedience to all their Lawful Commands. And here it may be enquired,

Q. *HOW far Children are bound to Obey the Commands of their Parents?*

AND this nextly concerns Active Obedience, by performing of the things ſo Commanded them. As to that which is Paſſive, it will be ſpoken of afterwards. Here then we may take theſe Aſſertions;

1. THAT *the Authority of Parents over their Children is Limited.* It is ſo by the Command of God, who hath not left them a boundleſs Authority; but hath told them how they ſhall, and how they ſhall not exerciſe their power over them, Eph. 6. 4. *And ye Fathers, provoke not your Children to wrath: but bring them up in admonition of the Lord.* Yea, they themſelves are accountable to the Civil Powers for their injuring their Children; and in ſome caſes to repair to them, for Juſtice againſt Rebellious and Contumacious Children, as God appointed in Iſrael: and every well ordered Government allows unto Children a relief againſt the Unreaſonable Treatments of Unnatural Parents.

2. THAT *God hath a Supream Power over both Parents and Children.* They are equally under His Government, & obliged to Obey His Commands; He having and uſing Authority to preſcribe Duties, and give Laws to them. Though the reaſon of the Authority of Parents, and Subjection of Children, is laid in the Relation itſelf, yet God himſelf is the Law-giver unto both; and He alone is the abſolute Sovereign over the whole Creation. Tho' Parents have a Command over their Children, yet God Commands them both, and one as well as the other, is to ſeek the Law at His Mouth.

3. THAT *hence Children are bound equally with their Parents to Obey God*, and muſt be called to an Account before Him for it. They labour of a miſtake, who think that God hath ſo ſubjected Children to their Parents, that they are not to enquire further into their Duty, than the Pleaſure of their Parents; and that if theſe lay any ſinful Commands on their Children, they are without further enquiry to perform them; and that not They, but only their Parents are accountable to God for it; as if theſe and not the other, were guilty of ſin. For tho' Men in Authority, are partakers in other Mens ſins, by Commanding them to do that which God hath forbidden; yet they bring guilt upon themſelves by compliance with ſuch Commands: for every perſon is firſtly ſubject to the Law of God, and by vertue of that Law is ſubject to his Superiours, and muſt be called to give an Account of all his Actions to God, *Rom.* 14. 12. And if they be not careful to Obey God, they will never Obey their Parents from a right Principle. Hence that, Eph. 6. 1. *Children, obey your Parents in the Lord: for this is right.* The meaning whereof is not only becauſe God hath Commanded, but alſo it ſets bounds to the Obedience; and hence that in, Col. 3. 20. *Children, obey your Parents in all things: for this is well-pleaſing unto the Lord.* Is thus to be limitted, viz. *All things which God requires.*

4. *CHILDREN* therefore, as they grow capable, *ought to know what is their Duty in all things.* There are other Commands beſides the Fifth, and they are given Univerſally, and all Men are bound by them, without any reſpect to the Orders that God hath placed Men in. *Thou ſhalt not*, &c. is an Injunction upon every Individual perſon. And altho' Children in their Infant, and Ignorant Age, depend much upon their Parents Inſtruction to teach them what is Duty, and what is Sin; and it will be an horrible Crime in Parents, that neglect ſo to Inſtruct them: yet every Child hath in him a Natural Conſcience, and beſides the common Principles which are engraven on it, there are advantages of acquainting themſelves with the Will of God; and it is their *Duty* to inform themſelves by

them; and it is his Commendation, 2 Tim. 3. 15. *And that from a Child thou hast known the holy Scriptures.* Children have Souls to save or lose as well as Parents, and therefore should acquaint themselves with the way of Salvation, how else should they live and please God.

5. THIS *rightly informed Conscience, is to govern their Obedience to their Parents Commands.* For Man is a Cause by Counsel, and the Word of God is the Rule to direct his Counsel in all that he doth, and he may not lawfully do any thing that is contrary to it, so far as he is, or may be informed by it. And tho' Children ought to learn of their Parents, yet when they have learned, they ought to practice accordingly, else in Obeying their Parents, they disobey God: and from these Premises, we may gather these few Conclusions,

1. *IF Parents Command their Children that which is contrary to the Divine Precept, they are bound with Modesty to refuse Obedience.* I say with Modesty, for tho' they may not dare to do the thing; yet they ought to carry themselves as Children, who bear an high respect to their Parents, and make it appear, that it is not from a contempt of them, but from an awe of God, that they with-hold their Active Obedience: However, that is a plea to be made against all the unlawful Commands of any *Superiour* in the World, in whatsoever he is placed. Act. 5. 29. *We ought to obey God rather than man.* And doubtless, where God's and Men's Commands do interfere, God must be obeyed. For no Authority upon Earth can possibly make void any one of God's Commands, for He is the One Law-giver.

2. *THEY ought to Obey them in all that is Just and Good.* When their Commands are according to the Word of God, they ought to believe, that now God Commands them by their Parents, and therefore they ought not to do it as of constraint, but with a willing Mind, and with all Alacrity. For no Obedience but what is voluntary, is acceptable to God. Hence that Commendation, Phil. 2.22. *As a Son with the Father, he hath served with me in the Gospel.* For Children to do what they are bidden is better than to refuse; but to do it with reluctancy, and tokens of displeasure, and murmuring is unworthy of the Relation. Children should study thus to please them, and take the greatest content, when they find their Obedience to give content to their Parents. Nor ought they to be displeased, because their Lusts are crossed, and sinful Courses checked by such Commands; but on the other hand to Thank God for such Parents, as carefully use their Authority, to keep them from the path of the destroyer.

3. *IN things that are not in themselves Sins, nor in their Circumstances, they ought to Obey without disputing, so long as they are under their Parents Care & Charge.* Doubtless when they come to be for themselves, they have a liberty to use their own Prudence in ordering their Affairs, tho' with a due deference to the Advice of their Parents; but as long as under their Wing, their lawful Commands are to be complied withal. As to their Duty in things indifferent, I debate not, till Men are agreed what these things are: But if by them is intended such things as are in themselves neither Sins nor Duties, but may be either one or other, according to Circumstances; doubtless Parents Commands will make them a Duty in Children, who are not at their own dispose; unless it be evident that in the Circumstances, God would be dishonoured and disobeyed. And tho' it may be lawful for Children who have discretion, humbly and submissively to plead with their Parents about the inconvenience apparent in the thing, yet withal to testify a readiness to acknowledge Parental Authority, if they persist in their pleasure: And doubtless this is comprehended in the *all things* directed in, *Col.* 3. 20.

4. *WHEN they are Married, tho' they owe a reverence to their Parents, yet they are more at their own dispose.* They now set up for themselves, and make a distinct Family, whereof they have the charge upon them; and are not under such Servitude as before: Nevertheless there are things in which they ought to testify a due regard to their Parents, and that not only in respect of the solemn Instructions given them to fear God, but in other things of greater liberty. It is therefore a commendation that God gives the *Rechabites*, That they Obeyed their Father in a matter which otherwise had not obliged them, *Jer.* 35. 15, 16.

5. *IN the discharge of Publick Trust they are bound to the Law.* Children are sometimes called to Civil or Ecclesiastical Offices, during their Parents Lives; and though this doth not discharge them from a Reverential respect to them, (on which account *Solomon* is commended for this to his Mother, 1 *Kings* 2. 19. And if they are capable of giving them light into their Duty, it is very proper for them to consult with them, and take their advice, so far as is for their help,) yet they are not to obey them in any thing, which is contrary to the Rule of their administration; nor to avoid the doing of that which is right, for fear of displeasing them. It is therefore charged on *Ahaziah*, as his Sin, 2 Chron. 22. 3. *His Mother was his Counsellour to do wickedly.*

BUT we may proceed to the more particular Duties incumbent on Children, during their Minority, to testify their Subjection to their Parents in; and these are more especially,

(1.) *AN endeavour to get and keep a deep impression upon their hearts, of the Just & Right Authority of their Parents over them.* All Obedience to God must proceed from a right Principle; now the Principle of this Obedience, is because they are their Parents: And this is to sway them against whatsoever Corruption in them might improve to weaken their Obedience to them. The word, *Thy Father, and thy Mother*, must carry weight in it, to over-ballance other things: Nor should any thing that cannot remove this Relation subvert their Obedience. Tho' they are poor in the World, and cannot do so much for them as others can

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for theirs; tho' they are of mean Port in the World, and are poſſibly deſpiſed by their Neighbours among whom they live: tho' they are Moroſe, and do not carry it ſo obliging to their Children as becomes the love of ſuch a Relation: Nay, tho' they are wicked & fear not God, but leud in their lives; when it ſhould humble them, yet they are to remember, that God hath made them their Parents, and given them Authority over them. And this Relation is as ſtrong, and the Obligation as forcible, on ſuch whoſe Parents are the Pooreſt and moſt Ignoble, as if they were the greateſt Princes on Earth.

(2.) *FROM this Principle they muſt carefully comply with ſuch things as theſe*: viz.

1. *THEY muſt hearken to their Counſels which are Good.* True, if they adviſe them to do a wicked thing, they are to avoid it, as before; but if they tell them their Duty, and call upon them to attend it, or warn them againſt any thing that is evil, and charge them to abſtain from it; not only are they to comply with it, becauſe it is in itſelf juſt and right; but the Authority which it comes withal, ought to bear upon them, and have a deep impreſſion on their Minds. There is therefore Emphaſis in that, Prov. 4. 1. *Hear, ye Children, the Inſtruction of a Father.* And 31.1. *The prophecy that his Mother taught him.* To remember, this I had from my Father and Mother, who loved me, and ſought my good, and ſhall I not be careful to obey it? So he, *Prov.* 4. 3, 4.

2. *TO receive their Rebukes with great Submiſſion.* Children are too apt to forget themſelves, and do things that are worthy of a reproof. And Parents, who love their Souls, cannot but chide them for it, tell them of their fault, ſhew them how they have Sinned againſt God, hurt their own Souls, grieved them, and accordingly to diſcover their juſt diſpleaſure at them: Now it is the Duty of ſuch to bear them Patiently, and not reply upon them; tho' if innocent, they may meekly plead it, and Parents ought to hearken to them, for they ought to do ſo to their very Slaves, *Job* 21. 13, 14. Yea they ſhould take reproofs kindly, and take warning by them, and be more heedful to themſelves for the time forward, not to diſpleaſe or grieve them; nay, to be Thankful to God for the faithfulneſs of their Parents.

3. *TO receive their Corrections, with an Obediential Frame and Carriage.* Children are not to think that their Parents hate them, becauſe they Correct them for their faults, but aſcribe it to their tender love to, and care for them, and to prevent a greater evil from befalling them: And the Parents ought ſo prudently to manage this, as to leave ſufficient Conviction of this love, in the manner of it; yet Children ought not to riſe up againſt their Parents in it, tho' they may think themſelves innocent, or that they uſe over ſevere diſcipline to them, but to uſe Obedience to them in the thing, tho' they uſe great Arbitrarineſs in it. Hence that, Heb. 9. 12. *We have had Fathers of our fleſh, who corrected us after their own pleaſure, and we gave them reverence.*

4. *THEY ſhould ſtudy to pleaſe, and fear to offend them.* That there is a Fear included in this Honour, is evident by, Lev. 19. 3. *Ye ſhall fear every man his Mother and his Father.* And without this reverential fear, it is not poſſible that Children ſhould diſcharge the Duties they owe to their Parents; there is therefore an high reſpect they muſt entertain for them; and accordingly account it their intereſt to give them content, as far as may be, and no ſmall infelicity to have them diſpleaſed at them at all; much more by their ſinful provocation, or doing any thing which they know will be grievous to them: So that tho' they think ſuch a thing lawful in itſelf, yet if it will provoke them, they are to deny their own deſires in it, when they are under no Obligation of Duty to do it. And if they know that they have grieved them at any time, they ſhould ſeek all lawful courſes, to obtain their reconciliation.

5. *THEY ought to depend on them to be directed in their Employment of their Time, and Manner of Occupying themſelves in it.* Children are not to come and go, and do as they pleaſe, but to take their direction from their Parents about it; and therefore they are to do nothing of Weight, but by their advice and direction; and accordingly to ask it of them, and be always ready to give them a true Account of what they have done; and if they have a deſire to any lawful liberty or diverſion, to ask their leave, and reſtrain themſelves to their Approbation, and not exceed the limits which they ſet them. Chriſt himſelf paid ſuch ſubjection to his Parents, tho' one of them was but ſuppoſed to be ſo, *Luk.* 2. 51.

6. *THEY ought to be content with the Supports, which their Parents are capable of Allowing them.* They muſt adore the Governing Providence of God, and be ſatisfyed to Live accordingly: And tho' they cannot do for them as others who abound more, yet, to accept thankfully of their love and kindneſs in that little which they do cheerfully allow them out of what they have: yea, to think their Parents better know what is convenient for them, than they themſelves do.

7. *THEY ought to hide their Parents Infirmities,* and not to deſpiſe them, on account thereof, or reproach them for them. And that whether Natural Infirmities, or Sinful, or thoſe that grow upon them by the decays that accompany Old Age; and all theſe are included in that, Prov. 23. 22. *Hearken unto thy Father that begat thee, and deſpiſe not thy Mother when ſhe is old.*

8. *THEY ought to take their Advice and Conſent, in changing their Condition by Marriage.* I need ſay no more in this matter, than, if Parents have an Authoritative influence into this Affair, which was formerly proved, then Children muſt needs owe their Obedience in it. We have therefore that put as one braud upon *Eſau*, to augment his ill Character, Gen 26. 34, 35. *He took to wife Judith the Daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Baſhemath the Daughter of Elon the Hittite: Which were a grief of mind unto Iſaac and to Rebekah.*

[2.] THE other thing in which Children are to Honour their Parents, is, by *Affording them needful Succours in their Necessity*. It is here supposed, that Parents may in Providence be reduced to such Necessity; and it is very frequently so, especially with such as Live to Old Age, and past their Labour. And here these things are observable,

1. *CHILDREN ought to get their hearts deeply possessed, with the great Obligations they are under to their Parents.* And here, besides that they were the Instruments of their Being, which is a Natural tie; all the care, pains, patience, labour and expence laid out upon them, ought to be thought of by them, and leave Conviction on them, that they can never sufficiently compensate it to them, nor do any thing too much to testify their gratitude to them. And very often, there is this particularly to consider, *viz.* That Parents have been Necessitated to Labour hard, and lay out their Earnings for the Support & Education of their Children, till they were capable of doing Service for their own Support. Now this leaves matter of Conviction on Children, that it is a due debt which they owe to them, to retaliate when they are become helpless to themselves. And hence,

2. IN *General*, it is the Duty of Children, to *take care of their Parents, to their Ability, that they be not a Publick Charge.* And it is a dishonour that they do to them, if, when they are able to do it for them, they turn them over to the Alms of the People: And this is manifestly intended in 1 Tim. 5. 3, 4. *Honour widows that are widows indeed. But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their Parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.* v. 16. *If any man or woman that believeth, have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the Church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.* And he mentions the Church, because in Times of Persecution, Christians were often Out-lawed; whereas the support of the Indigent & Impotent, belongs not properly & ordinarily, to the Ecclesiastical, but Civil Constitution: however it tells us, that none is to be reckoned Indigent of common Support, that hath Children or Grand-Children, that are able to relieve him.

3. *MORE Particularly* there are two things, in which this care is to be exerted by them,

1. *DURING their Abode with them*, in a cheerful laying out their labour & endeavour, that their Lives may be comfortable. Children that have been the Charge of their Parents, to bring them up to be capable of doing something, should not presently, in hope of doing better for themselves, desert their helpless Parents, as thinking it now time to look to themselves, and let them shift as they can: they ought not to now to leave them so long as they stand in need of them, till such time as they are called by God's Providence to set up Families of their own; but think their labour & earnings well laid out, if their Parents Lives may be made any way comfortable by it; and more Credibly than if it were expended for the adorning of their own Bodies with Superfluities.

2. *WHEN they are gone Abroad*, and set up Families by themselves, they are still to take care of them, according to their Abilities. They are not to throw off the care of them, under a pretence of a Charge of their own. It is true, that every Man's own business is to see to the welfare of his own Family; but still, it is a great Obligation, not to forsake their Aged and Poor Parents; and therefore according to the Portion of the World, which God affords them to make them sharers of it; yea, to deny themselves and theirs of many conveniences, rather than their own Parents should suffer for want. Eminent is the Example of *Joseph*, in providing honourably for his good and aged Father, in a time of great straits; and no less commendable that of *Ruth*, in labouring to Support her Mother-in-law, who was past her labour, and under Poverty. And the Providence of God, hath very frequently in this World requited the tender care of such Children, to observation; and peculiarly is this tenderness to be shewn in the time of Sickness, by seeing that they want neither for due tendence, or any other relief, which their Condition calls for; and readily bearing with their Infirmities, and studiously avoiding any thing, which may any way grieve them; and also to take care for their decent Burial, according to their Condition and Ability. These are the Principal heads, to which Children's Duties are referred.

USE. AND let Children be hereby Admonished of their Duty, and advised to be careful in the practice of it, and humbled under the Conviction of their many short comings in it. Remember, this is the way to please God, *Col.* 3. 20. And what greater & more forcible Argument can be used with such as do believe that it is our happiness to please God? And on the other hand, the neglect of paying them this Honour, and casting contempt upon them, either by Disobedience, or by Neglecting of them, will highly displease God, and provoke His holy Anger, to pour out signal Effects of his wrath upon them. Hence that, Prov. 30. 17. *The eye that mocketh at his Father, and despiseth to obey his Mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.* And remember; you that are Children, either are, or may be Parents; and God is wont very often to testify his Acceptance or dislike of our Carriage to our Parents, by an Answerable Carriage of our Children to us, which will afford Occasion of Comfort or Sorrow to us afterwards.

[JUNE, 29. 1703.]

SERMON CLXXVIII.

Secondly. WE have Considered the Order of Superiority, which is purely *Natural*, viz. of *Parents* and *Children*: It follows that we take an Account of that which is *Political*: The *former* is called *Natural*, because the Relation itself is made by Natural Generation; whereas those that *follow*, are not so.

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For tho' the Light of Nature will teach us, that if there are ſuch Relations, there are anſwerable Duties belonging to them; as alſo the neceſſity at leaſt of ſome of them, for the well-being of Mankind; and that therefore the Infinitely wiſe God hath ordained them: Yet the placing of theſe Relations between theſe and thoſe Individual Perſons is not Natural, but Arbitrary, and ariſeth partly from the Governing Providence of God, partly from a mutual ſtipulation between the Parties themſelves: And theſe may be diſtributed either into thoſe that are more *Private*, and are called, *Œconomical*, or thoſe which are more *Publick*, and are by way of ſpecialty called *Political*. A brief Account of each of theſe may ſuffice.

I. THE *Œconomical* is that which belongs to the Conſtitution of Private Families; which are the firſt foundation of Humane Societies, and out of which all other do ariſe; and do neceſſarily require that there be Order in them, without which Mankind would fall into a Rout. And here are Two Relations to be obſerved, 1. That which is between *Husband & Wife*. 2. That which is between the *Maſter & Servant*: And theſe may be taken up in Order:

[1.] THE Relation is made between *Husband & Wife*: And I mention this firſt for Two Reaſons,

1. BECAUSE *this Relation comes neareſt to that which is Natural*. For tho' not Nature, but mutual Conſent, makes theſe Individual Perſons Correlates in this Order; yet the natural Neceſſity of this Relation was founded in the Order and End of Man's Creation. Humane Nature was at firſt confined to one Man, and one Woman, by whom it was to be Propagated and Multiplyed in it's Individuals, which was the reaſon why God made a diſtinction of Sex between them: And to prevent Confuſion, God from the Firſt appointed Marriage, as a neceſſary Medium of it, (plainly intimated in, *Gen.* 2. 14.) And in this He laid a foundation for diſtinct Families, to ſet up each by themſelves; hence one Man was to have but one Wife at once, nor would ever have had occaſion for a ſecond, if Man's Apoſtacy had not opened a Door for Mortality to break in upon him; and this the Prophet argues from God's making but One, *Mal.* 2. 15. So that if this Order be not upheld, either Mankind muſt ceaſe, or Mankind muſt degenerate into the State and Order of *Brutes*, which is altogether diſagreeable.

2. THESE *are the moſt Neceſſary, as well as principal Parts of a Family*. I do not ſay, that there can be no Family without theſe, the Death of one of theſe doth not neceſſarily diſſolve a Family, tho' it doth mutilate it; nor is it compleat where this Relation is not. It was the firſt reaſon of making Families, and had Man continued in his Integrity, it would have been neceſſary; whereas, whether the other were not introduced by the Apoſtacy, may afford matter of conſideration.

IN the further Proſecution of the Duties between theſe, we are to take Notice, that of all the Orders which are unequals, theſe do come neareſt to an Equality, and in ſeveral reſpects they ſtand upon even ground. Theſe do make a Pair, which infers ſo far a *Parity*: They are in the Word of God called *Yoke-Fellows*, and ſo are to draw together in the Yoke. Nevertheleſs, God hath alſo made an imparity between them, in the Order preſcribed in His Word, and for that reaſon there is a Subordination, and they are ranked among unequals. And from this we may obſerve ſome Duties that are *mutual* or common between them, and others that are *proper* to each.

(1.) THE *Mutual* Duties are ſuch as belong to each equally, by vertue of the Covenant Relation they ſtand under: And are more eſpecially ſuch as theſe,

1. *CONJUGAL Love*. We formerly conſidered, that Love being ſaid to be *the fulfilling of the Law*, it is in that reſpect common to every Relation that is placed between Men. Nevertheleſs this Love is ſpecify'd, according to the Nature of the Order Perſons are in; that therefore which belongs to Married Perſons is *Conjugal Love*; which is therein diſtinguiſhed from that which is due to any other Relation whatſoever. There is alſo a *ſpecial Love*, which comprehends the whole Duty of the Husband to his Wife, in all the parts of it; and is put in contradiſtinction to the Submiſſion, which expreſſeth the whole Duty of the Wife, *Col* 3. 18, 19. But this Conjugal Love is *Mutual*, and is the proper Cement of this Relation: And it is enforced from that Conjugal Union, by which they become One Fleſh: And tho' this Oneneſs be not *Natural*, but *Voluntary*, yet it is the neareſt relative Conjunction in the World, and on that account it requires the intimateſt Affection; and if it be rightly made, it follows from a Preference that theſe have, each of other in their hearts, above all the World, on account of this Relation: For which reaſon it is compared to Love between Chriſt & his Church, Eph. 5. 25, &c. *Husbands, love your wives, even as Chriſt alſo loved the Church, and gave himſelf for it*——. And the true Comfort which is to be hoped for from this Relation, muſt derive from this Love, without which it will prove to be, of all the moſt unhappy.

2. A *ſpecial Care and Tenderneſs one of another*. And this follows from the Love now mentioned, and is indeed the end and uſe of it: And in this they ought with an holy emulation, to ſtrive which ſhall outſtrip the other. They are to be Helps one to another, and this Helpfulneſs is equally incumbent on them; and there are many things wherein they are to expreſs this Helpfulneſs of theirs, which I ſhall not diſtinctly inſiſt on. There is a ſtudy and care, to pleaſe one the other which belongs to them in common: Hence that in 1 *Cor.* 7. 33, 34. They ſhould, ſo far as may be without ſinning againſt God, endeavour to give each other *Content*, that they may fortify and preſerve Amity and Sweetneſs in their whole Converſation; remembring that by Marriage they are made inſeparable, and cannot without Sin, at leaſt on one ſide, be put aſunder, or depart

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one from the other. Hence they ought to ſtudy each others Tempers, and prudently accommodate themſelves thereunto, ſo as not to irritate the Corruption that is in them; to bear with each others Infirmities, Natural or Sinful, conſidering themſelves as the frail Children of fallen *Adam*; and making the Allowances which they ſtand in need of having made to them: To chuſe the fitteſt Seaſons to Reprove each other, for things which their Love and Duty calls for; and uſe the greateſt meekneſs in the application of them: Such was that of *Abigail* to her Churliſh *Nabal*, 1 *Sam.* 25. 36, 37. They ſhould be careful of each others Health: And carry to one another with greateſt Tenderneſs in Time of Sickneſs, expreſſing a very peculiar Compaſſion. They are to be very tender of each others Reputation; not only to bear, but alſo to cover and not diſcover any thing, which may render them a reproach to others; and this either by ſilence when it may be kept ſecret, or by the beſt and moſt candid Interpretation, when it cannot otherwiſe be hidden.

3. A *Mutual endeavour to promote each others Eternal Salvation.* To do all they can to help one another to Heaven; and in nothing can they equally ſhew their beſt Love. Conſidering they have but a little while to Converſe together in this Life, they ſhould do their utmoſt to be Inſtrumental, that they may meet and dwell together in the Kingdom of Glory, where their Love ſhall be perfect. And for this end, they ſhould be to each others *Patterns of Piety*, and by their Exemplary Religious Carriages to ſtir up an holy Emulation between them; to call upon and quicken each other to the Fear of God; and freely to communicate their Experiences, and to be much in *Secret Prayer* to God for one another, That God would Bleſs them indeed, and make them partakers in His Love; and Travail in Birth for their Converſion and Salvation: And all this is intimated in that, 1 Cor. 7. 16. *For what knoweſt thou, O wife, whether thou ſhalt ſave thy husband? Or how knoweſt thou, O man, whether thou ſhalt ſave thy wife?*

4. A *joint Intereſt in governing the reſt of their Family.* If God in his Providence hath beſtowed on them Children or Servants, they have each of them a ſhare in the government of them; tho' there is an inequality in the degree of this Authority, and the Husband is to be acknowledged to hold a *Superiority*, which the Wife is practically to allow; yet in reſpect of all others in the Œconomical Society, ſhe is inveſted with an Authority over them by God; and her Husband is to allow it to her, and the others are to carry it to her as ſuch: Touching *Children*, the *letter* of the Command expreſſeth it; and it is urged elſewhere with *Emphaſis*, as we formerly obſerved: And as to *Servants*, the Metaphorical and Synecdochical uſage of the words *Father* and *Mother*, heretofore obſerved, implys it; for tho' the Husband be the Head of the Wife, yet ſhe is an Head of the Family.

(2.) LET us proceed to the Duties which are *Proper* to each of theſe Correlates, or belong to the Husband as he is Superiour, and the Wife as Inferiour. That there is ſuch an *inequality* fixed by the Divine Precept, the Word of God abundantly teſtifies; how far this is augmented by the Apoſtacy, (as is intimated in Gen. 3. 16. *And thy deſire ſhall be to thy husband, and he ſhall rule over thee,*) I ſhall not now enquire; only obſerve, that it is become more grievous by reaſon of the ſinful Frame befallen both, which makes the one Imperious, and the other Impatient of having any reſtraint: Nevertheleſs, this Order was placed from the Creation; and appointed by the Law of ſpecial Government, and therefore the Apoſtle argues it from Reaſons fetch'd from the Order of Creation, as well as the Apoſtacy, 1 Tim. 2. 13, 14. *For Adam was firſt formed then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, was in the tranſgreſſion.* And we are acquainted, that the Reaſon of the Woman's Creation was the ſupply of Man's Need and Comfort, *Gen.* 2. 18. So that altho' it be Arbitrary, whether this Woman will accept of this Man for her Husband; yet in caſe ſhe doth ſo, ſhe in ſo doing takes him in that Relation which carries ſuch a Superiority in it, and conſequently engageth herſelf to carry it to him as ſo: For this belongs to the Terms of the Marriage Covenant. Let us then take an Account of theſe ſeverally;

1. THE *Husband's Duty as Superiour*, is in Scripture called *Love*, by way of eminency and ſpecialty; and therefore the Precept laid on them, is every where expreſſed by this Term; as *Eph* 5. 25. *Col.* 3. 19. and elſewhere: And for the intenſeneſs of it, it is reſembled to the Love of Chriſt to his Church; and it is unqueſtionable, that the Spirit of God uſeth this word to intimate, that he ought to manage all his Authority in all reſpects, ſo as to expreſs the entireneſs of his Love to her; and not under pretence of Authority, to forget that ſhe is the neareſt Companion that he hath in the World, and is his ſecond *Self*; ſo the Apoſtle argues, Eph. 5. 28, 29. *So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies: he that loveth his wife loveth himſelf. For no man ever yet hated his own fleſh; but nouriſheth and cheriſheth it, even as the Lord the church.* And tho' if the Wife finds her Husband not ſo Kind, as ſhe would Rationally expect, ſhe ought to acknowledge it a fruit of the Apoſtacy, and bear it as a Conſequent of Sin, yet this is no excuſe to him. Now from hence there are theſe Duties more eſpecially belonging to the Husband,

1. HE *ought to ſhew a ſingular Tenderneſs*, conſidering her as the *weaker Veſſel.* Thus he is directed, 1 *Pet.* 3. 7. Women are uſually attended with more bodily Infirmities than Man; and peculiarly in breeding, bearing and nurſing Children, which draw forth not a little of their ſinful Impatience; and a great deal of bearing and forbearing is neceſſary to be uſed on the Husband's part; and the rather,

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because they may read their own Sin in it, and ought to adore the Sovereignty of God in making this difference; and to acknowledge themselves to be Instrumental, in much of the Trial which they meet with.

2. HE *ought carefully to maintain her Honour and Authority in the Family.* He is to give her Honour, 1 *Pet.* 3.7. And indeed, He doth but consult his own Honour in so doing; for her Credit redounds to him: And particularly to see that her Place be maintained in the Family; and that both Children and Servants pay her the due respects, who are too apt to despise her, and will trample on her Authority, if they see themselves countenanced by him. How tender was *Abraham* of *Sarah*'s Authority, when despised by *Hagar*, Gen 16. 5, 6. He ought to be more peculiarly severe in bearing testimony against Contempt shewn to his Wife, because her wrong belongs to him to right.

3. In sum, HE *ought to carry himself to her, so as in all things to approve himself worthy to be her Head.* The Spirit of God by the Apostle, puts this title upon him, Eph. 5. 23. *The Husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church: and the Saviour of the body.* And this Comparison affords matter of suitable Instruction to the Man, how he ought to carry himself in his Place. The word *Head*, is not only used as a Note of Superiority, as it is very frequently in the Book of God; but being a comparison taken from a thing Natural, it carrys in it Instruction about the *Nature* of this Superiority, and Way in which it is to be used, by all Persons to whom it is attributed: And there are more especially these Three Things pointed at in it;

1. TO *shew a singular Wisdom & Knowledge in his whole Conduct.* It is true, There is Duty from the Correlate, arising from the Relation it self, which obligeth the Conscience, tho' the Subject of it be defective in the discharge of the Duties arising from it: Hence that in, 1 Pet. 2. 18. *Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.* The reason whereof is of equal force in other Orders, because it intends the Connection which God hath made in the Precept, between the Relation and the Duties; and both the Relate and Correlate, are accountable to God for their demeanure; but still the Duty abides on Men in every Relation, to carry themselves worthy of it, and that is by acquainting themselves with the Duties of the Relation, and practising a careful Conformity thereunto. Now it is the Prerogative of the Head, in the Body Natural, to be the Seat of the Understanding, which it is to employ and apply for the right Conducting of the whole Body. And if the Husband would maintain his Superiority, he ought to study to excel in Wisdom and Prudence: And how shall he be a leader to his Wife in ways of Discretion or Piety, if he doth not excel in these Gifts? It is their Duty, 1 Pet. 3. 7. *To dwell with them according to Knowledge.* But how shall they do this, if they have it not? He ought therefore to do as the Good Man is Characterized, *Psal.* 112. 5. *To guide his Affairs with discretion.*

2. TO *use singular Care, in providing things meet for her.* Tho' the Head be principal part of the Natural Body, yet it is a Constituent part of the Body, and hath therefore a Sympathy with it, and cannot but be careful for it; and its great Contrivance is for the Comfort of it, and keeping off of Injuries from it. As therefore it belongs to the Man to lay out his Providence, and Endeavours for the good of his whole Family, so more particularly & eminently for his Wife, who is more closely united to him, by special Bonds of Propinquity than any other Member of it: Hence that, Eph. 5. 29. *For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it.* He should therefore always be contriving and laying himself out for her Comfort, that she may not want any thing that is needful for it, that comes within his Ability to do for her.

3. TO *lead and guide her with Pious Counsel, and a Godly Example.* He ought to use his Superiority, as with tenderness, so with greatest Reason. The Head is to guide the Body, and order it's Affairs, as it is it's own body; and as the Husband hath a Duty of Conducting his Wife, so he ought to do it, with that which may command her, as she is a Cause by Counsel, wherein there is a manifest difference between the thing used in the Comparison, and the Subject to which it is applied. We find such a Title put on the Husband, Prov. 2. 17. *The guide of her youth*: which implies a power of direction. Nevertheless, He must remember, that it is for God, and for his Glory that he ought to do it; and for that reason he is to require nothing of her, but what is agreeable to the revealed Will of God: As he is her Head, he ought to be able to back his Counsels with the Word of God; and lay before her a sufficient Conviction of her Duty, to comply with him therein; for he hath no Authority of Compulsion; tho' there are ways in which he may lawfully let her see his dislike of her refusing to comply with his just demands of her: And to give force to these, he ought to go before her in Exemplary Love and Godliness; and let her see, that he requires nothing of her, but what he is willing and ready to do, so far as it belongs to him in his Order and Relation. Thus in general we have the Husband's Duty. And as to particulars, I refer you to such as handle the several Cases depending.

2. THE *Duty of the Wife, as she is Inferiour*, is frequently in Scripture called *Submission*: See *Eph.* 5. 22. *Col.* 3. 18. The word used there is a general word, and signifies to be ordered under another, or to keep Order, being a Metaphor from a Band of Souldiers, or an Army; and comprehends under it the Duty of Inferiours, in every Rank and Order which God hath placed them in; and is therefore applied to Children in respect of their Parents; the Wife in regard of her Husband, Servants in respect of their Masters, and Young Persons with regard of such as are Aged, 1 *Pet.* 5. 5. And hence

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the Submission here required, is not to be measured by the Notation or import of the Word it self, but by the Quality of the Relation to which it is applied. It is therefore to be in general observed, that this Submission is not the same with the Subjection required of Children to their Parents, or the Obedience due from Servants to their Masters. But as there is such a subordination intended in it, as requires the Wife to testify her Acknowledgment of her Husband's Superiority; so it is such as is to be managed so by the Husband, as that his Wife may take delight in it, and not account it a Slavery, but a Liberty and Priviledge; and the Wife ought to carry it so to her Husband, as he may take Content in her: And whatsoever is contrary to this, and is rendred grievous to either Party, deriveth not from the Precept, but from the Corruption there is in the Hearts of Men. Accordingly, the special Duties incumbent on Wives in this Relation, are such as these: (For I here meddle not with those that belong to them under the Seventh Command, but refer them thither.)

1. SHE *ought to entertain in her Heart, a reverend Respect for her Husband.* This must be the root and spring of all that Subjection which she pays to him, else she will either not pay it, or do it hypocritically. This therefore is required as a thing carefully to be looked after, Eph. 5. 33. *Let the wife see that she Reverence her Husband.* Therefore the word firstly signifys *to Fear*, and is of an Active signification: It sometimes is used for that *Horror* which siezeth a Person upon the apprehension of some great Danger Threatning: But for the most part it is improved in the New-Testament, to express the Reverence which an *Inferiour* conceiveth for a *Superiour*, on account of that Superiority, and is applicable to all the Relations of this kind: It is not a *slavish Fear*, which is nourished with hatred or aversion; but a *noble* and *generous Fear*, which proceeds from Love. The Wife ought to have such an Honourable respect for her Husband, as should make her to be very careful that she offer nothing to him, that should justly offend him; but count it her Conjugal Happiness to enjoy his kind and tender respects for her: And this she ought to maintain by a due consideration of the Duty of the Relation: Tho' the observation of his worth and good demeanure is a good help to fortify it, and the consideration that the Happiness of the Married Estate hath a main dependance on the good Correspondence between them.

2. TO *study & use all lawful ways to oblige him.* To do any thing Sinful for this, is too much, and will displease God, whom we ought to Reverence more than any Creature whatsoever: But there is an Art or Cunning which is Commendable, viz. *To acquaint our selves with the Tempers or Disposition or Inclination of one whom we have a peculiar respect for, and wisely to accommodate our selves to it*; than which there can be nothing in Ordinary Conversation more obliging: And this is proper in the Case before us; this must not be to nourish any wicked way in them, which is another thing.

3. TO *hearken to him, in his lawful Counsels and Demands.* It is true, as was formerly observed, if a *Superiour* advise, or Command one that is Subject to him, any thing which is contrary to the revealed Will of God, he is to refuse to do it, observing a suitable decorum in the manner of the refusal; and the reason is, because God is Superiour to both, and all the Duties of all Relations are prescribed and bounded by his Command: But in other things there is a Duty of Compliance; though a Wife certainly hath greater liberty of debating the Prudence of the thing: However, both respect and common Interest oblige her carefully to Consult him in every matter of weight; to take his Direction in things of common concern between them; and in things indifferent to chuse rather to gratify his Demands, than please her own Humours; and to be sure to do no unnecessary thing, which she knows will offer Provocation to him.

4. TO *take delight in his Honour, as her own, & use means to uphold it.* The Husbands Honour is her Credit, and she then Honours her self, when she most Credits him: It is therefore one piece of the Commendation of the *Vertuous Woman*, Prov. 31. 23. *Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.* She ought therefore to carry it in all things among Men, so as that Men may not for her foolish Behaviour, reflect on her Husband; as they will certainly do, if she be guilty on that Account. Nor ought she to indulge any thing to his disrepute; but if she knows any thing that would be so, to use all Means that it may not take the Air.

5. TO *rest satisfyed with, and take Content in his Condition.* This Union was made upon Choice; and if she engaged in it deliberately, she knew his Condition in this World, and ought to be willing to be content with the Providence of God in all the Changes that may come over it. A Friend is born for the Day of Adversity; much more then, such a Friend as this: If therefore Providence frown on him, her Duty is to bear with him, and use endeavours by Cheerfulness and Counsels to Encourage him; and whereso ever God shall call him to have his Lot, to be a cheerful Companion to him, and Comfort, *&c.*

6. TO *use Fidelity and Frugality, in managing the outward Concerns of the Family.* It belongs to the Character of a *Vertuous Woman*, Prov. 31. 11. *The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.* She ought therefore to have an inspection over the *Houshold Affairs*, to see that nothing be *wasted*, or *prodigally spent*; that all have what is suitable in due season; that her *Deeds of Charity* be measured suitably; and nothing of any great moment disposed of, without his Knowledge and Approbation: And this belongs not only to such as are *Poor*, but to every Woman that will take this Relation upon her, let her be never so *Noble*: For doubtless, this Paragraph in the Chapter, contains a Description of one that is fit to make a Wife for a Prince.

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USE. WE may learn from the Premiſes, *A good Rule for the making of Happy Families.* Let ſuch as ſtand in this Relation one to another, ſtudy and practice more theſe Duties, and endeavour to out-do each other in that Conjugal Love, and the regular expreſſions of it; and wait upon God for his Grace to help them in ſo doing. This is the way to have Piety, & Peace and Proſperity to dwell under ſuch a Roof: For there God will command the Bleſſing. And if ſuch do meet at any time with a Croſs in this Relation, let them examine themſelves whether there hath not been ſome notable Defect in theſe regards, and be humbled before God for it. This will be the way to recover His Favour, & to live together as the fellow-Heirs of Eternal Life.

[JULY 27. 1703.]

SERMON *CLXXIX.*

[2.] WE proceed to conſider the Relation which is made between the *Maſter & Servant*; which alſo belongs to the *Œconomical* Order, and goeth into the Conſtitution of a Family; tho' not ſo principally and neceſſarily as the *former*; and therefore it is put in Order after that. And here we are to obſerve, that *Maſter* is not to be taken *excluſively* but *incluſively* of the *Miſtreſs*, who alſo hath a power of Authority over Servants; as was obſerved under the former.

BEFORE we proceed to conſider the Duties belonging to the Correlates in this Order, it is requiſite that we enquire firſt into the *ground* or *foundation* of the Relation it ſelf; whether it be appointed by God; when, & how, & how far it is to be reduced to the *Law of Nature*, or *Moral Law*. That there is ſuch a Relation, *de facto*, is apparent; but how it came about, is matter of Diſpute; ſome aſſerting that the Relation between Maſter and Servant, is as Natural as that between Parents and Children; others conſtantly aſſerting, that the Relation it ſelf is made by Men's corrupt Wills; and that it is unlawful for any to take to himſelf the Authority of a *Maſter*, or for any to ſubmit to the Condition of a *Servant*: Whereas others go on in a *middle way*, which is more agreeable to Truth: And for the diſtinct taking up of this matter, I ſhall briefly offer the following Obſervations;

1. THAT *the Order under conſideration, is* Œconomical. The Titles of *Lord* and *Servant*, are ſometimes uſed for every ſort of Relation between Superiours and Inferiours: But the Nature and Quality of the Subjection is diverſe in them, and to be meaſured from the Relation it ſelf, and the End or Deſign of it. But more peculiarly, we are here to diſtinguiſh it from the Lordſhip and Service between Civil Rulers and their Subjects.

2. HENCE *the Right of Dominion, and the Duty of Servitude, is limited to that which is proper to a Family.* A Family indeed is ſometimes conſidered more *largely*, and ſo it comprehends not only a *Tribe*, but alſo a *Nation*, as we find it often uſed in Scripture; but in a more *ſtrict* and *appropriate* ſenſe, it intends a *Private Society* of Mankind, which is Domeſtick; to the compleatneſs whereof there are Three Orders combined, Huſband and Wife, Parents and Children, Maſters and Servants: Which Orders being different, there are the diverſe Rules which belong to them: And becauſe no Society can conſiſt or attain the End of it, without Order, and every Member of it ought to be obliged to Order; there muſt be Duties anſwerable lying upon them: And this the very Light of Nature will give Teſtimony unto: Hence that, 1 Tim. 3. 4. *One that ruleth well his own houſe, having his children in ſubjection with all gravity.* But theſe Duties muſt hold a ſubordination to, and not either claſh with, or encroach upon thoſe that are proper to *Publick Societies*, or Civil Government.

3. THAT *ſuch a State of Servitude, as is* Œconomical, *was incompatible with Man's State of Integrity.* For altho' there would have been inequality among Men neceſſarily following from the Relations that God placed Men in; yet ſuch a Relation as this is, was neither neceſſary nor adapted to the State of Innocence. Man was Created in a State of Liberty compleatly furniſhed with the Image of God, and made for Dominion over the Inferiour Creatures of the Viſible Creation, *Gen.* 1. 26. Which Dominion would have belonged to every Man, when grown to the uſe of Reaſon; who was then to be at his own diſpoſe; whereas the moſt eaſy Servitude Œconomical, hath that in it, that the Servant is not at his own diſpoſal; but is at the call and beck of another, who is to Govern and Order him in his Actions; as, *Matth.* 8. 9. Nor would there have been any need of it, Man's Condition would have been compleat for his well-being without it.

4. THAT *this Dominion & Servitude were brought in by the Apoſtacy, and are a fruit of the Curſe.* The Reaſon why the Pagan Philoſophers aſcribed it to the Law of Nature is plain, *viz.* Becauſe they were altogether ignorant of Man's primitive State of Perfection, and conſidered Mankind in the Condition which they found him in, which was under the Ruines of the Apoſtacy; which had they known, they would have been otherwiſe minded. And when great Divines do ſay that the Law of Nature requires this Relation, they do not intend it of the primeval right, but of the primability of it, in regard of Man's preſent Condition, which they call a ſecondary Right; ſuppoſing truly, that in this Law, Proviſion was made not only for the Relations which were at firſt made; but alſo for all ſuch, as might afterwards be introduced, either by the Providence of God, or by a poſitive Law. Hence,

5. THE *Miſery conſequent on Man's Fall, hath made this Relation neceſſary and unavoidable.* Tho' a State of Service, which naturally infers it's Correlate, was no ways agreeable to Man's Primitive Perfection; yet it is ſuch as the Condition of fallen Man, under his unhappy

Circumstances, cannot be without ; which renders it both needful & profitable to Humane Society ; and not only in the *Common-wealth*, but also in the *Family*. All Servitude began in the Curse, but it is so ordered in the Providence of God, as it becomes Beneficial to Mankind. And such is the Condition of some that they do fall unavoidably under this State, and are made Servants of others : Nevertheless, God in His Infinite Wisdom, in it provides for the Succour and Advantage both of Masters and Servants : and it is none of the least Media for the upholding of Families, and providing for the Comfort of many Lives.

6. HENCE *there are necessary Rules, prescribing and limiting the Duties belonging to this Relation given by God.* That there are such, the Word of God acquaints us, and the Necessity of Mankind called for it, else there would have been no Family Order, which would soon have brought Ruin upon the World. The End of this Order is for Man's Benefit, tho' it also carry on it a Note of the Apostacy ; and this Benefit would soon cease, were not both Masters and Servants under the limits of Restraint ; as is evident from the breakings out of wickedness in many, this notwithstanding.

7. THE *Rules or Duties referring to this Relation, are reducible to the Law of Nature, or the Moral Law.* That Law not only laid Commands on Men, considered in, and in things agreeable to the State of Integrity ; but was a Rule of Government, and therefore extendible to every Condition that Man might be in. And the First Command requires that Man receive the Command from God, in whatsoever he shall at any time make known His Preceptive Will in, because He is our Lord and Lawgiver ; and Infinite Wisdom could not but accommodate the Rule, so as to comprize in it every State which Man might be brought into ; and made this or that to be his Duty in such an Hypothesis. Hence the Light of Nature, or right Reason, which is the Medium by which we are to spell out the Law of Nature, will tell Men upon search, that such a Relation, being to be used for the Glory of God and Use of Mankind, hath such inseparable Duties attending upon it : And when God hath revealed His Will concerning this in His Word, must say, It is highly Rational ; and doubtless that general Rule, rightly applied, will undeniably infer it, Matth. 7. 12. *Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them : for this is the law and the prophets.*

8. THAT *it is very lawful for some to be Masters, and some to be Servants in a Family.* For, tho' Sin made it necessary, yet that necessity falls under the Governing Providence of God, and is made capable of being improved to His Glory. It is therefore a Condition, in which God may be glorified ; and for that reason we are commanded to use it so : and Servants are bidden on this account to be content in it, and carry it with a due regard hereto, 1 *Cor.* 7. 20, 21, 22. And the Apostle asserts the just dominion of *Philemon* over his Servant *Onesimus*, Phil. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

9. THERE *are different degrees of this Dominion & Servitude.* The word *Servant* is thought to be borrowed from the saving of Persons in War ; but it is applied to all such in a Family as are under the Command of a *Master*, and owe to him Subjection : And we know by Experience, that these are not all of a sort, or come under the same degree of Servitude ; some are more Free, and others more in Bondage ; hence the word *Servant* is sometimes used in common language, distributive with that of a *Slave*. Now the ground of this difference ariseth from the divers ways in which this Relation is brought about ; and these may be reduced into four Heads, *viz.*

1. BY *Compact or Agreement.* And these are the most *honourable* sort of Servants : And these are such as are originally Free, and either by themselves or by their Parents or Overseers Indent with their Masters, between whom there are mutual Obligations, such as Apprentices bound to Trades, or hired Servants for a shorter or longer Time ; of this sort of Service there are few that make any dispute against the Lawfulness of it, being apparently necessary.

2. BY *Self Alienation, through Poverty or Forfeiture.* When Men are reduced to such Exigence, as they either Sell themselves or Children to their Neighbours ; or run themselves in Debt and have nothing to Pay ; or for some pecuniary Crimes are Sold ; such things are allowed by the Laws of Nations, and the Scripture seems to approve the Equity of this ; this was Civilly practised in Israel, 2 *Kings* 4. 1. And it seems to be grounded on that Law, *Deut.* 15. 12. And may be argued from the Scope of that Parable, *Matth.* 18. 25. *Levit.* 25. 39.

3. BY *Captivity in War.* This also hath been reckoned to *Jus Gentium*, and accounted Indulgence to such as might have been slain ; and was allowed by God to his People Israel. On this Account he gave a Law about it : See, *Numb.* 31. And these are reckoned to the Man's own proper Goods ; and a right of buying and selling them was allowed to them ; *Lev.* 25. 44, *&c.*

4. BY *Natural Generation.* For, though Men are not naturally Servants as they are Men ; yet Men may be born Servants, being descended of such Parents as are so. And this also hath a Divine Approbation, *Gen.* 14. 14. 17. 12. So that all these sorts of Servants come under our present Consideration : And I shall endeavour to give a general Account of the comprehensive Duties belonging to each.

(1) *THERE is a Duty of Love which Masters owe to their Servants.* And tho' there is a diverse Government of them according to the different ground of their Servitude ; yet there is an Honour, Love and Respect which they owe to all ; and the *poorest Slave* hath a right to it : The meanest Servant is in some respect as good as his Master, altho' Providentially made far Inferiour to him. They had both one Father ; are made of the same Metal, and cast in the same Mold of Humanity ; so *Job* acknowledgeth, Job 31. 15. *Did not he that made me in the womb, make him ? and did not one fashion us*

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in the womb. They have both one Supream Lord and Maſter, to whom they muſt give up their Account; hence that, Ver. 14. *What then ſhall I do when God riſeth up? and when he viſiteth, what ſhall I anſwer him?* Hence that, Eph. 6. 9. *Knowing that your maſter alſo is in heaven.* And they have both Immortal Souls equally capable of being made partakers in Eternal Glory: So that this difference in Condition is only temporary; and hence the Duties of Maſters to their Servants may be reduduced to Two Heads. 1. Reſpecting their Command over them. 2. Reſpecting their Care they ſhould have of them.

[1.] RESPECTING their *Command over them.* That they have a right of Command, is very evident from the Nature of the Relation; elſe they could in no true ſenſe be called *Servants.* And as the Power over Servants upon Compact is limited by the Articles of it; ſo in the other, which ſeem to be more Arbitrary, it is bounded by the Rules both of Natural and Revealed Religion: And here in general, (*Negatively,*) no Maſter as ſuch, hath an Arbitrary Power over his Servant, as to Life and Death; this would be to encroach upon the Civil Government, to whom it belongs to do Juſtice between Maſters and Servants: Hence that Law, Exod. 21. 20. *Notwithſtanding, if he continue a day or two, he ſhall not be puniſhed: for he is his money.* And what follows in the next Verſe, was an Indulgence of the Judicial Law to that People. And here theſe particular Duties are to be obſerved,

1. *THEY are to Command them nothing but what is juſt and right.* And here a difference is to be made; there are Services which in themſelves are lawful, but are alſo in eſteem ſordid, and not agreeable to ſome, who are of a more ingenious Education; and yet neceſſity requires them to be done; but are fitter for ſuch as are of a more Servile Condition: But that which I here mainly intend, is, that there are ſome things which are in themſelves *Lawful*, and others that are *Sinful*, being a direct breach of ſome Moral Command. Now the Law of God is to bound their Authority, and they may not Tranſgreſs it: And it is certain, that to Command a Servant to do a thing that is forbidden of God, is to be a Guilty partaker of other Men's Sins, and to be a Moral Cauſe of them, which is univerſally forbidden, 1 *Tim.* 5. 22.

2. *THEY are to forbear ſcurrilous & undue Threatnings.* See, Eph. 6. 9. *Maſters forbear threatning.* The word *forbearing*, properly ſignifys to remit or moderate a thing. Not that all Threatnings are here interdicted; for there are that belong to Diſcipline, and are good Means to prevent Diſobedience, or humble them when in a Fault: But thoſe unjuſt Threatnings, which carry in them the indication of fury and unbridled paſſions, are to be reſtrained: for they both diſcover an ungracious frame in him that uſeth them, and tend more to harden Perſons in their wickedneſs, than to reſtrain or reform them, which is the next end of all Family Diſcipline, which requires Moderation.

3. *THEY are to Correct them with Prudence and Humanity.* That Corrections, whether by Reproofs or Chaſtiſements, are not only a Privilege belonging to the Superiority of Maſters, but a Duty incumbent on them, in caſe that need calls for it, both for the maintaining of their Authority in the Family, and the real Good of ſuch Servants, is certain: And altho' there is to be a different Adminiſtration of it to ſome ſorts of Servants, and others; yet theſe two things mentioned, are to govern them in the application of it to any, even ſuch over whom they have the greateſt Juriſdiction, *viz.* It muſt be done with *Prudence*; in which Prudence there are two things to be obſerved, *viz.* They ought not to do it, except there be a *Juſt Provocation*; nor then always, unleſs the *Circumſtances* make it needful. Extream Rigour here, is extream wrong. Utmoſt Severity is not to be uſed, when more gentle Treatment is as probable to attain the end: We read, Prov. 26. 3. *A whip for the horſe, a bridle for the aſs, and a rod for the fools back.* And we are not to make *Aſſes* of our Servants, whilſt they may be treated as *Men.* And when Prudence calls for it, *Humanity* ought to Govern it. They muſt avoid all Cruelty, both in words and blows; and rather keep within the bounds of Severity, than go beyond the Limits of it: and for this reaſon it ought not to be done in a Paroxiſm of *Ungovern'd Rage*; but when Paſſions are under the Government of Diſcretion. It was a laudable and imitable Expreſſion of a Pagan, which Moral Philoſophy had taught him, who ſaid to his offending Servant, *I would Beat thee, if I were not in a Paſſion.*

4. TO *allow them a full liberty to plead their Innocency.* What ſolemn Profeſſion doth *Job* make of his Integrity on this Account, Job 31. 13. *If I did deſpiſe the cauſe of my man-ſervant, or of my maid-ſervant, when they contended with me.* The end of Reproof and Correction is to convince the Subject of a fault; if therefore they are *Guiltleſs*, they deſerve it not; and therefore a due enquiry into the Caſe ought to precede. And it is their due, ſoberly to vindicate themſelves if they are able; and are not therefore to be terrified with Menaces, and forbidden to ſpeak for themſelves. And if they have been wronged by a raſh treating of them, it is a neceſſary Duty to do them right, tho' the manner of it is to be wiſely managed, ſo as not to give them occaſion to inſult; and the Obligation in theſe two laſt reſpects, is to be gathered from the equity of the Law, *Exod.* 21. 26, 27.

[2.] RESPECTING the *Care which they ſhould take of them.* They are Members of the Family, and conſequently under the Care of the Head of it: And this Care ought to be exerciſed both in regard of their Souls and Bodies.

1. IN *regard of their Souls.* And here is their principal Care to be employed: All the

Members in a Family are therein equal, in that they have Souls equally capable of being saved or lost: And the Soul of a Slave is, in it's nature, of as much worth, as the Soul of his Master, having the same noble Faculties and Powers, and being alike Immortal; and being alike Precious to Christ, who paid as great a Price for the Redemption of the Soul of *this* Person, as of the *other*, Ezek. 18.5. Col. 3.11. Now every Housholder is a sort of Priest in his Family; every Soul in it is put under his Charge, and he is bound to seek the Salvation of it, and must give an Account for it another Day, when God shall demand, Where are the Souls that I betrusted thee withal? Hence they are bound to take Care for their Instruction in the fear of God, and allow them the liberty of the Ordinances, and give them their seasons for Reading the Word, and secret Religious Performances; and to have neglected them in this, will be a bitter Remorce on their Consciences another Day, Gen. 18. 19. *For I know him, that he will command his children and his houshold after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord.*

2. IN *regard of their Bodies.* And the summary Duty here is to do that for them which is *just & equal*, Col. 4. 1. And tho' we cannot put a particular stint to this, but it much depends on the Discretion of Masters, and Condition of Servants; yet it is certain, that this is not left wholly to their Arbitrary Pleasure: Doubtless there is a Caution against an over delicate Provision for such, included in that Adage, Prov. 29. 21. *He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child, shall have him become his son at the length.* But there is the least danger on this hand. As to Servants by *Compact*, they have a Relief against Oppression by their *Articles*, especially *Apprentices*; as to *others*, it is a Duty lying on Masters, to see that they have wholesome, sufficient and seasonable *Food*, whereby they may be strengthned and encouraged to do their Work; and that they have suitable *Apparel* to cover their nakedness, and defend them from the injury of the Seasons; and if they have been Faithful to them in their Service to do something more for their Encouragement: And they owe to them a tender Care that they want for nothing that is proper for them in a time of Sickness: It is recorded for the Commendation of that Centurion, *Matth.* 8. 5, 6.

(2.) *THERE is a Reciprocal Duty of Servants towards their Master*: And it is to be paid to them, *eo Nomine*, because they are their Masters, let them be otherwise what they will; and they are to adore the Providence of God, in disposing them to a better or worse Condition in this regard; and if they suffer hard things in it, to consider, that Servitude it self was bro't in by Sin, and is a part of that Death which Good as well as Bad must undergo in this World; hence that, 1 Pet. 2. 18. *Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.* And the principal and most comprehensive Duties incumbent on such, are these that follow;

1. THEY *ought to entertain in their hearts, a Reverential Fear of them.* Eph. 6.5. *Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear & trembling, in singleness of heart as unto Christ.* We observed under the former, that there is a Fear or Reverence due from every sort of Inferiour, to the Superiour, which ought to be a Principle influencing them to the practice of their Duty; without which, they will either not do it at all, or do it Hypocritically: But that this Fear is diversifyed according to the Nature of the Relation which they stand in: The Apostle therefore here subjoyns trembling, to express the kind of Fear belonging to Men in this Order, implying a sense of their Subjection, and the Power their Masters have over them; and the Corruption of their Hearts making this Condition uneasy to them, which should make them the more careful to watch themselves, and fortify against the Temptation, which Pride and impatience of Servitude is apt to urge upon them: God therefore useth such an Expression as this, Mal. 1.6. *If I be a master, where is my Fear?*

2. *CHEERFUL Obedience to their Lawful Commands.* Not resisting or fretting; Tit. 2. 9. *Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again.* They are to remember, that they serve God, in serving their Masters; and therefore should do it willingly; Eph. 6. 7. *With good will, doing service, as to the Lord and not to men.* It is true, if they Command them to *Sin*, they must humbly refuse; for both their Masters and they are God's Servants, and they must not disobey Him to please Men; but no lawful Command, tho' possibly in it self ingrateful, should be refused by them, nor disputed against by them, nor done with a murmuring and discontented mind.

3. *DILIGENCE and Faithfulness in discharging of the Service that is incumbent on them.* They ought to be as diligent in serving their Masters, as if they were doing for themselves; and indeed they do so in a true account. They should account their Master's Profit as their own, & be as much concerned for it; and for that reason they ought to use chearfulness in all they do; for this reason they are forbidden *Eye-service*, Eph. 6.6. *Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.* It is a good Motive to serve God faithfully, because His Eye is ever upon us; hence that, Matth. 6. 6. *Thy Father seeth in secret.* But the Master's Eye cannot be always upon his Servant; but his Conscience should be his Monitor, which is to consider his Duty, and that Account he must give to God of his Service: He ought therefore to beware, that his Masters Affairs do not suffer by him, either by Purloining or Neglect, Tit. 2. 10. *Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.*

4. *PATIENCE & Submission.* He may possibly serve an hard Master, who Rules him with Rigour: And this hinders not, but if he

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be injuriouſly treated, he may make his Orderly application to the Civil Magiſtrate, whoſe Duty it is impartially to afford him a redreſs, upon a clear Proof of it: Nevertheleſs, he is not to riſe up againſt his Maſter; or by any way, take his own Revenge upon him: And if he have no door open to obtain regular Succour from Men, he ought with Patience to commit it to God, who hath ſaid, that He is the Avenger of all ſuch.

USE. LET all ſuch as ſtand in this Relation; *Take heed to themſelves, that they do ſerve God thus in it, as they hope to give up their Account with Joy another Day.* Let *Maſters* conſider, They have a Maſter in Heaven, who will reckon with them e're long; and if they have abuſed their Power, or neglected their Duty, it will be ill for them. And let *Servants* remember, That whatſoever Entertainment their Service finds from their Earthly Maſters, God will accept and crown their Faithfulneſs in it; and if they have ſerved Chriſt, and done it as to him, great will be their Reward in Heaven: And how hard ſoever it may at preſent ſeem unto them, yet when Chriſt ſhall ſay, *Well done good and faithful Servant*, it will never Repent them.

[AUGUST 24. 1703.]

SERMON *CLXXX.*

II. WE are now to paſs over to the conſideration of thoſe Orders which are *ſpecially* called *Political*: The *former* were more *Private*, *theſe* more *Publick*, and refer to the *larger* Societies and Combinations of Men. For there are no ſorts of orderly Societies among Men, but what are under the obligation of mutual Relative Duties. And here are Two ſorts of Relations, which may come under our Cognizance; the one ariſeth from the *Condition* of Men, whom God's Providence ordereth to dwell in ſuch Societies; the other from the *Order* which God hath ſet up and appointed to be maintained in ſuch Communities, for the well-governing and regulating of their Affairs; for both of which there are Precepts given in the Word of God; and may be a little enquired into.

[1.] *THERE is that Relation & Order which ariſeth from the* Condition *of Men, whom God's Providence diſpoſeth of to dwell in ſuch Societies.* And that which I ſhall only inſiſt on, and which is more peculiarly taken notice of in the Holy Scriptures, is that which is grounded on Old Age and Youth. There are in all Places, ſome that are *Aged*, and others that are *Young*; and both of theſe in plenty are promis'd to a People whom God will bleſs, *Zech.* 8.4, 5. Now, tho' there is not a ſpecial Relation between theſe, ſo as to give the one a right of Juriſdiction over the other; yet from the Condition that each is in, there is a Civil Reſpect due from the one to the other; and God hath Commanded an agreeable Deference; and the light of Nature diſcovers it to be highly Rational; and the very Heathen Moraliſts have taken notice of, & preſcribed Rules concerning it. We may here only take a brief and general Account of this:

(1.) *ANCIENT Perſons* ought to carry it towards them that are *Younger*, ſo as to adorn their Age. Their whole Converſation ought to be ſuch as may Commend them to their *Juniors*, and command a venerable reſpect from them. They ſhould adorn their gray Hairs with thoſe Vertues which do every way become them. Tho' Age it ſelf hath a reſpect due to it, yet if it is not becomingly managed, it may be unhappily expoſed to Contempt: We therefore have that Obſervation of the Wiſe Man, Prov. 16. 31. *The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteouſneſs.* We have a ſummary Account of the Exemplary Vertues, which they ought to adorn their Lives withal, Tit. 2. 2. *That the aged men be ſober, grave, temperate, ſound in faith, in charity, in patience.*

1. *SOBER*, or *Vigilant*: But it is frequently uſed for *Sobriety*; and that not only in reſpect of the *Body* but of the *Mind*. And it is not to be reſtrained to Meats, Drink, Apparel, for that comes afterward; but it comprehends the whole Deportment, and conſiſts in a vigilant Care to keep a guard upon all their Words and Carriages, that they do not exceed the bounds of Sobriety; not bragging of themſelves, or allowing themſelves in any manner of Exceſs.

2. *GRAVE.* The Word ſignifies one of a Modeſt, ſeemly and venerable Carriage: The Word is tranſlated *Honeſt*, Phil. 4.8. But it properly ſignifies a *well compos'd Carriage*, ſuch as may command Reſpect from others; and is oppoſed to that which is *light*, and *frothy*, and *jocular*: And nothing more unbecoming Old Age, than *juvenile Levity*; and is as ominous as Flowers in *December*, and greatly Prejudiceth Youth.

3. *TEMPERATE.* The Word ſignifys one that *keeps his Mind*; and is often uſed for *Sobriety* in general, and is comprehended in that; but becauſe in nothing are Men more endangered to loſe the uſe of their Underſtanding, then in Exceſs in Drinking, it is often reſtrained to that; and though it's comprized in the firſt, and therefore the *Greeks* had a feaſt which they called Νηφαλια, becauſe no Wine was drank in it; yet the Apoſtle puts it in, becauſe it is a Vice that Old Men are too eaſily allured to, under pretence of Age & Infirmity, which needs Relief; and there is nothing more ſcandalous than an *Old* Drunkard.

4. *SOUND in Faith, in Charity, and in Patience*: i. e. to carry themſelves ſo, as to give all poſſible demonſtration of their Soundneſs in theſe Graces, by the exerciſe of the Duties which refer to them. The word *Sound* is a Metaphor taken from the Health of the Body; and it intends *Sincerity*, which is Evangelical Integrity; and theſe Three Graces comprehend under them, the whole of a Chriſtian's Life: By *ſoundneſs in Faith* we are to underſtand, adhering to the Doctrines

Doctrines or Truths of the Christian Religion, without wavering; holding fast the foundation, and not suffering themselves to be imposed on, and led away with every wind of Doctrine, to be able to say as *Paul*, 2 Tim. 4. 7. *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.* By *soundness in Charity* is intended, *firmness in New Obedience*, which is called *Charity* or *Love*; and is to be the discovery of a sincere Faith, *Gal.* 5. 6. And it comprehends in it, all the Duties required in both the Tables of the Moral Law; to be faithful and constant in the Duties of Worship towards God, and Righteousness towards Men; and therein to give an Example of a Sober, Honest and Godly Life, to the Rising Generation. And by *soundness in Patience* is to be understood, a submissive and chearful bearing of all sorts of Afflictions, which they meet, and to which Old Age is incident. And herein they are to go before the Younger, that they may see the shine of these things in them, and learn by them, and be possess'd with a suitable Veneration of them; and set before them a convincing demonstrative of the reality of the Christian Religion.

(2.) IT is the Duty of *Younger Persons* to pay to the Aged, a respective and submissive Carriage. And this is to be paid to them both in Words and Gestures: And there is a proportionable decorum to be observed in this, according to their Age; and this is peculiarly to be observed by such as are in their Minority; tho' there is a deference to be had to it, in the several distributions that are given of the Ages of Men: And here we may observe,

1. THAT *there is a respect due to Old Age for it self.* It is a general Rule under this Fifth Command, that whatsoever Order God hath put Men in, there is a Duty incumbent on the Correlate, which ariseth from the Order it self; tho' Persons will better deserve Acknowledgment in it, if they carry it according to the Will of God in that Order; yet for the sake of it, and as long as they bear it, it is not to be neglected: Tho' in some Orders which Persons are put into by Consent and Contract, Men may forfeit both the Order and the Honour belonging to it: But Old Age is a thing which ariseth not from Men's Choice, but God's Providence, and carries in it a dark adumbration of God's Eternity, who therefore stiles himself, the *Ancient of Days*, Dan. 7. 9. That is therefore given as a Precept, referring to Old Age it self, Lev. 19. 32. *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the Lord.* Under which Expressions are comprized many particular things. To be sure, besides an *inward Respect*, (without which all outward Reverence is but a Mockery,) there is an *external Behaviour* by which our acknowledgment of their Years is to be paid: And to this belongs Children's rising up to them, and standing uncover'd in their Presence; hearkning to them when they speak to them, and giving them respectful Answers; bearing with their Infirmities, and not insulting over them.

2. WHERE *Old Age* and *Piety* are met in any, *there is a great Regard to be had to such venerable Antiquity.* And here I shall only mention Three things;

1. THEIR *Grave Discourses are observantly to be hearkned unto.* Not that we are to pin our Faith upon it; but we may expect from such to have well weighed and experimented things communicated to us: Younger ones therefore ought to allow them the liberty of Communicating themselves, and not interrupt them, as thinking themselves Wiser. *Elihu* tells us how he behaved himself among those Old Men in their talk; he attended diligently, and tarried till they had done, *Job* 32. 6, 7, 11, 12. If therefore at any time we dissent from them, it should be with great Modesty of Expression.

2. THEIR *Counsel is to be asked in matters of great moment.* Men of Years and Observation, are most fit to give sound Advice, whose Experience hath greatly encreased their Practical Knowledge, and whose Years have brought their Judgments to more of stayedness and solidity. For Young Persons to confide in their own Fansies, is folly and arrogance; and for them to relinquish the Ancient, and apply to those that are their Contemporaries, argues Contempt and forebodes Mischief; this was *Rehoboam*'s Ruin, 2 *Chron.* 10. 8.

3. THEIR *good Example is to be acknowledged and imitated.* God hath made it their Duty to set a Pattern of every Vertue before the Younger, who are to bless God for them, and to be followers of them, both while they are alive, and when they are dead, as we are exhorted, *Heb.* 6. 12. This therefore is one advice the wise Man gave to his Son, Prov. 2. 20. *That thou mayst walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous.* And if there were more of this spirit in our Young Ones, the Apostacy would not make such fearful advances, as it doth among us, whilst the present Generation decries the holy Zeal of their Ancestors, pretending to know more than the Ancients.

[2.] WE pass over to the Consideration of *that* Order *which God hath set up, and appointed to be maintained in such Societies, for the well-governing and regulating of their Affairs.* Now these Societies come under a double consideration, viz. *Civil* and *Sacred*; the one referring to the Government of the *Common wealth*, the other of the *Church.*

CONCERNING both of these, we may in general observe, That the Power or Authority which some have over others; and the consequent Subjection which those others owe to them, Personally considered, doth not derive *Naturally* but *Providentially*: Nevertheless, the Light of Nature or right Reason, will abundantly tell us, that wheresoever there are Societies of Men, made so, either occasionally, or by Combination, there must be Order: And when we consider the State into which Mankind

Mankind are fallen by reaſon of the Apoſtacy, this Neceſſity is augmented, becauſe elſe all would certainly run into Confuſion, and end in Ruin: And tho' the good Succeſs of this depends on the over-ruling Influence of God, yet he manageth His Ordinary Providence in the way of Means. Now theſe Societies are *Civil* or *Eccleſiaſtical*; and becauſe there is a great difference between theſe two, in more reſpects than one, it is neceſſary that they be conſidered ſeparately and diſtinctly.

I. A *Civil Society* is a Combination of Men, for the carrying on of their Temporal or Secular Concerns for the outward Felicity or well-being of the whole, and every part of it: In the Adminiſtration whereof, there is neceſſarily ſuppoſed a Civil Government; and conſequently, ſuch as are to *Govern*, and ſuch as are to be *Governed*. And here alſo it may be enquired;

Queſt. *WHETHER Civil Government were conſiſtent with the State of Integrity?* Nor is this Caſe ſo eaſily reſolved, as that which was formerly moved, concerning the *State of Servitude*; inaſmuch as that is apparently the fruit of the Curſe; whereas that of *Civil Subjection* ſeems not to be ſo, tho' the diſorder which Sin hath brought in it, hath too much rendred it ſo eventually. I ſhall only here obſerve more generally;

1. THAT *Civil Humane Societies have their riſe & reaſon from the Nature of Man*: Some therefore have thought it a good comprehenſive Deſcription of Man, that he is πολιτικον, Man was made a Sociable Creature; and hath a natural diſpoſition to hold Converſe with his own Kind: Nor doth this inclination ariſe, meerly from the neceſſity of his lapſed Eſtate for mutual ſupport and defenſe, though that hath Augmented the neceſſity of it; but it was put into the Conſtitution of Man, and he ſought it, not only by Inſtinct, as Brutes do with their Kind; but the Exerciſe of Reaſon, and the conſideration of the Relations which God at firſt conſtituted between Mankind, and the Affection put into them towards their Correlates therein. It is therefore a bruitiſh opinion of thoſe, who would have Men, if their Integrity had remained, to have lived in the Fields & Woods after the manner of Wild Beaſts, whereas it is evident that Men do ſeek familiarity with ſuch whom they have the leaſt neceſſity for.

2. THAT *the Order of Superiority, and Inferiority, was well enough conſiſtent with Man's perfect State at firſt.* God did therefore put Mankind into ſuch an Order, as ſoon as he made him, and gave him with it the Law of ſpecial Government. The Fifth Command was, as well as any other, a Precept of the Moral Law, and engraven upon Men's Hearts; and that, not meerly as a reſerve, after Relief againſt the Miſery of his fallen State, but for his Practice in his State of Uprightneſs. The Order of Huſband and Wife took Place as ſoon as God had made Man Male and Female, and brought them together: And had they continued in that Eſtate to have had Children, the Duties of that Relation would have been actually incumbent on them. Nay, the different degrees in Glory, are no obſtruction at all, to the Perfection of the bleſſedneſs of every one of the Saints.

3. *HAD Man abode in his Primitive State, there would have been always ſome naturally Superiours to others.* If *Adam* had lived till this Day, he would have been the Head of all his Poſterity, and they would have owed to him, a ſuitable Subjection; and if Families deſcending had gone forth to People other Places, there would have been the ſame Relation between the Father of ſuch a Family, and all the deſcendents from him; for this natural Relation would not have ceaſed, nor the Duties depending on it.

4. *AS Man's Happineſs could not be impeded, ſo God's Glory might be Celebrated by Civil Orders.* A well ordered Government hath in it an Adumbration of God's Governing the World; and tho' there were no need of it to reſtrain Men's Luſts, yet it might tend to the Ornament of the Univerſe, and be a trial of our Obedience to this Precept: And we have good footing in the Word of God, that God hath placed an Order between the very Angels of Light. And it is Rational to conclude, that as the World had began to be Peopled, there would of neceſſity have been a multiplying of Civil Societies, and theſe diſtinct, for the upholding of Civil Commerce & Amity. They are therefore in a great Error, who tell us, that ſo many Kingdoms or Common-wealths as there are in the World, ſo many Teſtimonies of Divine Diſpleaſure; for tho' ſome of the Reaſons of the Neceſſity of it are ſo, yet Government it ſelf is not.

TOUCHING the *Moral Neceſſity* of Civil Government, with reſpect to Man's *ſinful State* ſince the Fall, it is evident from Human Reaſon, and Philoſophy pleads for it by Arguments fetch'd from this Topick, as being ignorant of any other State of Mankind Antecedent to it: So that the Precepts given for it in the Word of God, are not purely Poſitive or Inſtituted; but are built upon Moral Principles, and are all of them reducible to *One Head*, viz. *The deep intereſt which a Civil Happineſs hath in it.* And tho' Men's Corruptions have too often abuſed it to a contrary iſſue, yet the blame of that is not in Government it ſelf, but in the Inſtruments by whom it is managed; and it is frequently a Judgment with which God puniſheth the grievous Provocations given Him by a ſinful People: Hence that, Hoſ. 13.11. *I gave thee a king, in my anger, and took him away in my wrath.* But if it were not for this, there would be no living together for Mankind, but Humane Societies muſt diſband; Murders, Adulteries, Rapine, and all manner of Oppreſſions would rage; and there would be leſs of Order in the Habitable World, than in Hell it ſelf. God indeed is able to Curb in the Luſts of Men; but he hath ſeen meet to uſe and appoint Means for the promoving it, in and with which He doth Co-operate: And among theſe, that of Civil Government is none of the leaſt: And hence all the *Powers* are ſaid *to be of him*, Rom. 13. 1. Prov. 8. 15, 16.

8. 15, 16. And it is noted as a Judgment upon Israel, *when there was no King in Israel, and Men did what they pleased*, and an inlet to great Tragedies, *Judg.* 17. 6. 18. 1.

AS to the *Form* of Civil Government, there is no one that is determinately fixed upon in the Word of God, to be a common Rule obliging all Communities, to take their Measure by; but it is a *Prudential*, and to be wisely accommodated to the Genius of the Place, and the best probability of attaining of the great End, and the well-being of the whole: And the sorts of it are Three, viz. *Monarchy*, *Aristocracy*, and *Democracy*, within which bounds all ought to keep it; so that it neither degenerate to Tyranny on the one hand, nor to Anarchy on the other, either of which is directly subversive of the Ends of Government, and is the Misery of a People which are under them.

AS to the so much Controverted Question, *which of these Forms is best?* If the Enquiry be only, which is so in it self? it is meerly *Theoretical*, and more nice than profitable: But if it intend, which is so practically? or with respect to the People among whom it is erected and established, it cannot be absolutely and universally determined; inasmuch as there are differing Circumstances, which may render the one most accommodable for *this* People, and another for *that*; and there is none of them that will be without it's Inconveniencies and hazards, whilst it is managed by Men, the best of whom labour of Sin and folly. Tho' it hath been generally thought, that one that is well tempered of all Three, is best suited to maintain Government, in it's due bounds.

IF Enquiry be made concerning the *Right* of Government; or how the Power of Administration comes to be devolved upon *these* Persons, rather than *others*: This also is as difficult to determine as the former. If we speak of it, *de facto*, the Customs and fundamental Constitutions of Nations are various; and tho' there are general Rules for it in the Word of God, and to be gathered from the light of right Reason; yet the particular and personal determination of it is various. God indeed fixed the supream Government of the Kingdom of Israel, in the House of *David*, which was Typical; but He made it not a stated Rule for all the Kingdoms and Common-Wealths in the World: It may therefore be by Succession, or by Election, in either of which God over-rules, either for the Felicity or Penalty of a People.

IN *general*, all this is founded in Compact, nor can Conquest it self come to a fixation, so as to establish a well-ordered Government, till there be a Combination: However, then is a Government truly Happy, when it's Rulers are fitted and spirited for their Post: Hence that, *Eccl.* 10. 16, 17.

TOUCHING the *Rule* by which Civil Government is to be administred, it ought not to be Arbitrary, nor can the Condition of the best of fallen Men bear it; but it is to be by wholesome and just Laws. For it is the Duty of all Rulers to do Justice and Judgment, as we shall afterwards consider; and this cannot be, but where there are fixed and established Laws, by the Execution whereof Men's Rights are to be upheld, and all Iniquity and Unrighteousness to be born witness against: And out of doubt, there was a Moral Reason in that Statute which God made for the Kings of Israel, Deut. 17. 18, 19. *And it shall be when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, out of that which is before the Priests the Levites And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law, and these statutes to do them.*

BUT I come to a more *particular* consideration of the mutual Duties belonging to this Order among Mankind. Now the Correlates here, are the *Rulers* and *Ruled*, or Magistrates and Subjects: And as this is a Relation which God Himself hath ordained, and placed between Men; so there are the Duties incumbent on either Party, which arise from the very Nature of the Relation; and about which Directions are given to us in the Holy Scriptures. For to suppose one of the Correlates to be under Obligation, and the other to be at entire Liberty, is contrary to the very End and Design of all the Relations which God hath put Men in, one towards another. As therefore, it is a Sin in the Subject to deny or withhold his subjection to Rulers, whom God hath in His Providence set over him; so it is no less Sin in the Ruler, to neglect or pervert the Administration of Government, which is for the good and benefit of the Subject.

NOW as in this Order of Men, they are distributed into Governours, and Governed; so there are divers Ranks and Orders among those who share in the Ruling a People: Hence that distribution, 1 Tim. 2. 2. *Kings and all in Authority.* 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14. *Kings & Governours*, &c. And the Administration of Government requires that there be many subordinate Ministers and Officers in Power, both in regard of the Legislative and Executive part of it, who tho' Subject to their Superiors in Power, yet have a Superiority in regard of others; and the meanest Civil Officer hath a claim to this, according to the Authority he is vested withal. But I shall not take these asunder, but only in general give Account of the general Duties required by this Command, on both parts.

[OCTOBER 19. 1703.]

SER-

SERMON *CLXXXI.*

WE have conſidered ſomething in general concerning the Civil Relation, which God hath placed between Magiſtrates and their Subjects; and are now to proceed to take an Account of the Relative Duties which God hath required of each of theſe.

Firſt, THE *general Comprehenſive Duty of Magiſtrates*, is *to exerciſe the Authority which God hath beſtowed upon them, for the good of the Subject.* As to that Queſtion, which hath with ſo much vehemency been diſputed *Pro* & *Con*, viz. *Whether Magiſtrates were made for their People, or the People for their Magiſtrates?* It is enough to ſay, that God conſtituted this Order of Men for the common Good of Mankind; and if it had not been for the need of the People He had never appointed Civil Rulers over them; and He hath accordingly accommodated their Duties for the beſt advancing of this End: And in this regard, they were equally made one for another; nor can they obtain a Civil Happineſs, unleſs they mutually conform to the Will of God in this regard. It is an honour which God puts upon Men, when He calls them to Publick Service, and they can then only honour Him in it, when they uſe it to the Ends of the Precept: And he hath aſſured us, that this was for the Good of the People over whom they are ſet: Hence that, Rom. 13. 4. *For he is the miniſter of God to thee for good.* And this Care of theirs, every the meaneſt Subject hath a title to; and that is the reaſon given why we ought to Pray for them, 1 *Tim.* 2. 3. And in this is *David* commended for his Exemplarineſs in his management of his Royal Authority, *Pſal.* 78. 72.

[1.] NOW that they may *apply their Authority*, there are *Two* general Duties peculiarly incumbent on them:

1. TO *get and maintain Cordial and entire Love for their Subjects.* Love is the bond of every Relation which God hath ordained among Men; and if that fail, the Duties depending on it will be neglected: And it is a tender and compaſſionate Love that is here required, as will appear by the *Metaphorical Titles*, which are in the Word of God, put upon Civil Rulers: They are called *Heads*, and their Subjects are the *Members* of the Body Politick, *Judg.* 11. 9. *Numb.* 25. 13. *Mic.* 2. 1, 11. and elſewhere. And this not only in reſpect of Dignity; but alſo of influence. And we are told in Eph. 5. 29. *For no man ever yet hated his own fleſh; but nouriſheth and cheriſheth it, even as the Lord the church.* They are called *Fathers*, and their Subjects their *Children*: Hence that of *Naaman's* Servants, 2 *Kings* 5. 13. 1 *Sam.* 24. 11. Noting that they ought to be tender to them as their Children; hence that Compellation, *My Son*, Gen. 43. 29. Joſh. 7. 19. They are called *Shepards*, Iſa. 44. 25. 63. 11. to denote with what gentleneſs, they ought to look after their People.

2. TO *apply this Love, in laying out their Study and Endeavour for their Good.* Civil Magiſtracy is a Buſineſs which God calls Men to employ themſelves in. The Charge of a People is a great Charge, and there are a great many things that go in to procure their Tranquillity and outward Felicity, which require much Study to Contrive, and a great deal of Induſtry in the Proſecution; and if they do indeed ſuitably effect them, it will put them upon anxious Sollicitude in the purſuit of their Deſign. Love is an active Affection, and it cannot ly ſtill; but lay it ſelf out, and think it can never do enough for it's Object: And ſuch a Love as this did *Solomon* expreſs in that Choice which he made upon God's Offer, 1 Kings 3. 9. *Give therefore thy ſervant an underſtanding heart, to judge thy people, that I may diſcern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy ſo great a people?*

[2.] MORE *particularly*, the things wherein they are to apply themſelves to provide for the Good of their Subjects are ſuch as theſe,

(1.) THEY *ought to provide a Body of wholſome and good Laws, to be the fixed Rule of Government.* We before obſerved, that no People ought to be Governed Arbitrarily, or according to the Wills or Paſſions of Men, which muſt unavoidably be Tyrannical. All Men ought to know, or at leaſt have ſufficient Means to inform themſelves, on what Terms they ſtand, and wherein they may preſerve themſelves ſafe from the danger of Civil Cenſures. There is therefore a Legiſlative, as well as an Executive Power belonging to Government, which is to be applied to the Enacting & Ratifying of ſuch Civil Ordinances as are for the Publick Benefit. And theſe Laws are not to be made meerly for Men's Pleaſure, but according to right Reaſon; which is to take it's meaſures from the Publick Benefit, and the Rules of Righteouſneſs, which the Light of Nature gives evidence to: Hence Wiſe Lawgivers do not only Ratify their Edicts with the Seal of their Authority, but Preface them with the Reaſon on which they are grounded.

AND here that CASE may be briefly conſidered, *viz.*

Queſt. *WHETHER the Law given by* Moſes *to Iſrael, from the Mouth of* GOD, *be the Square according to which all Humane Laws are to be meaſured?*

BY way of reply, I ſhall only offer theſe Conſiderations,

1. THE Laws given by *Moſes* were of three ſorts, *Moral*, *Ceremonial* and *Judicial*; which are therefore called *Commands*, *Statutes* and *Judgments*. Theſe, tho' they made but One Body, yet came under a different conſideration both as to the Riſe and Reaſon of them; and although they proceeded from the ſame Author, yet were given upon diſcrepant Accounts.

2. HENCE to the right Reſolution of this Inquiry, theſe muſt be conſidered *ſeverally*; for it is certain, that the whole Law, conſidered as one entire Syſtem, was given to that People, as peculiarly accommodated to them, under

their Circumſtances, and ſo was appropriated to them, being given to diſtinguiſh them from all other People in the World.

HERE then,

1. THE *Moral Law* ſumm'd up in the Ten Commands, and dilated upon in ſeveral particular branches, was no other than the Law given to Man in his Creation, and was the Rule of Righteouſneſs, and true Holineſs, and the Rule of God's ſpecial Government of Men, according to which he was to be happy or miſerable. And this was the ſame for ſubſtance with the Law of Nature, and is therefore of Perſonal force, having Mankind for the ſubject of it. This ſet the whole bounds between right & wrong, and the Rationality of it was ſubſcribed to by Man's Conſcience; all theſe three Titles belong to the Encomium of it, Rom. 7. 12. *Holy, Juſt, Good.* Every Tranſgreſſion of this Law is a Sin, and that in the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, (hence that, *Lev.* 18. 27, 28.) Hence, all Humane Laws are to be directed by this Law, ſo far, as to make nothing a Tranſgreſſion, but what is Condemned by this, require nothing of the Subjects, but what is approved by this. For doubtleſs, God is the One Supream Law-giver, and all others derive from Him, (*James* 4. 12.) All the Heathen Law-givers pretended that they received their Inſtructions from ſome Deity; and the End of all Laws ought to be ultimately the Glory of God, which cannot be paid Him, but by the Conformity of them, to his fixed Law.

2. TOUCHING the *Ceremonial Law*, it ſufficeth to ſay, that it was purely Poſitive, and mainly accommodated to the Firſt Table, or the Worſhip of God, and had a reſpect to Chriſt who was to come: He therefore being ſhadowed by it, & it being given to them to help their Faith in waiting for Him who was the Subſtance; they are now Antiquated and Aboliſhed, (as is fully proved, *Heb.* 9. 10.) And a ſubordinate End of them being to make a ſeparation between Iſrael, and all other People, it muſt needs be appropriate to them; and this wall being pulled down, it is no more of any uſe to them, (*Eph.* 2. 14.) Nor hath God given to any Authority in this World a Liberty to ſubſtitute any other ſignificant Ceremonies of Worſhip in their room.

3. WITH reſpect to the *Judicial Laws*, we muſt obſerve, that theſe were *Appendices*, partly of the Moral, partly of the Ceremonial Law: Now ſuch as, or ſo far as they are related to the *Ceremonial*, they are doubtleſs Aboliſhed with it. As, and as far as they bear reſpect to the *Moral* Law, they do, *eo Nomine*, require Obedience perpetual, and are therefore reducible to Moral Precepts, only it is obſervable that ſome were only Indulgences; ſuch was that our Saviour ſaith about Divorces for any ſlighty Cauſe; and ſo it did not evacuate the Moral Precept about it, *Matth.* 19. 8, 9. And give me leave with reſpect to theſe Laws, to digreſs ſo far as to offer two Cautions,

1. THAT tho' frequently the Seal of Sovereignty, *I am the Lord*, be a note of a *Poſitive Law*; and when there is a Reaſon given of a Law, it is for the moſt part *Moral*, yet this will not hold *always*. God gives a Reaſon why *Blood* ſhould not be eaten, *Lev.* 17. 14. And yet it is certain, that this was never a *Moral* Precept, but *Poſitive*; and there are other parts in the Creature, in which the Life is as nearly, and in ſome regards more nearly concerned than the *Blood*, which are not forbidden.

2. THAT there are ſome *Judicial Laws*, in which the thing commanded or forbidden, is *Moral*, and yet the Penalty annexed to it is *Poſitive*. All Penalties preſcribed in any of the Moſaical Laws, if Mulct, Corporal Puniſhment or Death, were Judicial, and belonged to the Civil Government, *Sacrifices* only excepted, which were Ceremonial, and belong'd to the Eccleſiaſtical: Now many of theſe were Arbitrary, and accommodated to the State of the Iſraelitiſh Church in their State of Bondage. Now, tho' the open Tranſgreſſions of the Moral Law came under the Cognizance of the Civil Magiſtrate, yet all the ſame Penalties that were then appointed, are not now binding: Some indeed were Moral, as the Death of a Murderer, and without any Ranſom; and ſome alſo ſuppoſe that the making Adultery a Capital Crime belongs hither: But others were proper only to the Time and State of that People, as the Law about Profaning the Sabbath, *Numb.* 15. 33. *&c.*

NOW the *Legiſlative Power* of Rulers, in their making of Laws is to be regulated by theſe Two general Directions, which they ought ever to lay before them in their Debates and Concluſions, *viz.* That they be *Righteous*, and *Good*: Theſe two might be comprehended in one, for that which is Righteous is Good, and nothing can be truly Good, but that which is Righteous. Nevertheleſs, there may be ſome diverſity in theſe conſiderations, which may therefore be look'd upon diſtinctly.

(1.) THEY ought to be very careful to make *Righteous Laws*, and no other. This is intimated in that, Prov. 8. 15. *Princes decree Juſtice.* Hence a Wo is denounced by God againſt ſuch as make *Unrighteous* ones, Iſa. 10. 1. *Wo unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievouſneſs which they have preſcribed.* God will reject Fellowſhip with them, Pſal. 94. 20. *Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowſhip with thee, which frameth miſchief by a law?* Now there is a *double* reſpect in which a conſideration is to be had of Righteouſneſs in the making Laws, *viz.* The *Matter* about which it is made, and the *Sanctions* affixed to it: And in both of theſe, there may be a Tranſgreſſion, if due Care be not uſed.

IT is here to be obſerved, that for the making of a Law to be an Inſtrument of Government, it is not enough that there be a *Precept* given by Authority directing and commanding *this* to be done, *that* to be avoided; but there muſt alſo be a Penalty annexed, elſe it will hazard

hazard being deſpiſed. Now in both of theſe regards, Righteouſneſs is carefully to be conſulted.

1. IN *reſpect of the* Matter *about which it is made*; and that is, *when the Thing decreed is agreeable to the Rule of Righteouſneſs.* Nothing ought to be required of the Subject in Obedience to Civil Authority, in the doing of which the Law of God will be violated, and he diſobeyed. All Men are Firſtly Subjects to God, and therefore they are to have regard to Him, in all the Subjection required of Men to them. As they Rule from Him, ſo they are to Rule for Him. It is true, there are many things which occur in Providence, and are made neceſſary by it, for which there is no particular expreſs Command in the Scriptures, but the Rule of Providence requires that it be put into a Law; and the general Rules given will ſufficiently warrant it; and there are ſuch things as theſe which do frequently evene: But to Enact any thing which is Repugnant to the revealed Will of God, and directly oppoſeth a Negative Precept of the Moral Law, which is given without Limitation or Exception, is utterly unlawful; and for the ſame Reaſon, the Light of Nature is to be conſulted and followed; and that general Rule is well to be regarded in making Laws, as in any other thing, Matth. 7. 12. *All things whatſoever ye would that men do to you, do ye even ſo to them: for this is the law and the prophets.* Nor ought any Law to be made to tolerate any real Wickedneſs, under any pretence whatſoever; for the Command of God forbids us to do Evil, that Good may come of it.

2. IN *reſpect of the* Sanctions *annexed to the Laws made.* As there ought to be Sanctions, elſe the Law will not advance the End of it; (whereas we are told, 1 Pet. 2. 13. *Submit your ſelves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's ſake.*) and tho' there may be a Latitude left in ſome things, to be diſpenſed according to the Prudence of the Judges, (though that ought not to be unlimited, but within due Bounds) ſo there is a regard to be had to the Merit of the Crime, in the proportioning of the Penalty. It was a miſtake in *Draco* the Lawgiver, that he reckoned all Sin equal, and therefore made every Crime Capital, whence he was ſaid to write all his Laws in Blood; and tho' it be a Truth that the leaſt Sin deſerves Death from the hand of God, yet it doth not ſo from Men. The end of Civil Laws is to preſerve Mankind in Order, and in that regard, *Salus Populi eſt Suprema Lex.* And God himſelf appointed in the Law given to Iſrael, different degrees of Penalty, according to the Nature and aggravation of the Crimes. Severity therefore is to be duly tempered with Lenity in Laws, leſt otherwiſe they ſhould have a tincture of Cruelty. To this Righteouſneſs alſo belongs the providing for Commutative Juſtice between Men, by Laws which may defend Men from Wrong and Injury by their Neighbours, in their Life, Chaſtity, Eſtate or Reputation.

(2.) THEY ought to take heed to make *Good Laws* and only ſuch. And tho' unleſs they be *Righteous*, they cannot be *Good*; yet there is ſomething more that comes under this conſideration: And we do not here conſider Goodneſs under a Metaphyſical Notion, but that which is Moral and Political. It is not their Goodneſs in themſelves, but as they are a Medium to promove the proper End of Government; and that is, the well-being of the whole, and every part of it: And it is in this reſpect that the Law which God gave to His ancient People, is ſo often ſaid to be *Good* Neh. 9. 13. Pſal. 119. 39. Mic. 6. 8. Care ought therefore to be uſed, that the Welfare of the Body be deſigned, and that the Law be a ſuitable Medium, (having a Rational tendency in it, to the advancement of it.

AS to that controverted Queſtion, *Whether Civil Rulers have a power to make Laws about Things Indifferent?* I ſhall only ſay thus in general, *viz.* That we muſt diſtinguiſh between Power as it reſpects the Submiſſion due from the Subject, and as it is under the Divine Ordinance and Regulation: We muſt alſo diſtinguiſh between a thing Indifferent in it ſelf, and in it's Circumſtances: And then it may eaſily be reſolved, that God hath given Civil Rulers Authority to make no other Laws, than are for the Good of the Government; ſo that if they Enact any other, they Tranſgreſs their Commiſſion from God, and are accountable to Him for it; and do not carry it as Fathers to their People. And though in a Moral ſenſe, there are things which themſelves are of a middle Nature, and Man is at liberty either to do them, or avoid them; and in that ſenſe they are neither Good nor Evil, and ſo they cannot be the proper Matter of a Law, it being eſſential to a good Law, that it be for the Good of thoſe for whom it is made; and to limit the Subject in things lawful in themſelves, meerly *pro Arbitrio*, is Oppreſſion. But theſe things may be cloathed with ſuch Circumſtances, as may render them either hurtful or beneficial to Men, and ſo they will become either a Duty or a Sin; and it will be very proper to make Laws about them accordingly, which may be for the Publick Good. And doubtleſs, there are no Laws more neceſſary for the *bene eſſe* of a People, than ſuch as put a Reſtraint upon the ſinful abuſe of Lawful Liberties.

NOW that is the beſt Body of Laws, which moſt amply provides for the advancing the Happineſs of all that are under them; and that is ſummarily recommended to us in that, 1 Tim. 2. 2. *That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godlineſs and honeſty.* When they lay in to ſecure both Godlineſs and Honeſty among a People, they are Happy under ſuch a Government, if by their own folly, they do not make themſelves miſerable. When they provide that the true Religion may be eſtabliſhed, the true Worſhip of God may be upheld, and all that withſtands be ſuppreſſed, and no Unſcriptural Rites be impoſed on Men; when they take Care, that all Orders of Men have their due Honour and Reſpect paid to them; due Diſtances be maintained between Superiours and Inferiors; that Men may enjoy their Rights, and be ſaved

from violence and wrong; That the liberal Education of Children be encouraged; That thoſe who deſerve well be Rewarded, and Wickedneſs be puniſhed: When by ſuch Laws as theſe, they do as far as can be provide for a People's Felicity, they are very Good.

AS to the Queſtion, *Whether Civil Rulers have Power to make Laws about the Religious Worſhip of God, and Heretical Doctrines?* I ſhall only Anſwer, Whatſoever may truly ſerve to the Peace and Tranquillity of the People comes within their reach, agreeable to the Rule of Reaſon, and the Word of God. Now, no People can do well without Religion, nor can they do well without the True Religion. Publick Judgments are often bro't for Irreligion, and falſe-Worſhip, when tolerated; and who ſhould reſtrain it but ſuch as have the Civil Sword put into their hands by God: Thoſe therefore were the Leaders in the Reformation, recorded in Scripture, and puniſhed Offenders in this kind. Civil Rulers do receive their Authority from God, and are to uſe it for Him; which how ſhall they do, if they ſuffer His Attributes to be Blaſphemed, His Name to be taken in vain, His Worſhip to be defiled, His Sabbaths to be profaned, His Truths to be perverted. Tho' therefore they have no Warrant from God, to Coin any New Articles in the Religion which He Himſelf hath revealed; nor to appoint any New Inſtitutions in His Worſhip, which alone belongs to the Kingly Office of Chriſt; (and if they ſhould do ſo, His holy Jealouſy would be incenſed againſt them,) yet their Power is *Circa Sacra*; and they ought to provide that the Houſe of God be built, His Worſhip upheld; the Miniſters of His Sanctuary be ſupported; all Affronts againſt His Sacred Majeſty be duly born witneſs againſt; and all Heretical Doctrines which are at any time broached, be ſuppreſſed. And how can this be done, unleſs there be Laws adapted to theſe Ends? Without this, they cannot provide that their Subjects may lead quiet and peaceable Lives, in all Godlineſs; but there muſt be endleſs Schiſms and Deſtractions in the Church of God.

USE. WHAT need have we then, to *Pray to God for our Rulers, in this Regard*; That He will put His Spirit upon them; and afford them the direction of His holy Spirit; That they may have a right diſcerning of theſe Things, and an Heart ſtrenuouſly engaged, thus to promove the true Welfare of the People under their Charge.

[NOVEMBER 16. 1703.]

SERMON *CLXXXII.*

(II.) THEY ought to take care for the *Execution* of Good Laws, according to *Equity*. This alſo is incumbent on the Civil Magiſtracy, although the Duty doth not ly alike in all reſpects on all in Authority, but on every one in the Station which he bears in the Civil Government. We before obſerved, that for the maintenance of good Order in the Body Politick, there is a Legiſlative, and an Executive Power belonging to the Magiſtracy, both whereof are neceſſary, nor can they be well ſeparated without unavoidable miſchief. To Govern without Laws, brings an Arbitrary Government, which is unreaſonable; and opens the way to Tyranny, by expoſing the Eſtate, Liberty and Life of the Subject, to the Will of the Rulers, who are ſinful Men, and liable to Prejudices; and no Man is ſafe, or knows when or how to keep himſelf clear from Civil Cenſures: And the end of Laws which is to maintain Equity and Juſtice, cannot poſſibly be advanced except due Care be taken that ſuch Good Laws be duly put into Execution. Laws that are made or uſed, only as Scarecrows, will ſoon be deſpiſed; and the Law-makers themſelves be quickly contemned, and their Authority diſregarded. A Law is properly an Inſtrument of Government, and all the Good it doth is by being applied to the End of it, which is to encourage Vertue and ſuppreſs Vice; which is attained by letting Men know, that it is made in earneſt; elſe the Sword is born wholly in vain. It is therefore to be obſerved, that as there are Perſons to whom it belongs to make Laws, ſo there are ſuch as are betruſted with the diſpenſation of them, who are in Scripture-Language called *Judges*: And tho' the ſame Perſons may be employed in both, (the Prudence whereof will admit of a diſpute,) yet they do it not under the ſame conſideration. There is a Power of appointing Judges or Juſtices; and there is a Power veſted in the Perſons ſo appointed, who are nextly to Execute the Laws, by vertue of the Authority thus conveyed to them; and there is ſomething incumbent upon each of theſe, to render the Government juſt and equal: And theſe may be conſidered ſeverally.

[1.] IT belongs as a Duty on *Lawgivers*, to take utmoſt Care, *that Juſt Laws may have a due Execution*. We formerly obſerved, that it is incumbent on them to ſee that their Laws be *Righteous* and *Good*; elſe if the Law be Unjuſt and Oppreſſive, they will be guilty of all the Injury that is done by the Execution of it, becauſe they Command it; but they have an Inſpection over the Application alſo. And here are principally theſe Duties,

(1.) TO *appoint Perſons fitly qualified for this Poſt*. All Men are not capable of ſuſtaining ſuch a Charge, nor will Birth or Wealth nextly furniſh them; but there are peculiar Gifts & Vertues neceſſary to be found in ſuch as have ſo great a Truſt put upon them. *Jethro's* Advice which he gave to *Moſes* is very comprehenſive of this Duty, Exod. 18. 21. *Thou ſhalt provide out of all the people, able men, ſuch as fear God, men of truth, hating covetouſneſs:* The wiſeſt of Men may be deceived in the Character of others; however ſuch are to be

ſought

ſought for; they muſt be *able men*, Heb. *Men of might*, which is not always applied to bodily Strength, which is no neceſſary Qualification of a Judge; but often to Strength of Mind, and comprehends under it both Reſolution and Courage, and Ability to ſearch into a Cauſe, and skill in the Laws; that ſo they may put a difference between Right and Wrong. They muſt be ſuch as *Fear God*, which will influence them to Righteouſneſs, as knowing they muſt give an Account to God; and having a Principle in them, which will not ſuffer them to do any Injuſtice, but make them impartial. They muſt be Men of *Truth*, i. e. of *Fidelity*, for ſo the Word is frequently uſed; which will make them ſearch out matters to the bottom, and Judge according as the Cauſe is, laying aſide reſpect of Perſons. And they muſt *hate Covetouſneſs*, which will make them ſcorn to take Bribes, to blind their Judgments.

(2.) TO *bear a due Teſtimony againſt ſuch as carry themſelves unworthily in their Truſt.* This alſo belongs to the Superiour Power in a Government: Men may upon Trial be found to be inſufficient to bear their Place, and manage themſelves very unworthily in it; they may oppreſs the Innocent, and let Criminals eſcape, and not hear the Pleas of the Widows and Fatherleſs; certainly ſuch, upon due Information, ought at leaſt to be diſcountenanced, and not be ſuffered to have any more advantage ſo to do, but be wholly diſabled. We find what *David* reſolved to do in his Kingdom, *Pſal.* 101. 3, *&c.* and 75.10. Theſe ought to let all ſuch know, that if they Tranſgreſs their Charge, they ſhall find no Protection from them.

[2.] THE Duties of *Judges* themſelves, which they are to follow in all their Adminiſtrations, are *diverſe*; the chief whereof are ſuch as theſe;

1. THEY *ought in general, to have a due regard to Juſtice and Equity.* The Law is, or ought to be a Rule of Righteouſneſs; this therefore 'tis his Duty to lay in the Foundation of all his Adminiſtrations, and firmly reſolve to take all his meaſures according to it; and that he will take heed, that he do no unjuſt thing; ſo did he, Pſal. 75.2. *When I ſhall receive the congregation, I will judge uprightly.* The diſtinction indeed between Juſtice and Equity is very nice, tho' I know *Lawyers* make a very great one; and for that reaſon are Courts of *Equity* erected, to abate the Rigour of Law *Juſtice*, in Caſes wherein Perſons elſe would ſuffer wrong. But in a Moral ſenſe, all Laws are to be calculated by the Rules of right Reaſon; and if ſo, they are both *Juſt* and *Equal*: And tho' Men through the miſapprehenſion of the reaſon of things, may be in an Error in the application; yet Judges ought to interpret them in every thing that is dubious, by this general Rule; for they are to do Juſtice and Judgment.

AS to that Queſtion, *Whether a Judge is bound to Execute a Law, which he is convinced to be in it ſelf Unrighteous?* It would take up too much time to diſcuſs it diſtinctly; all that I ſay is, They are to Judge for God primarily; and He loves Righteouſneſs, and hates Iniquity; and we are told concerning ſuch, Prov. 17. 15. *He that juſtifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the juſt, even they both are abomination to the Lord.* And they that think ſuch a Man hath two Conſciences, a Publick and a Private, will find it a grand Cheat one Day, when they ſhall ſtand before the great Tribunal. But there is great Prudence neceſſary to be uſed in ſuch a Caſe.

2. THEY *ought to have a peculiar regard to the Laws of the Government, to which they ſerve.* Tho' the Law of God is the Rule of his Conſcience, which he ought by no means to tranſgreſs; and that Law extends, and ſets bounds to all his Actions, in every Relation he bears among Men; yet the Law of the Government is that to which he is to refer all his Juridical Actions, and they are to be bounded by it, and that on a double Account. He is to execute all the wholſome Laws of it, according as there is occaſion for it offered to him; and this he is to do becauſe the Oath of God is upon him, which is a Solemn tye lying upon his Conſcience, than which there can be no ſtronger Obligation among Men; as alſo, becauſe he is a Miniſter of God, as well as of Men, appointed for this very end, *Rom.* 13.4. God therefore and Men expect it of him; and the Civil Tranquillity hath no little dependance upon it. He is alſo to be limited by the Law in all the Executions of his Office. Conſider him as a Judge, and he hath no Authority to make Laws for his Direction, for they are already made to his hand, and he is bound to them. It is an unexceptionable Rule, that where there is no Law, there is no Tranſgreſſion, and conſequently no Puniſhment due; And tho' if a Man tranſgreſs the Law of God, a Judge may and ought as a Chriſtian to rebuke him for it; yet if there be no Law of Man, he cannot inflict any Civil Puniſhment upon him; nor will it be his default, but the blame of Lawmakers, if he go unpuniſhed, in caſe the Treſpaſs be ſuch, as requires that it be born witneſs againſt by the Civil Powers; which, when it is ſo, was formerly taken notice of.

3. TO *ſearch to the bottom of the Cauſe that comes under his Cognizance.* He ought to avoid all raſh Judgment, and not to determine a Caſe before he hath heard it: We are therefore adviſed, Prov. 18 13. *He that anſwereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and ſhame unto him.* And 25. 2. *It is the glory of God to conceal a thing; but the honour of kings is to ſearch out a matter.* There are many Cauſes, that come before Civil Judges, which are intricate and perplexed; and the matters themſelves lye much out of ſight, and the right determination of them is a matter of great weight, wherein Men's Eſtates, or Reputation, or Lives are concerned; ſuch things as theſe are not to be ſlightly paſſed over, but canvaſſed throughly. This therefore was one thing wherein *Job* vindicated his Integrity in this regard, *Job.* 29. 16. There are a great many Tricks, and Covers, and fair Pleas that Men will make in their own Cauſe, to blind the Cauſe, and put a falſe Face upon it;

and

and it requires great Skill, and a diligent Application of it, to set it in its true light, to prevent and detect all Fraud & wrong Judgment; and if he is not critically Cautious in this he may easily pass an Unrighteous Sentence, which he will have cause to repent of, when it may be too late to remedy, and bring upon himself a Guilt which is not easily wiped off.

4. HE *ought to have a special regard to right the Poor and Helpless, against their Rich and Potent Oppressors.* The Mean and Despised, who have none else to stand up for them, and right them, are exposed to wrongs and injuries, and every one will be ready to crush and tread them under the foot of Insolence: These therefore have no other, under God, to make their Case known to, but such as have the Authority of righting them, put into their hands. God hath therefore in his Word, given special Charge to such, to take Care of these; hence that in, Psal. 82. 3,4. *Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.* Hence that Warning given to such, Prov. 24. 11,12. *If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain: If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not: doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?* And this is the commendation given of *Solomon*'s Reign, who was therein a Type of Christ, Psal. 72. 12, 13, 14. *For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth: the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight.*

5. HE *is to allow a fair Hearing to all Parties, whose Cause comes before him.* There are *Two* sorts of Causes which belong to the Cognizance and Determination of Civil Judicature, *viz.* Matters *Criminal* or *Capital*; and Matters of *Controversy* between Man & Man: In either of these it is his Duty to suffer the Party accused to Plead for himself, and bring whatsoever he can in his own Defence, and have an Ear open to him, as well as the Accuser or Plantiff; and not to Judge before he hath heard what both sides have to alledge for themselves. (*Acts* 25. 16.) He ought therefore to shew no manner of Partiality during the Trial, much less to become an Attorney for the one against the other. *Audi alteram partem*, was a saying frequently in the Mouth of a Pagan Judge. And another could say, *I have Two Ears, when I sit to hear any Cause.* In matters between the Prince and the Subject, he ought to let the Subject have as full a Hearing and with as much Candour as him who pleads on the Princes behalf; and in Matters between Man & Man he is to give the Poor as free Audience as the Rich, the Mean as the Noble Man. Nor ought the Plantiffs fair and plausible colouring of the matter, Preoccupy or Prejudice his Judgment, much less Determine it; but he must maintain as free and open a Spirit to receive what the other hath to bring in his own Vindication. It is a Vulgar Speech and True, *One Man's Cause is Good, till another be heard.* And it agrees with that of the Wise Man, Prov. 18. 17. *He that is first in his own cause, seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.* He ought not therefore to be frightned with hard Words and Menacing, but entertained with greatest Candour: Thus did *Joshua* accost *Achan*, when he sat in Judgment upon him; as, *Josh.* 7. 19.

6. HE *ought to proceed in Judgment*, Secundum Allegata & Probata, *i. e.* according to the *Nature* of the Things alledged, and the *Evidence* which is produced, for the making of it a Legal Truth. And there are two things which do belong to this Head.

(1.) THE *matter of Fact must be legally proved.* It is not enough that the Person be accused, and Matters never so unjust alledged against him; but there must be Evidence brought in against him, which shall according to Righteousness make it to appear that it is, *ad Hominem*, a plain and undeniable Truth. If it were enough to *Accuse*, who should be Innocent? But in due Proof, it stands a Truth in Law, nor will the denial of the other Person invalidate it; for if it be enough to *Deny*, who should be Guilty? Now the ordinary way to Evidence things of Fact in Civil Courts, is by Humane Testimony; tho' Artificial Arguments are of use; and here God hath required, that in one Case, there must be at least *Two* Witnesses, for the Conviction of a Person, or making a Thing legally True.

AS to that Case, *Whether* One *Witness will not suffice in some Cases?* I Answer in a word, That all Cases are alike as to Evidence, and God hath wisely provided, that because One Man's Credit is, of it self, as good as another's in this point, there should be Two Witnesses, and therefore that Law was Moral which required this; *i.e* When there is nothing else to prove the matter, & this must be to an Individual Fact.

AS to the Case, *How far the Man's own Confession will Convict him?* It may be replied, That the Word of God allows it in some Cases; but then the Person must be clear, full and free in it; not evidently under the power of Melancholly: And the Civil Law also well provides both that no Confessions shall be extorted, and that the Matter of Fact Confessed shall be Notorious. Hence it is wholly unlawful to put any to the Rack, to draw out a Confession from them; because it is a fearfull Punishment, and an horrible Injury to an Innocent Person; and such is the Person in the Question, till legally Convicted, in the account of the Law.

(2.) THE *Relation which the matter of Fact bears to the Law, must be duly stated.* And here also, no small Caution is requisite: A matter of Fact may be proved, the Man may be legally convinced that the thing is so; but then it is another Question, What reference it hath to the Law; whether he hath Transgressed, and so made himself liable to the Sanction; whether he hath Injured his Neighbour, and so ought to make him a Reparation? It was proved

proved againſt *Abimelech*, that he had ſuccoured *David*, when he fled from *Saul*, but not that he had therein tranſgreſſed any Law, inaſmuch as *Saul* had never declared *David* to be an Enemy, and a Rebel againſt the Government.

7. HE *is to diſallow all unneceſſary delays of Judgment.* It is true, over precipitancy is on the other hand to be avoided; ſuitable Time is to be allowed for Men to provide for the Juſtifying of their Cauſe; but ſtill it is a great Duty, that matters be not needleſly deferred, and this both in matters Criminal, and in Suits at Law: There may be matters of Suſpicion and Preſumption alledged againſt an Innocent Perſon, which may unavoidably bring him into Trouble; tho' Care is to be uſed as far as may be to prevent it: However to ſuffer Impriſonment, or be under Security, is a ſuffering. and therefore it ought not to be any longer than need requires; but the matter as ſoon as can be, brought to an iſſue, that if he be Innocent, he may be reſtored to his Liberty and good Name; if Guilty, he may ſuffer according to his demerit. And in matters of Suit, it is the Duty of Judges to bring matters to as Expedite an Iſſue as can be, and not to conſent to every trifling pretence of Non Suits, *&c.* and ſo to keep things in ſuſpence, till the righteous Perſon ſuffer more loſs and expence than his gained Cauſe will repair, and it ſtands him in more to recover his juſt due, than the thing it ſelf is worth. It was Exemplary in that Roman Judge, Acts 25. 17. *Therefore when they were come hither, without any delay on the morrow I ſat on the judgment ſeat, and I commanded the man to be brought forth.*

8. HE *ought to pronounce the Sentence impartially, without reſpect of Perſons.* It was a Moral Precept given to Judges, in Lev. 19. 15. *Ye ſhall do no unrighteouſneſs in judgment; thou ſhalt not reſpect the perſon of the poor, nor honour the perſon of the mighty: but in righteouſneſs ſhalt thou judge thy neighbour.* And Deut. 1. 16, 17. *Hear the cauſes between your brethren, and judge righteouſly between every man and his brother, and the ſtranger that is with him. Ye ſhall not reſpect perſons in judgment, but you ſhall hear the ſmall as well as the great; you ſhall not be afraid of the face of man, for the judgment is God's.* Acception of Perſons is then ſinful, when Men are to be tried in Law, and the Judge inſtead of keeping exactly to the true meaning of the Law, is byaſſed by the conſideration of ſomething in the Perſon himſelf, ſo as to neglect or pervert the Law for the ſake of that Conſideration; and here it is univerſally forbidden: It is neither to be regarded for the Poor or for the Rich. Sometimes a Man may be tempted to Succour an unrighteous Cauſe, either from Conſanguinity, or Friendſhip, or Fear of the Perſon, leaſt he ſhould do him ſome injury in Revenge, or becauſe of ſome Gift, or Bribe offered in ſecret; and ſometimes, tho' this is more rare. to favour a Poor Man in Pity and Compaſſion to him, ſuppoſing him like to be ruined, in caſe the Law be proſecuted upon him; both of theſe are contrary to the Juſtice required of ſuch. There is indeed no unlawful Acception of Perſons, in things meerly Gratuitous; a Man may beſtow his Favour at his diſcretion; but in matters of Juſtice, it is a *thing* abhorred of God, and of all good Men.

9. HE *is to provide that the Sentence may be duly Executed.* The End of the Law will not otherwiſe be obtained, but indeed excluded. There are indeed ſubordinate Officers employed for this; but it is incumbent on the Judge to take an effectual courſe that it be done, or ſuch as are truſted with it, be duely born witneſs againſt, on their neglect thereof, *Prov.* 28. 17.

BUT here it may be enquired, *Whether Civil Authority may not grant a Pardon to an Offender, if they ſee meet to extend ſuch a Favour to him?*

TO this I reply, That no Judge as ſuch, is impowred to give a Pardon to a Criminal, his Province being to adminiſter Juſtice, according to Law; and there is no diſpenſatory Power belonging to him in that Poſt. It is alſo a great Truth, that there are ſome Crimes which God hath definitely required of Men, that they ſhall not ſhow the leaſt Pity to the Perſon convicted of them, as in the caſe of *Murder*, fore-mentioned, *Gen.* 6. 9 And it is farther to be obſerved, that the end of Laws is to put away Guilt from a People, whereby elſe God would be provoked to bring his Judgments upon them; and to be a Terror to others, that by the Execution of them, they may learn to fear and avoid ſuch things; both of which will be in a great meaſure loſt, by the eaſy forgiving of ſuch Perſons.

NEVERTHELESS, There are ſome Caſes ſo circumſtanced, that extream Right would be extream Wrong, and the Severity of the Civil Law would appear to be Cruelty: And when it is ſo, it's doubtleſs, that God hath lodged in the ſupream Power of a People, a Prerogative, either to mitigate the Severity of the Sentence, or to take it off by a free Pardon: And this more eſpecially, when the Law it ſelf which is tranſgreſſed, is ſuch as nothing elſe makes it a Crime, but only the Civil Authority and Sanction; and the thing it ſelf would elſe have been Lawful; though where this Power is lodged, is according to the Conſtitution of the Government.

USE. THIS alſo gives us reaſon to Bleſs God, when He beſtows ſuch Judges upon us. And calls upon us to Pray to God, That He would inſpire, or aſſiſt all ſuch, that they may acquit themſelves ſo, that Juſtice and Judgment may go down our ſtreets as a ſtream; and then will God, even our own God bleſs us.

[DECEMBER 14. 1703.]

SER-

SERMON *CLXXXIII.*

(III.) THEY ought to take utmoſt care for the *Peace* and *Safety* of the Subject. This therefore is one thing on account whereof we are to Pray for Rulers; 1 *Tim.* 2. 2. The Civil Peace and Tranquillity of a People, is, next to the true Religion, the greateſt Bleſſing they can enjoy in this Life. Now it peculiarly belongs to Civil Rulers, to take Care for the upholding of this, by ordering and governing all Affairs which refer to it. It is none of the leaſt Miſchiefs brought in by Man's Fall, that Mankind are filled with a Spirit of Diſcord, whereupon they are ready upon all occaſions to Quarrel; and their Contention to break out into open Hoſtility, which brings in all manner of Miſeries. Now theſe Controverſies are either *Perſonal* & *Private*, for the remedying or preventing whereof, the Two former Rules do ſerve; or more *Publick*, in which a People may be involved and expoſed to War, in which Oppreſſion and Ruin are threatned. So that the matter under our preſent conſideration, refers to the management of the Affairs of *War* and *Peace*; which being an Affair that requires the moſt prudent Conduct, muſt needs come under the Regulation of Civil Authority.

NOW there are Two ſorts of Wars, by which the Tranquillity of a People may be undermined, *Inteſtine* and *Foreign*; for the preventing, or well-compoſing whereof, great endeavours are to be uſed, in which the ſincere Affection of the Rulers to their Subjects will be proved.

AND here, that Queſtion about the *Lawfulneſs of War*, is proper to be handled, rather than under the *Eighth* Command, inaſmuch as the thing it ſelf belongs to Civil Government, and is under the Regulation of Rulers; but it is a thing ſo unreaſonable to *deny* it, or ſo much as to *doubt* of it, that it is hardly worth the while to diſpute of it.

WAR is uſually diſtinguiſhed into *Defenſive* and *Offenſive*. As to the former, viz. *Defenſive*, when we are to ſtand on our own Guard, to ſave our ſelves from an injurious Invader, and to repel Force with Force. *Self-Preſervation* is a Principle ſo cloſely rivetted into the Nature of the Creatures, that it is unnatural to doubt of the Lawfulneſs of it; and to chuſe rather to ſuffer all manner of Violence and Oppreſſion, than to ſtand on our Defence, and reſiſt an injurious Adverſary, is to forego Reaſon it ſelf: Nor can ſuch a People expect long to enjoy the Liberties, which God hath beſtowed on them a Right unto; but muſt look to be made a Prey by others, and enſlaved by them. It is true, the actual Neceſſity of this is brought in by Man's Sin; but as the Caſe ſtands, ſince the Apoſtacy, there is no Living in ſuch a World as this is without it; nor will thoſe Scriptures which Caution us againſt private Revenge, make ought againſt it.

NOR can a *Defenſive* War be managed without that which is in a ſenſe *Offenſive*; for we cannot ſave our ſelves in it, unleſs we offer Violence to thoſe that Aſſail us.

BUT as to that which is pecularly called *Offenſive*, i. e. When we are the Aggreſſors, there may be a more ſeeming pretence for the *Unlawfulneſs* of it; tho' it is but ſeeming, inaſmuch as there may be ſuch Affronts and Provocations offered by an Adverſary, before he breaks forth into open Hoſtility, as may neceſſitate it; and the Safety and Tranquillity of a Government, cannot be ſecured without it; which, what they are, may after be conſidered: And tho' Vengeance belongs to God; yet in ſuch Caſes, God hath betruſted Magiſtrates to Act in His Authority; and hence they are called *Revengers*, Rom. 13. 4. And for this Reaſon they are called the *Shields of the Earth*, Pſal. 47. 9.

WE may here then conſider their Duty, in regard of the ſorts of War firſt mentioned.

AND that,

(1.) WITH reſpect to the Tranquillity of the Subject againſt the miſchief of *Inteſtine Wars*, i.e. Such as breed in the Bowels of the Government, and are moſt pernicious; and their Duty in this Affair, comes under Two Heads,

1. THEY *ought to uſe all prudent Endeavours to prevent ſuch Troubles*. And that is to be done, by Antedating the Cauſes of them; and theſe Cauſes are rooted in the diſcontents entertained by the Subjects, againſt the Adminiſtration of the Government, in which wiſe Rulers will take Care, as far as they can, that there be no ſuch Occaſions offered; or if there be, ſeaſonably to remove them. All Oppreſſion will raiſe diſquiet in Men's minds, *Eccl.* 7. 7. Now the Subject may be oppreſſed, either in their Liberties, or Eſtates, or by the Injuſtice of Miniſters; and when either of theſe Gall them, they will wince: Rulers therefore ought in Prudence as well as Conſcience, to take effectual Care, that the People's juſt Liberties be defended; that no heavy & unreaſonable Taxes be impoſed on them, and that all publick Officers be kept within due bounds. And if at any Time Diſcontents ariſe and ſpread, they ſhould carefully endeavour to lay them; and if there have been any thing juſtly grievous offered to their People, to remove it out of the way, and by gentle Treatments to compoſe them, before they break out. It was a piece of Wiſe Counſel the Old Men gave to *Rehoboam*, 1 *Kings* 12. 7. Which if he had hearkned to, he might have prevented the Rupture which followed upon his forſaking of it.

2. THEY *ought to conſult the common Good of the People, in the ſuppreſſing of ſuch Inſurrections*. They cannot always be prevented; there are for the moſt part, ſome turbulent Spirits that love to Fiſh in troubled Waters, who are ready to blow up a ſpark of Diſcontent into a flame, and ſo raiſe Civil Wars in the heart of a Government; and it is incumbent on the Rulers to withſtand them, and the Welfare of the Subject is concerned in it. But there is great Caution and Moderation to be uſed in the Application: Severity ought at ſuch

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a time, to be reſtrained to the Ringleaders of ſuch Factions, and all gentle offers and treatments made to the reſt, remembring, that the waſting of the Subjects is a weakning of the Government; and extream Rigour will but ſtrengthen the Rebellion, whereas a general Pardon and Amneſty, will tend to make the Cement the ſtronger and more durable. It was a noble Speech and Carriage of *Joab*, in that Civil Rupture, 2 Sam. 20. 21. *A man of mount Ephraim (Sheba the ſon of Bichri by name) hath lift up his hand againſt the king, even againſt David: deliver him only, and I will depart from the city.* And an imitable Policy in *David* to quiet the People, after *Abſalom*'s Rebellion, *Chap.* 19. 14, *&c.*

(2.) WITH reſpect to the Tranquillity of the Subject againſt the evil of *Foreign War.* It is a thing too frequent for Neighbouring Governments to fall out, and come to open Hoſtility one with another, whereon not a little Miſery enſues. And this proceeds either from the Pride and Ambition of Rulers, or the unjuſt Carriages of the Subject; and uſually both of theſe meet, in order to an Eruption. Here alſo is a great Duty lying on Rulers, who would conſult the Civil Happineſs of their People, which is upheld by Peace, and interrupted by War.

HERE then,

1. THEY *ought to uſe all due endeavours to preſerve the Subject from the Miſery of* War: *To do what in them lies, to maintain the* Peace *of their Government.* He ſaid too much, who thought that the moſt Unjuſt Peace is preferrible to the moſt Juſt War: There are Times when God calls his People to take up the Sword; nor doth the Goſpel-Day diſcharge them from it: However, War is not to be taken up for every ſlight occaſion; hence that, Prov. 20 18. *With good advice make war* For this reaſon they ought to avoid the giving of Provocation to their Neighbours, or take occaſion from every Punctilio or Circumſtance, to pick Quarrels. It is a miſerable thing for a People to be laid open to all the Infelicities of War, only for the Humour or Pride of a few Men; they ought to be content with their own, and not Injuriouſly to invade the Dominion of others.

2. THEY *ought in Times of* Peace, *to make good Preparation for* War. They ſhould not, upon a vain Preſumption, *Laiſt* like, live at reſt, in a turpid Security and Neglect; this is to provoke Men, whoſe Covetouſneſs and Ambition is ready for ſuch an Enterprize, to make inroads upon them; whereas to be always in a readineſs, is a Rational way to prevent it, and preſerve quietneſs, as well as to be provided for the worſt, if it ſhould fall out. It was a prudent Advice of *Aſa* to his People, and well becoming a Father of his Country, 2 *Chron.* 14. 6, 7, 8. It is a preſumptuous thing for any to ſay, our Defence is in God, and upon it, to do nothing in the uſe of Means, to provide for their own Safety; for true Faith directs to the uſe of proper Means, to obtain the End deſired.

3. THEY *ought to vindicate the Affronts and Injuries offered their Perſons or Subjects.* Not that every ſlight Injury ſhould be improved to the height; but when they are Inſolent, it is Lawful and a Duty, ſo far to curb them, as any Advantage is offered them. Doubtleſs *David* had a juſt Quarrel with the *Ammonites*, for their abuſe they offered his Ambaſſadors, 2 *Sam.* 10. 7. And when Neighbouring People Rob, or Pillage, and make inroads upon them, it is their Duty to take up Arms to repel them: For they cannot do it in a courſe of Civil Juſtice, but it requires ſuch a way as this; and therefore the Courſe which *Jepthah* took againſt the *Amorites*, *Judg.* 11. was Juſt and Warrantable.

4. THEY *ought in* Offenſive War, *firſt to offer the fair Terms for* Peace. Such War cannot lawfully be made, but upon Provocation given; for without it, the Aggreſſor muſt needs be Guilty: But the common Love to Mankind, the Miſchief which the Subject will be expoſed to the hazard of, the uncertainty of the Iſſue, do all of them require, that it ſhould be the laſt Eſſay. God himſelf therefore, (tho' for a ſpecial Reaſon He exempted the Seven Nations of *Canaan*, yet in regard of others, he) gave that Law to *Iſrael*, Deut. 20. 10, &c. *When thou comeſt nigh unto a city to fight againſt it, then proclaim peace unto it.*— And herein *Jepthah* payed Obedience to that Law, when he went forth againſt the Children of *Ammon*, in that he firſt Expoſtulated with them. *Judg.* 11. 10, *&c.*

5. THEY *ought to make* War, *with a regard to* Peace. It is their Duty to maintain a placable Spirit; then, when they are put upon it to ſhew the moſt ſevere expreſſions of Hoſtility. There is neceſſarily a great deal of Severity to be ſhewn in bloody Battles, and Depopulations, which are the unavoidable Effects of War; but it ought ever to be tempered with Humanity. It was the Charge which the Prophet laid to *Iſrael*, when they had the better of the *Jews*, 2 Chron. 28 9. *Behold, becauſe the Lord God of your fathers was wroth with Judah, he hath delivered into your hand, and ye have ſlain them in a rage that reacheth up unto heaven.* It looks like a bloody Diſpoſition, to draw the Sword, and throw the Scabbard away, (as one words it,) *i. e.* To reſolve the utmoſt Cruelty: To ſlay Women and Children in cool Blood, is a thing which ordinarily will admit of no excuſe. The End of War is to ſubdue an inſulting Adverſary, and to procure for themſelves Safety from their Oppreſſions; and not to lay the World waſte, and to fill Places with nothing but images of Horror and Deſolation.

AND theſe are the principal things which lye upon Civil Rulers in reſpect to *War.*

(IV.) THEY ought to take Care to promove the *outward Proſperity* of their People. This indeed is one thing that belongs to, or comes under the *Making* of *Good Laws*, and ſeeing to the juſt *Execution* of them; but it hath a *peculiar* Conſideration in it, and may therefore come under a diſtinct Head: And if they are *Fathers* indeed, they will deſire, conſult, and take delight in the Wealth of their Subjects; and indeed, in ſo doing, they do provide for

their own Grandeur. And for this end, it is their Duty to encourage all Honeſt Callings, which are the way to Proſperity; and to remove ſuch Blocks and diſcouragements as are wont to give Check thereto. And here,

1. BY *maintaining of Men's Properties*: By all means ſecuring and preſerving of Men's Rights from being invaded, and being diſpoſed of Arbitrarily without Law. Not but that every Man, according to his Ability, owes a due Proportion to the Support of the Government, whereof he is a Member, (as will afterwards be conſidered;) but it is fitting, that every Man ſhould be able to call his Eſtate his own, and have the diſpoſal of it according to Equity This is the way to promote Induſtry, which is the readieſt courſe to get Wealth, in the Ordinary Providence of God, (*Prov.* 10. 4.) for every Man naturally ſeeks Advantage by what he doth, the Proſpect whereof ſtimulates him to uſe Induſtry.

2. BY *taking effectual Courſes, that* Idleneſs *be prevented.* It is God's Command, that every Man ſhould have a Lawful Calling, and be Diligent in it; and it is incumbent on Rulers to take Care that Men ſo do: It is the Precept in, 2 Theſ. 3. 10. *That if any would not work, neither ſhould he eat.* Idle Perſons are Drones, that Live upon the Honey, but make none, and ſhould be driven from the Hive, *i. e.* They are duly to be Puniſhed: Where Idle Vagrants abound, Poverty will come on ſuch Places as an armed Man. It is true, ſome God Providentially diſableth from Labour; and for ſuch, Care ought to be taken; but when Men can, and will not Labour, they ſhould be conſtrained to it. Hitherto belongs the Care that is to be uſed, that Children be ſeaſonably put out to Learn ſome honeſt Calling, and not ſuffered to go about the Streets, from Door to Door, Begging or Stealing; and if Parents are ſo Brutiſh as to neglect them, the Civil Authority ought to diſpoſe of them. Hitherto alſo belongs the preventing or ſuppreſſing of ſuch things as are the occaſions of Idleneſs, and needleſs Expence, *viz.* Private Houſes of Entertainment, where Perſons ſpend their Time and Money; and learn all manner of Immoralities; as alſo, the unneceſſary and imprudent multiplying of Publick Houſes, where ſo much of precious Time is ſpent, to no profit, but loſs; where Drinking and Gaming exhauſts Men's Subſtance, and brings ill Habits upon them; and to allow this, under pretence of giving decayed Perſons an Opportunity to Support themſelves, is the way to Ruin a great many for the Maintenance of one; and is therefore a thing cried out of, in all well ordered Governments.

3. BY *a due Witneſs born againſt* Thefts *and* Robberies. Where theſe abound, a People are Impoveriſhed, and Men diſheartned in their Employments. Care ought therefore to be uſed to prevent them; and when they are detected, there ought a Terror be put upon others, as well as a Teſtimony born againſt them.

AS to that Caſe, *Whether Theft may be puniſhed with Death?* I ſhall only obſerve, that we conſidered before, that Penalties are to be ſuited to the Publick Safety: And therefore the Judicial Law of *Moſes* doth not ty up Lawgivers in this, but the Publick Neceſſity is to determine: Nevertheleſs, there ought to be a difference made, in the kind and degree of Theft; and *Neceſſity* is not to be pretended *Unneceſſarily*; and it looks in itſelf, as if there were a diſproportion between Life, and the outward things of it: Beſides, that is an Obſervation which ſome have made, *viz.* That it is experienced, that there are fewer Robberies committed in ſuch Places, where ſome more eaſy Puniſhments are inflicted, than where Theft is puniſhed with Death; and that it hath rather hardned than terrified ſuch as have fallen into this unhappy Courſe, and rendred them deſperate: However, it is certain, that ſuch are intollerable in a Civil State; and the Proſperity and Safety of the whole, requires, that they be vigorouſly ſuppreſt.

(V.) THEY ought in all things, to *ſet an Example of Righteouſneſs and Holineſs before their People.* We obſerved, that the great End of Civil Government, is to preſerve both the Tables of the Moral Law, which God hath betruſted all theſe withal, to whom Civil Authority is committed: And the Reaſon is, becauſe they are ordained of God for this End, and Rule for him; as he ſaid, 2 Chron. 19. 6. *Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man but for the Lord.* And altho' they are ſet over Men, yet are they God's Servants, and as much under the obligation of Obedience to Him, as the meaneſt Subject; upon which account, they have no more Liberty to clear themſelves to tranſgreſs the good and righteous Laws of God, which ought to be the Pattern of all their Laws, than any other; and are equally obnoxious to God's Diſpleaſure: Nay, Their Tranſgreſſion is in many reſpects aggravated on account of the high Station which they are advanced unto; they are guilty of greater Ingratitude to God, who hath Honoured them with Preferment, and put on them an Image of His Authority, which is hereby deſpiſed; and the Name of God ſuffers more eminently from them, if they violate His Precepts, inaſmuch as they are more in the light and obſerved. *David*'s Sin is ſo aggravated, 2 Sam. 12. 14. *By this deed thou haſt given great occaſion to the enemies of the Lord to blaſpheme.* And their Example is more conſpicuous and influential. The Poet could ſay, *Regis ad Exemplum*, &c. The Practice of Rulers is like to be a Pattern which many will lay before themſelves, and will more readily follow it, than the Laws. It will be vain therefore to make Laws, and put ſevere Sanctions to them, if they prove Cob-webs, and great ones, or Men in Power, can break them when they pleaſe: Nor indeed will Rulers have the Courage to ſee that good Laws be duly Executed upon Offenders, if they themſelves

ſelves do live in the violation of them; and will expoſe themſelves to the greaterContempt, if they ſhould eſſay to put them in Execution, inaſmuch, as they herein make it to appear, that they do not pay a real reſpect to the Laws themſelves.

WHEREAS, on the other hand, If they ſet a good Example, and do practically pay a deference to their wholeſome Edicts, by a carefull Conformity of themſelves thereunto, they will greatly encourage thoſe that are Honeſt and Good, and gain great Love and Reſpect from them; and will put a greater Terror upon thoſe that are Vicious, and have no good Principle of Obedience in them, as expecting not to Eſcape the ſuffering of the Civil Cenſures, in caſe they come under their Cognizance: And this will alſo encourage them with the greater Confidence in all their Adminiſtration,and make them the more impartial, and ſtop the Mouths of all that would otherwiſe be apt to Cenſure them. It was to Men in Authority that the Apoſtle is ſuppoſed to give that Reprimand, Rom. 2. 22. *Thou that ſayeſt a man ſhould not commit adultery, doſt thou commit adultery? thou that abhorreſt idols, doſt thou commit ſacriledge?* Whereas, It was a good Argument of Conviction, that *Nehemiah* uſed with them, *Neh.* 5. 10. It was for this reaſon that God commanded, that the King himſelf ſhould write a Copy of the Law, and keep it by him, *Deut.* 17. 18,19. It is therefore a token of God's Kindneſs and good Will to a People, when He beſtows ſuch upon them in the Magiſtracy; and ſaith, that becauſe he loved His People, He gave them ſuch to bear Rule over them, who are Wiſe & Faithful, and ſtudy by all means to advance the Glory of God, and the Welfare of the Subject in all things. And God is to be acknowledged in it, and praiſed for it; for it is by Him that Men are ſet up, whoſoever be the Inſtruments of it. As on the other hand, it is an Argument of His Wrath, when there are thoſe given to them, who regard not Righteouſneſs, but are themſelves Wicked, and Oppreſſors, and do either by Example or Connivance encourage Leud Men, and ſuffer Leudneſs and Violence to prevail; it being both it ſelf a Judgment, and opens a door to let in more and more fearful Fruits of God's holy Revenge.

LET us then pray hard to Him, who is the God of the Spirits of all fleſh, that he would always ſet over the Congregation of His People, ſuch Men to go out and come in before them, who ſhall, like *David*, lead them with the Integrity of their hearts, and Skilfullneſs of their hands; who ſhall Judge uprightly, and walk in their Integrity; that ſo Juſtice may go down our Streets as a Flood, and Righteouſneſs as a River. And let us Bleſs God for ſuch, as the precious Tokens of His Benignity to us; and this be humbly Recommended to ſuch as are veſted with Civil Authority,as that which will be their Honour and Happineſs: God will thus teſtify to His Acceptance and Approbation of them, and all good Men will Love and Honour them; and thus will they be the repairers of our Breaches, and reſtorers of Paths to dwell in; and their Names ſhall be had in precious remembrance, when they are dead and gone; and after Generations will have cauſe to ſpeak of them with an honourable mention, and erect Monuments for them in their hearts, which ſhall outlaſt Marble it ſelf.

[JANUARY 11. 1703.]

SERMON *CLXXXIV.*

Secondly, IT follows that we proceed to conſider the *Duties which* Subject *owe to their Civil Rulers.* And theſe may be gather'd from the *former*; the principal and moſt comprehenſive whereof may be briefly conſidered. Here then,

1. IN *General, The Duty of the Subject is to pay all due reſpect to the Magiſtrates, according to their Dignity and worth.* And this is a proper and genuine return of acknowledgment, for their laying out of their Authority, for the good of the Subject. We obſerved, that there are ſeveral Orders of Men in the Civil Government, who, tho' every one hath his part, yet have not a like Dignity or Authority in theGovernment: accordingly, there is a different reſpect to be paid to them: Hence the Apoſtle hath ſuch a Remark in, 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14. *Submit your ſelves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's ſake: whether it be unto the king, as ſupreme; Or unto governours, as unto them that are ſent by him for the puniſhment of evil-doers and for the praiſe of them that do well.* And this is due to them for the ſake of the Office they bear, which is honourable; and Government can never obtain it's proper End, unleſs the Honour due to the Rulers be upheld. If once their Perſons come to be deſpiſed, their Authority will be trampled on, and all Miſeries will enſue thereupon: There is alſo a reſpect due to them for the worth of their Perſons, when they approve themſelves to be worthy Patriots and Fathers to their People: As God is to be thanked for ſuch, ſo are they to be had in precious eſteem, And highly valued for their Works ſake. Now the things wherein this reſpect is to be paid to them, are

2. MORE *Eſpecially* ſuch as theſe,

(1.) THEY *ought to be much in hearty and earneſt Prayer to God for them.* This is indeed a Duty univerſally incumbent on all *Inferiors*, with regard to their *Superiors*, in every ſort of Relation which God hath Ordained to be among Men; and cannot be neglected by them, without bringing Guilt upon themſelves, for omitting a neceſſary Duty. And there are none that do more ſtand in need of our Prayers, than thoſe who are put into ſo great Truſt; on their right diſcharge whereof, there are ſo great Dependences: and not only our Obedience to God, but alſo our own Intereſt and deep Concern in their good Management, will engage us thus to do. Hence we have this Duty ſtrongly urged on Chriſtians by the Apoſtle, 1 Tim. 2. begin.

I Exhort therefore, that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men: For kings, and for all that are in authority. And yet we know what manner of Rulers they were under the Command of. And there are *Three* things more peculiarly wherein we should apply our selves to the Throne of Grace in their behalf;

1. WE should Pray, That God would afford to them *a right Spirit of Government.* This is a Gift of God, and He is to be sought unto for it: All have it not, and the want of it will be attended with evil Consequences: Hence we have that, Eccl. 10. 16, 17. *Wo to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning. Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness.* And to this belongs both *Skill, and Discretion,* to know how to order Affairs for the Glory of God and the Welfare of the People. This *Solomon* prayed for in his own behalf, 1 Kings 3. 9. *Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?* And every Subject should seek it for the Rulers. It is therefore the Commendation of these, 2 Chron. 12. 32. *The children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.* These are Blessings worth the asking for. And also *those Vertues* whereby they may be disposed rightly to apply these Gifts to the End of them, and so be rendred great Blessings in their Generation; *viz.* That they may love Righteousness and hate Iniquity; favour the Good, and discountenance the Evil; promote the Interest of the true Religion, and suppress every thing that is contrary either to Piety or Probity: This therefore is specified, 1 Tim. 2. 2. *That we may lead a quiet & peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.* And we find how *David* professed concerning himself, *Psal.* 101. 3,——8. & 75. 2, 10.

2. WE should Pray, That God would *influence them in all their Administrations, to do that which is Right.* Their Work is great and dificult, their Temptations are many, and their Discouragements great, and their Mistakes of dangerous Consequence. Their Authority is from God, and they are accountable to Him; and if they provoke Him, they seldom suffer alone. They have Corruption in them, and without Heaven's Aid, they cannot do well; and do therefore stand in need of Prayer to Him, who alone can assist them with His Counsel and Conduct: for He hath said in, Prov. 8. 15, 16. *By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.* And this also is included in the direction about our Praying for such, 1 *Tim.* 2. 2.

3. WE *should Bless God for them, when he Spirits and Assists them in their Work, to do that which is Right.* Thanksgiving is one essential part of Prayer, and is a proper return of suitable acknowledgment to God for Benefits received; and this also is contained in that, 1 *Tim.* 2. 1. And we do not deserve *Good Rulers,* if we cannot cordially Thank God for them. God is wont to shew much of His Mind to a People by the Rulers whom he Providentially sets over them. It is recorded as a Token of God's Anger against *Israel,* when He sat some over them to be their King, in, Hos. 13. 11. *I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath.* If they had not sinned, He would not have done so: whereas it was in Kindness to them, when he gave to them *David,* a Man after his own heart: Hence that in, Psal. 89. 20, 21. *I have found David my servant: with my holy oyl have I anointed him. With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him.* And the Queen of *Sheba* could make that remark upon her Observation of *Solomon*'s great Wisdom and Prudence in his Administring Government, 1 Kings 10. 9. *Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice.*

(2.) THEY *ought to pay them a singular and cordial Fear.* The Wise Man puts those *Two* together in, Prov. 24. 21. *My son, fear thou the Lord, and the King.* And we have something like it, 1 Pet. 2. 17. *Fear God: Honour the King.* The *Honour* indeed, as was formerly observed, which is enjoyned in this Command, includes in it all the Duties between every Relation which God hath appointed; but the manner of the Payment of it is to be measured by the Quality of the Relation to whom it is due: Now when *God* and the *King* are put together, they do not stand in *Co-ordination,* for Princes are God's Subjects; but it may intend, That because God hath devolved such Power from Himself upon them, and they bear some dark resemblance of His Government more than other Men, He requires a peculiar Expression of this Fear towards them. This Fear is not to be *Slavish,* (for that can never be *Cordial,* but such as is attended with *Hatred*;) but it is to be *Free* and Liberal. *Good Subjects* have no cause to dread *Righteous Rulers*: for tho' they are *a Terror to evil-doers,* they are *a Praise to them that do well,* Rom. 13. 3. It is a Fear of *Reverence,* and should be like that of *Good Children* to their *Fathers*: we therefore observed, that they are so called: And this is to flow from an entire *Love* to them, which makes them afraid to provoke them, and take pleasure in giving them content: And this is to manifest it self, in a suitable demeanour towards them, in keeping a due distance, shewing them all Civil Respect, and avoiding every thing that should look like *Contempt*: And this respect is due to the Office which they bear: they are therefore called *Gods,* tho' *Mortal* ones, *Psal.* 82. 6. And it is certain, that except their *Honour* be upheld, their Persons will be despised, their Authority trampled upon, and their Government will be vilified.

vilified. And when they carry themselves faithfully in their Station, they command this respect to their Persons; and it is the least acknowledgment that can be paid to them for their good Management, by which every true Subject is made happy. And this respect ought to be paid them, in proportion to the dignity of the Post which they are posted in: Hence that distinction in, 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14. *Submit your selves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governours, as unto them that are sent by him.*

(3.) THEY *ought to pay a due Subjection to their Laws & Administrations.* We before observed under the Duties of Magistrates, that Two comprehensive ones are, the making of *Good Laws*, and the *Righteous Execution* of them; in both of which a main part of the Civil Happiness of any People doth consist. Now that these may attain the End, and a People may be truely Happy in them; there is of necessity a Subjection hereto, to be paid by the Subject; else they will lose their End, and Misery will ensue instead of Felicity. Nevertheless, this matter must be rightly stated, otherwise Men may fall into an Error on one hand or another. That there is a Subjection due, the Word of God acquaints us; and without it, the Ordination of Civil Government among Men, would be vain, and lose the End of it. Now this Subjection or Obedience, hath a respect either to the *Laws themselves*, or the *Administration* of them; and with regard to these, there is either Active or Passive Obedience required of the Subject.

[1.] WITH respect to the *Laws themselves*, They ought to pay *Active Obedience* to those that are *Just* and *Righteous*. As to the Illimited Obedience which some require, as a matter of Conscience, to all Laws indiscriminately, under the Obligation of the Fifth Command, as if a Man Sinned if he yielded it not, it is a great Error, nor will it be proved from 1 *Pet.* 2. 13. For by *Ordinance* in that place, is not intended a *Law*, but a *Magistrate*; and he is called an *Ordinance of Man*, both because the designation of his Person, and limitation of his Power is Humane. Here then observe,

1. THERE *are some Laws of Men, which are* in themselves *Duties*; *and expresly required by the Moral Law.* These we ought to Obey, whether they be a Civil Ordinance or no; because they proceed from the Authority of God, who is *our King and Lawgiver*, Isa. 33. 22. When therefore these things are required of us by the Magistrate, this doth not make the things themselves more our Duty than before; but they add to the Obligation, because, besides the *Divine Precept* in regard of the things, there is Lawful Command of *Lawful Authority*, commanding in God's Name, and by Divine Warrant; so that by Neglect we not only break that particular Command, to which the Duty it self relates, but also the *Fifth*, which also aggravates the Guilt: Hence that, Rom. 13. 4, 5. *For he is the minister of God to thee for good: But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil: Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.* If he be the Minister of God, and Acts according to His Warrant; not to Obey Him, is to Disobey God, who not only Commands the thing, but also Commands this Obedience.

2. THERE *are Laws* Prudential; *which God hath Authorized the Civil Magistrate to Enact for the Good of the Subject*: There is therefore an Active Obedience due unto them by the Divine Precept. There are things which in their own Nature are indifferent, but yet in their Circumstances, are either Expedient, or Inexpedient, and the Publick Benefit or Damage may be concerned either in the Practising or Omission of them by the Subject: Now tho' Man's Liberty in such things is not to be restrained by the meer Pleasure of the Law-giver, when no Good comes by such restraint; yet when the Publick Good is advanced by such Laws, and Damage will arise unavoidably by not making them, it belongs to the Care of Law-makers to provide for such things, by Laws accommodated thereto: So that such Laws must be Obeyed for Conscience sake, because the mind of God is discovered to us by such Circumstances; and they are herein the *Ministers of God for our Good*: Rom. 13. 2. *Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation.* And tho' we should not so well see the Prudence of them, yet because we may do the thing, or avoid it, without Sin in the matter of it, we ought to comply with it, rather than disturb the Publick Tranquillity.

3. THERE *are Laws which are* Unjust, *and which all the Civil Authority in the World, cannot by their Sanctions, make them to be* Just. Such Laws are presumed to be sometimes Enacted by Men in Civil Power, Psal. 94. 20. *Shall the throne of Iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?* For no Man or Men can make that to be *Righteous*, which God Himself hath determined to be *Sin*. Now such are all Laws which require such things to be done, which the *Moral Law* forbids; or prohibit such things, as that doth require. It is therefore certain, that it is a Duty of the Subject to refuse Active Obedience to all such Laws; and the Reason is irrefragable, because they are under a *Superiour Power*, which hath enjoyned them on their Peril not to do it: And whatsoever Penalties they expose themselves to, by so doing, they ought to adventure it; as knowing there are greater which they will run themselves into, in case they, for Fear comply. This therefore is the Caveat in this regard given by Christ himself, Matth. 10. 28. *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* There are some Cases in which Men may certainly with good Warrant, make the reply to those that require and threaten them, which the Apostles did to them, Acts 4. 19. *Whether it be right in the*

the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. And it is a vain wheedle for any to say, as some do, The *Lawgivers* must bear the blame, the *Subject* is bound to Allegiance, and is to look no farther: for every one hath a Conscience, and must Obey it, so as to do nothing against the plain Dictates of it, for he must give an Account of himself to God.

[2.] WITH respect to their *Administration.* There is a Submission due from the Subject to these, which brings in the Doctrine of *Passive Obedience.* This Doctrine hath been abused by the bigotted Patrons of that which they call *Non-Resistance* and *Passive Obedience*, to the just prejudice of all Men of Sense, who are not interested. There is indeed such a thing as *Passive Obedience* due from the Subject, but it is not unlimited; and needs Consideration. Here then,

1. IF *the Administration be Just & Legal, the Subject ought to submit patiently to the Penalty, which he hath deservedly brought upon himself.* Nay, He ought to take the Blame to himself, and acknowledge the Righteousness both of the Law, and of those by whose Authority it is executed. The *Thief* on the Cross could say of himself, Luk. 23.41. *And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds.* This Profession also *Paul* made when he stood before the Civil Bar, Acts 25. 11. *For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die.* If he suffers no more than what he hath deserved, he should Repent of his folly and seek to make his Peace with God, but not to murmur at his Punishment from Men, because they Obey the Will of God in what they do.

2. IN *Judgments that are Illegal & Injurious, a particular Person ought to use no* Unlawful *Means, to save himself from the Execution of them; but commit himself to God, and leave it with Him.* Such an one may and ought to Plead his Innocency, and Vindicate himself before the World, in the presence of the Judges; and where there is room for it, Appeal to an higher Court, as *Paul* did, *Acts* 25. 11. And sometimes he may call upon God to Vindicate him, as He did, 2 *Chron.* 24. 22. Nevertheless, he ought not to bear inveterate Malice against his Persecutors, but Die with *Stephen*'s Prayer, Acts 7. ult. *Lord, lay not this Sin to their charge.*

3. IN *all well regulated Governments, there is a Power seated, to redress prevailing* Male-Administrations, *and rectify the intollerable Disorders, which by reason of them, are destructive to the very End of Government.* Not but that something will be amiss, as long as these things must pass thro' the hands of Sinful Men, who labour (even the best of them,) under many Infirmities; but this is to be done orderly, and it in no wise justifies Plots, or Insurrections of Male-contents; for Evil is not to be suppressed with Evil. But then things depend upon the diverse *Civil Constitutions*, and come not particularly under a *Theological* consideration.

(4.) THEY *ought to maintain, and on all occasions, testify their Fidelity to them.* It hath been a Custom, Time out of Mind, for Subjects to have Oaths given them, wherein they Swear Allegiance, in which they invoke God to be a Witness of their Faithfulness in performing them: Hence we have that Advice given, Eccl. 8. 2. *I counsel thee to keep the kings commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God.* As to that Question, *How far the Subject's Oath is Binding?* Because it is mutual, and supposeth a Covenant, I shall not undertake here to enter upon it: But this is certain, that *Oaths* are not things to be dallied withal; and every Person ought to consider, that if he violate this, he thereby lays himself open to the Wrath and Judgments of God. They ought therefore to stand by the Government to which they owe Loyalty, and not to foment Conspiracies, nor to join in with such Male contents, as are weary of Good Government, and have a hand in contriving the Subversion of it; or join with the Enemies of it, and take up Arms against it, from private Peeks, or supposed Defects in Administration: The best managed Polity, will have such in the bosom of it; yea such as will be the more uneasy under it, because the Administrations are Righteous: And therefore these are put together, Prov. 24 21. *My son, Fear thou the Lord, and the king: and meddle not with them that are given to change.* Nay, They ought cheerfully to take up Arms, when lawfully called to it; and hazard their Lives in the High Places of the Field, in defence of their Rulers and Country: They ought also seasonably to detect and bear a Testimony against all Consultations, which may be on foot, to undermine and overturn the Laws, and Liberties, and Government of the Place where they are Subjects: Hence that brave Speech of *Joab*, 2 Sam. 10. 12. *Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God.*

(5.) THEY *ought to be cheerful in paying their share for the Support of the Government whereof they are Members.* It is a Precept laid down by the Apostle, Rom 13.7. *Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom.* Which assures us, that there is such a thing due by the Moral Law: and indeed, no Government can be upheld without it. There is an honourable Maintenance due to such Persons as are in Publick Trust, and have the Burden of Government lying upon them, which ought to uphold them in a Post answerably to the Dignity that is put on them: And it is a Disgrace to a People to with-hold it from them, argues a sordid and ungrateful Spirit in them, and tends to make the Government it self despicable: And because every one hath a Privilege in the Blessing of Good Rulers, they ought to be concerned in maintaining the Charge of it. There are also many Publick Charges, necessarily arising from many unavoidable Occasions which call for them; and for this there should be a Publick Treasure for the upholding of Alliances, for the supporting of Ambassies, for the Rewarding of well-deserving Persons, for the Encouragement of Schools and Colleges, for the Magazines of War, and Fortification of Places of Defence, for the carrying

carrying on of a just War with Injurious Enemies, besides whatever other Emergencies may fall out. It is a great, tho' a common fault, for Subjects to be always crying out of the Intolleableness of Taxes when their own Consciences tell them, that the Providence of God calls for them, and the Precept of God requires it of them: Whereas they ought to acknowledge the hand of God in these things, and be humbled under His Hand, to accept of it as a just Chastizement upon them for their Sin, and seek to Him by Repentance for the removal of it. Tho' if Rulers should become Oppressors, and Fleece their Subjects, only to gratify their own Lusts, or to keep the People Poor, they may well grown under it, and in a peaceable way ask for redress; but when they think, that all that goes that way, is Oppression, and do it grutchingly or deceitfully, they therein provoke God, to make them to experience the difference, between Rulers that love them, and such as hate them. And how many Places in the World, have been Instances of the woful Miseries, which they have justly brought upon themselves, by their woful Parsimony, who have lost Liberty, and Estates and Lives too, because they were not willing to expend a part, for the Preservation of the rest?

THUS, we have taken a brief Account of the most essential Duties between Magistrates and their Subjects; and let it not seem to us as a light matter whether we observe and practise them. Mankind cannot live like Men, unless they combine in Societies, who must Mutually Support each other. Civil Societies cannot uphold this Combination comfortably, without Government; but must become a meer Rout, and either disband, or be a continual Plague one to another. Government cannot be upheld, so as to be for the Civil Happiness of the whole, and the parts, unless the Rulers do Studiously, and Industriously manage themselves according to the Rules of Government, justly & righteously, but will turn Oppressors & subvert all. And unless the Subjects carry themselves with all suitable demeanure, towards them who bear Rule over them, they will render themselves and each other, and their Rulers too, Unhappy. Whereas, when in these respects, every one complies with the Duties which belong to them, in Obedience to God, it is the way to be Happy, and render themselves formidable to such as Malign them; yea, this is the way to enjoy God's presence among them, to defend them, and prosper them: And as the former is a witness of God's anger against such a People, so is this His kindness and good will. Let us then seek earnestly to God, to give & continue such a Spirit, and study, in both Rulers & Ruled; and endeavour, each in our Post, to contribute, by our wise and faithful demeanure, to the advancement of this; and Bless God for what of it we find and observe, ascribing it to Him, who is the Author of every good and perfect giving. And let us all heartily subscribe to that, in Psal. 144. ult. *Blessed is the people that is in such a case, yea blessed is the people whose God is the Lord.*

[FEBRUARY, 8. 1703.]

SERMON *CLXXXV.*

WE are considering of the Political Orders, which God hath placed among Men, and the Relative Duties arising there-from, both in the Superiour & Inferiour, which hath been laid open in regard of the Civil Polity.

II. *WE may now proceed to take an Account of that which is Ecclesiastical.* The Doctrine of the Church in general, doth not belong to the Fifth Command, but it comes under the Head of Application; Nevertheless, to make way for the better stating of these Relative Duties, we must borrow a few Rules from thence, which are these that follow.

1. *THAT God hath ordained a Visible Church State, in the World.* By a Church in a Theological sense, we are to understand a Number of Mankind, making an open Profession of the true Religion, and devoting themselves to the Service of God, according to his revealed Will; and this Church, in the general Notion of it, comprehends the total Collection of such as make this Profession thro' the World; in which sense the Word *Church*, is frequently used in the Gospel: and the reason of such a Church is grounded in the Law Moral, inasmuch as Man was made for Gods Service, and therefore ought openly to avouch him to be his God, and devote himself to him, as his Sovereign Lord, and last End. Nor is it sufficient that Men do serve this God in their Hearts, but they ought to call upon his Name, and not to be ashamed, of calling themselves by it. Hence that Precept, 2 *Tim.* 2.19. And God saith of his Church, Isai. 43. 21. *This people have I formed for my self, they shall shew forth my praise.* But the Church under this general Consideration, is not the subject of our present enquiry; nor hath Christ appointed a Visible Head of it in this World, to be his Vicar general on Earth, and whosoever assumes it to himself, is an Anti-christ, of whom, 2 *Thes.* 2.

HENCE,

2. *THAT God hath Instituted or Appointed particular Churches, for the Advancing of all the Ends of the true Religion among Men.* As God hath revealed the true Religion to fallen Man, so the first and great design of this Revelation, is their Salvation: which, because God will have it be advanced by means suitable to the Nature of Man, he hath ordained, that there shall be an orderly Combination of Men professing it, among whom these Means may be enjoyed, for the Conversion of Sinners, and Edification of Saints. Eph. 4. 11, 12. *And he gave some, Apostles and some, Prophets: and some, Evangelists: and some, Pastours and Teachers; For the perfecting of the Saints,* &c. Hence we so often read of *Churches*, in the Plural, which must needs design several Companies of Christians, some way standing in a special Relation one to another, for Religious purposes; and the reason for this is also Moral, because Mankind do stand in need of the Means, for the obtaining of Salvation, which he hath seen meet to afford them in this, and is to be acknowledged & obeyed in it. 3.

3. *THAT God hath seen meet in these Churches to ordain an Ecclesiastical Polity.* The Law of Nature also requires this, that in all Societies there should be Order, nor can they consist without it, but all things will be brought toConfusion. That Christ hath ordained a Government in His Churches, is not to be disputed: There are the Keys which He hath given to some, both of Doctrine and Discipline; and there are others that ought to subject themselves thereto. There are some who are authorized to Rule, and consequently there are some that ought to Obey them, for these are Correlates: Hence that, Heb. 13. 17. *Obey them that have the Rule over you.*

4. *THAT this Church State is a thing distinct and diverse from that which is Civil.* Though Persons do stand in Relation to both, yet it is upon a different account. These differ in their *Ends*; that of the *Civil* is for the maintaining of the outward Peace and Prosperity of the People; the *Ecclesiastical* is for the Spiritual saving Good of Men. The *Means* also for procuring of these are various, the one by Temporal and outward ways, the other by those that are Spiritual, and accommodated to Treat with the Souls and Consciences of Men. The one useth the *Civil Sword*, the other the *Sword of the Spirit* which is the *Word of God*. The *Orders* and *Officers* of them are diverse; in the Civil State, Men have a liberty to Constitute these according to their Prudence; but in the other, God hath reserved it to Himself, to appoint the Offices in His Church, and none may add thereto. And as it is the Duty of every Christian in a Professing Government, to acknowledge his Relation to *both* States, so a Man may be a Ruler in the one, and a Subject in the other: And as none invested with *Ecclesiastical* Power, are thereby discharged from the Subjection required of all Men, to those Powers under whom they live, so no Person in *Civil* Dignity, ought to exempt himself from the Laws of Christ in his Church.

5. *THE Correlates in this Order, are the* Eldership, *and the* People *that are under their Watch.* And here we may observe, That whatsoever prudential Combinations there may be between Churches for mutual Help, there is a peculiar Relation appointed by God, between these Elders and this People; and therefore there is a special Obligation of mutual Duty lying upon them; nor can the Ends of a Religious Society be otherwise carried on to the Glory of God and Benefit of Man. Here then,

First, *WE may consider the Duties of* Ministers *to their* People, *over whom the Holy Ghost makes them Overseers*; which are principally such as these,

(1.) IN *General.*

1. THEY *ought to carry themselves towards their People, not as Lords, but as Stewards of Christ.* It is the Advice given in, 1 Pet. 5. 3. *Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.* They are therefore called *Stewards*, 1 Cor. 4. 1. *Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.* There is a Power whichChrist hath constituted on His Ministers, which is given them for the Good of the Flock, and so they ought to exercise it; but they ought not to Usurp a Dominion: They have not to do with the outward Man, but with the Conscience; they are not therefore to give Laws to their Flock, but to keep close to the Law of Christ in all their Dispensations.

2. THEY *ought to get and maintain a tender Love to their Flock.* Love indeed is the Vital Affection, which is to influence every Relation; but there is a special Love belonging to these, if ever they will discharge the Work they are called to, faithfully and profitably: They are therefore called *Pastors* or *Shepherds.* And this is a common Name given to the Ministry, and peculiarly to the Ordinary Ministers; nor doth it stand distributively with *Teachers*, as an Office distinct from them, for both are but One Office in the Gospel account, 1 Cor. 12. 28. *God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.* Eph. 4. 11. *And he gave some, apostles: and some, prophets: and some, evangelists: and some, pastors and teachers.* Now our Saviour tells us,that the Good Shepard Loves his Flock: They are compared to *tender Mothers*, on the account of their Love to them, 1 *Thes.* 2. 7. And indeed such are the Offices which they are commanded to discharge to their People, that requires a great deal of tender Affection in them. Hence,

(2.) THE more *Particular* Duties, are such as these,

1. THEY *ought not to seek themselves, but the Glory of God and the Good of the Souls under their Charge.* It is the Commendation given of *Timothy*, Phil. 2. 20, 21. *For I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christs.* It is true, Gospel-Ministers ought so far to see to their outward Concerns, as to provide for their Families, which cannot Live on the Air; but the Burden of this Care ought to be taken from them by those for whom they Serve, as will be considered afterwards: But they ought not to make their Ministry a meer Design to advance their Worldly Interest, and raise themselves upon it, to the Neglect, or careless Attendance on the Work which they are called to; and he that doth not despise this as a little thing, compared with the Work it self, will be found an *Unfaithful Steward* when called to give up his Account: He is called to Serve God in this Station, and his great Business is to bring Glory to Him in it; and to count it his Happiness and Joy, if he may so do: And he is betrusted with the Charge of Souls, whose Salvation he is by all Means to endeavour the furtherance of; and therefore we read, Heb. 13. 17. *They that must give account.* And this awful Account ought always to bear hard upon their Minds, and be a Spur to quicken them to be Faithful in their Work: And if they Love the Souls under their Care, they will certainly

do

do thus. In a word, all other Thoughtfulness ought to vail to that one, that they may discharge their Work; so it was with *Paul*, Acts 20. 24. ---*Neither count I my life dear unto my self, so that I may finish my course with joy.*

2. THEY *ought to discharge their Ministerial Function, in all the parts of it with Faithfulness.* This seems to be the first Qualification required in those that are to be employed in this Work; 1 Cor. 4. 2. *It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.* It is true, There are Ministerial Gifts to be enquired after, in order to their Introduction; but in their Station, there is great Fidelity required: Their Charge is great; it is not the dying Bodies of Men, but their Immortal Souls; which if they Perish thro' their Infidelity, will be amazing. Now there are many things that go in to this Faithfulness; some whereof are counted up, 2 Tim. 4. 2. *Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.* There is Faithfulness in their *Preparations*; they ought not to spend the Week in Worldly Diversions, and then come with their indigested Discourses; and so offer to God that which Cost them nothing; and it may be, obtrude Poyson on their Hearers, instead of wholsome Nourishment: but they ought to prepare themselves by diligent Study and Prayer, enquiring into the Mind of God, and well pondering what they have to deliver. It was *Paul's* direction given to *Timothy*, & it belongs to every one in such a Function, 2 Tim. 2. 15. *Study to shew thy self approved unto God, a Workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* There is a Fidelity also in Studying for *seasonable Truths*, and those that are most needful and profitable according to the present Providences of God. A Word in Season is commended by the Wise Man more than once; and he tells us, Eccl. 12. 10. *The preacher sought to find out acceptable words, and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.* There is a Faithfulness necessary, in the *Dividing to every Hearer his Portion*; and this is mainly expressed in the forecited, 2 *Tim.* 4. 2. And we have that of Christ the great Pastour, Luk. 12. 42. *And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?* Some need Information, some Excitation, some Caution, others Reprehension, others Consolation; and all this belongs to him to Administer, as there is occasion: He must treat all Men faithfully; he must not *Sew Pillows under any Sinners Arms*, or encourage them in their Sins: Nor may he be afraid of the Faces of Men, or say to the Wicked, *Thou art Righteous*: He must, tho' with Prudence, yet Fidelity too, bear a Testimony against every prevailing Iniquity, tho' he pulls the Rage of Proud Sinners on himself by it: He must not therefore baulk any Truth which he is called to dispense, for any sinister end; but be able to say as he, Acts 20. 26, 27. *Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God.* And eminently ought he to shew his Fidelity, in Preaching CHRIST, and those saving Doctrines which flow from Him; to be able to say as he, 1 Cor. 2. 2. *For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*

3. THEY *ought to accommodate their Ministry to all sorts of Hearers.* This might have been annexed to the *former*, but it deserves a *distinct Head*, being of very great Concern, and carefully to be observed by him who seeks the Good of Souls, more than his own Airy Applause. Every Soul in the Assembly comes under the Care of the Minister, and he ought to seek his Edification. Now every one is not of a like Capacity; some are good Proficients in Understanding, these are able to digest *strong Meat*; but others are Babes in Knowledge, and such are to be fed with *Milk*: Thus *Paul* suited his Preaching, 1 *Cor.* 3 2. Every Minister ought to be Ambitious of the best and most accomplished Gifts; and when he hath attained to them, to sacrifice them to the Interest of Christ and the Good of Souls. One main part of this Work is described, Jer. 3. 15. *And I will give you pastours according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.* But if he will do this aright, he must suit himself to their Capacity: He should use *Plain* Words and Intelligible, to express the mind of God in. *Paul* saith of himself, and of this Case, 1 Cor. 14. 19. *But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power.* And to Study *Exotick* or new-fangled Words, (which scarce One of Ten understands,) is as if one spake in an *unknown Tongue.* It is true, There are the Mysteries in Religion, which are in themselves great Depths, and Terms that are necessary to be used, which every one doth not readily understand; but these are to be explained, & not more beclouded. To this also belongs their *Patience*, as well as *Condescendency*; and not to think it much to take a great deal of Pains, to distill Knowledge into the Minds of those that cannot receive but by Drops; so *Paul*, Heb. 5. 11. *Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.* And here also the Minister ought prudently to suit a Portion for all: He ought to train up the *Ignorant* to Understanding; and he ought to lead forward those that do *Know more*, to yet further Degrees of the Knowledge of the Mysteries of Godliness; for we are told their Work in this regard, *Eph.* 4. 11, 12. And to this Head belongs *Catechizing* of those that are Beginners, that they may have the first Foundation of saving Knowledge laid in them; which doth not only belong to *Parents*, but also to the *Pastors* of the Churches; and the faithful discharge of it, is a good Medium to establish Young Ones in the Truth, and fortify them against Errors.

4. HE *ought to Watch over them, by careful acquainting himself with their State, and applying himself accordingly.* This is included in that Admonition, Acts 20. 20. *And how I kept back*

nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house. And this comprehends not only his Publick, but his Private Managements too: He ought as far as he can to know their State, that he may the better apply himself to them: Hence that, Phil. 2. 19. *But That I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state.* Which doth not intend the State of their Souls, but how the Gospel flourished; whether they walked orderly, and kept in Peace, and each did his Duty; and whether any more were drawn over; and how each one behaved himself: And this is needful, because else how should he accommodate his publick Administrations? For this end, private Visits of his Flock, belong to his Charge, so far as he can have Opportunity; and in them he should call upon those who are Careless of their own Salvation, and admonish them of their Danger; warn such as lead loose Lives, contrary to their Profession, and shew them how unworthily they carry themselves, of the Name that is called upon them: Call upon Young Ones to Remember their Creator, and encourage them to Early Piety: Offer Counsel and Encouragement to such as are under Awakenings and Terrors of Conscience; and do all he can to further their Conversion: Resolve the Doubts, and Answer the Cases of Conscience, which any are at a loss about; and ease their Scruples, as there is occasion: To endeavour to Recover such as are declining; and establish those that are Sound in the Faith: To Visit the Sick, and offer seasonable Counsels to them, and do their utmost to prepare them for their great Change; and Pray over them, that their Sickness may turn to their Souls Advantage. These, and whatsoever things of like Nature, belong to their Office Charge; *Acts* 20. 18, 19, 20.

5. HE *ought to endeavour by a well-Ordered Conversation, to set a good Example to his Flock.* The Exemplary Carriages of Ministers, is very frequently inculcated in the Gospel, as a thing necessary to the good Success of their Ministry; 1 *Pet.* 5. 4. *Tit.* 1. 7. 1 Tim. 4. 12. *Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.* Tit. 2. 7. *In all things shewing thy self a pattern of good works: in doctrine, shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity.* It belongs to the Character of a Good Minister, that he be *a burning, as well as a shining light,* (Joh. 5. 35.) else he will likely prove an *Ignis fatuus.* It will be a poor Commendation of a Minister, when he cannot say with *Gideon, Follow me, and do as I do*; or with *Paul*, 1 Cor. 11 1. *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.* To press Duties solemnly on his Hearers, as matters of greatest Importance, if they hope to be saved, and yet himself live in the neglect of them, as if they were matters of no moment; is in Works to deny, what in Words they Profess; and to bring themselves under the Wo which Christ denounced against the Scribes and Pharisees, Luke 11. 46. *And he said, Wo unto you also ye lawyers: for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be born, and ye your selves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.* And how often do we find that Men can justify themselves against Reproofs, when they can bring in the Example of their Ministers to Patronize their Exorbitancies. *Paul* could Appeal to the Consciences of those among whom he had exercised his Ministry, whether his Life had not been Correspondent thereto, Acts 20. 18. 1 Thes. 2. 10. *Ye are my witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblameably we behaved our selves among you that believe.* They ought above all Men, to govern their Passions, to carry it Meekly, to shew the greatest Sobriety in their whole Conversation; to deny themselves of their lawful Liberty, for the Edification of others; because they are as Lights upon an Hill, and all Eyes upon them; and if by their ungirt Lives, they should hinder the Good Success of their Ministry, many Souls will suffer Damage by it, and their own Account would be more fearful. They ought therefore to stand firm in the Times of Apostacy, and not run after, or have any fellowship with the foolish Vanities that creep in among their People, but Reprove them with their own Practice. This they ought to do, if they would Serve God with a Good Conscience, and reap the Joy and Comfort of their Work, and be able to take their leave of their Flock as he did, Acts 20. 26. *Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.*

6. HE *ought to be much in Prayer unto God in behalf of his Flock.* As he ought to make it the Bottom Design of all his Works to advance God's Glory in their Salvation; so he is to remember that all his Help and Success depends upon God, who expects to be sought to for it. How often therefore have we *Paul* assuring of those whom he Writes to, that he was *ever mindful of them in his Prayers*; thus, Rom. 1. 9. *For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his son, that without ceasing, I make mention of you always in my prayers.* So, *Eph.* 1. 16. 1 *Thes.* 1. 2. 2 *Tim.* 1. 3. And for this he Commends *Epaphras*, *Col.* 4. 16. And there is great reason why he should thus do, both for *their* sake, and for his *own*: He depends entirely upon God, for all the Assistance whereby he may be able and faithfull; it must come from God's Mercy, 1 Cor. 7. 25. --- *One that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.* He ought therefore to Pray over all his Studies, that God would afford His Assistance in them; direct his Thoughts, and order his Preparations: For God's gracious Presence also in his Dispensatory; to give him a door of Utterance, that he may Plainly and Profitably, and without slavish Fear, declare the Counsel of God. He also ought to Pray for his People, That God would open a door of Entrance into their Hearts; That He will open their Eyes, and subdue their Hearts, and teach them to Profit: They should Pray for

for the *Unconverted*, That God would make them to return and Live, and Bless all Means to that end: That Proud and Careless Sinners may be Awakened, and Convinced Sinners may be Humbled, and that CHRIST may be formed in them. And they should Pray for every one, whose Case needs particular Remembrance; and lay them before God, with fervent Importunity. Yea, They should continue in Prayer, unto *Perseverance*; and whensoever God gives them *Good Success*, they should bring their Acknowledgements to Him, and give to Him the whole Praise of it.

USE. *AND if all this belongs to Men in this Post, certainly then, It is no* Easy *Work that lies upon them; nor do they need* Envy, *but* Pity. Surely, It becomes all that stand in this Relation, to maintain an Holy Awe of the Solemn Charge that belongs to it; and to wait humbly on God, for Pity, Pardon, Assistance, and Acceptance thro' Christ. And if any do in any measure Acquit themselves in it, they are to be accounted as the *Servants of JESUS CHRIST.*

[MARCH 7. 1704.]

SERMON *CLXXXVI.*

Secondly, WE proceed to Consider, *The Duties which a* People *owe to their* Ministers. That there are such Duties is certain, for the Gospel hath prescribed them; and it follows from the very Nature of *Correlates*, between which the Duties are *Mutual*, and the one flows from the other. But that I may not *speak in the Air*, it will be requisite that we a little Consider, *who are this* People, *who thus do stand related to the* Eldership, *and owe their Duty to them as such.* Now, Though there be a Relation to the *Church Catholick*, which all Ministers and People that are Christians do bear; so that a Minister may Lawfully Preach *Ex Officio*, to any Assembly of Christians, and Administer the other Ordinances to them, if orderly Invited thereunto; and the Members of *one* Church may, on that Score, Communicate with *another* Occasionally: Yet it is certain, That Christ hath Ordained, that there shall be *Particular Assemblys* of His People, in the several Places where such dwell; hence we not only Read of a *Church* at *Rome*, at *Corinth*, &c. but of *Churches* in *Galatia*, Gal. 1. 2. Now for the Organizing of these Churches, it is necessary that there be both *Elders* and *Brethren*, and these to be peculiarly Related each to the other: For this Reason the Apostles and Apostolical Men, when they had in any Place Converted a Number to the Gospel Profession, they Ordained *Fixed* and *Resident* Presbyters over them, as is every where Witnessed: And the very Light of Nature teacheth us, That if these *Elders* are by Christ's Command, to take the Charge of this or that *Flock*, as their Overseers; then *every one* of such a Flock are to acknowledge the special Authority of such, and themselves under peculiar Bonds to them, more than to any others: And it is against right Reason, that the one should be *bound*, and the other at a *loose end*; and without any Order, to *Desert* them, and go hither and thither at their own Pleasure: And this Practice, tho' too much followed by many, yet hath a natural tendency to destroy the Gospel Discipline: Not as if *Churches* are *Prisons*, but because it is necessary that a *Decorum* be used in Mens passing from one to another, and Scandal be prevented: For which Reason, all the *Reformed*, every where that I know of, have provided, that no Person be entertained in one Communion, without a Regular Recommendation from that where they formerly were Communicants.

NOW concerning such as these, who have a proper Relation to this or that particular *Society*, and consequently are immediately under the Watch and Care of this particular *Eldership*, we may consider what are the *Principal* and most *Comprehensive Duties* incumbent on them; which may come under *Two Heads*.

I. *THERE is a suitable Respect which they ought to shew to their* Persons. There is an Honour due to them for the sake of the *Post* which Christ hath put them in, which is Honourable: And there is an Honour due to them, when they are *Faithful* to God, and to the Souls of their Hearers. Now this Honour is to be shewn to their *Persons* principally:

[1.] IN their *Hearts*. And indeed it must begin here, or all the rest is but *Flattery* and *Abuse*. And there are *Two things* wherein this Honour ought to be maintained;

1. *IN an entire* (*Cordial*) Love *of them.* There is a *peculiar Love* which a People owe to their Faithful Ministers: Their Relation is very near, and the Cement of this Relation is *Love*, which ought to be *Real*; for that is a general Rule, 1 Joh. 3. 18. *Let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.* The Apostle observes what Affection his *Galatians* once had for him, which he blames them for the Loss of *Gal.* 4. 14, 15. And if we Love Christ, we shall certainly Love those that come from Him, on His Errand, and do truely discharge it.

2. *BY a Precious* Esteem *maintained for them.* And indeed this will be the genuine Fruit of a *Cordial Love*; especially if we consider *who they are*, and *what it is for*, that we have them. The *Place* which Christ hath set them in, the *Errand* they come upon, and their *Fidelity* in the discharge of it, challengeth an Honourable Respect for them, in the Hearts of those to whom they are sent. They are Christ's Ambassadors to us, and do Represent His Person, 2 Cor. 5. 20. *Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ*—. They are Men of God, such by whom he hath been pleased to communicate His Mind to us; and those that despise them despise Him; and He reckons it as so. They are Christ's *Ascention Gifts*, (Eph. 4. 10.) and for that reason to be Valued: They bring us *Glad Tydings* from Heaven, and therefore ought their Feet to be *Beautiful*, Isa. 52. 7. *Paul* gives that Advice

to People, 1 Cor. 4 1. *Let a man so account of us, as ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.* And without this Esteem, there is little hope of Profiting by their Administrations: Let their *Persons* be what they will, their *Commission* cals for this Respect for them.

[2.] IN their *Words.* Words are, or ought to be, the Expression of the Heart: And there is a Duty here also, which these ought to testify this Respect by; and that,

1. *BY speaking* Respectfully *to them.* They ought to acknowledge to them, the *Office Relation* which they bear; and avoid all Reviling or disdainful and insolent Language; particularly those Terms of Reproach and Contempt, that many delight to entertain them withal. It is the Apostle's Direction in, 1 Tim. 5. 1. *Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father, and the younger men as brethren.* And we find what a fearful Judgment of God befell very Children, who Affronted the Prophet with Reviling Language, 2 *Kings* 2. 23, 24.

2. *BY speaking* Honourably *of them, and defending their Reputation.* We ought to be tender of every Man's Reputation; but peculiarly of God's Ambassadors: As not to Revile them *our selves*, so to be ready to speak for them, when *others* Calumniate them. We should neither slander them ourselves; nor be silent, when we hear others do so. We should both Commend what is Laudable in them; and speak Charitably of their Infirmities: And except we thus do, we shall hinder our own Edification by them.

3. *IN their* Actions *or* Carriages *towards them.* And here I shall only offer at *Three* things,

1. *THEY should shew this Respect by a* Civil Carriage *towards them in their Station.* God hath set them in an Honourable *Post*; and they ought to have a Deference paid to them according thereunto. The Word of God is far from teaching Christians to make no difference in their Deportment to Men, of Higher or Inferiour Rank; and doubtless all those eminent Titles put in the Scriptures upon the Ministers of the Word, do evidence that they ought to be regarded as such, and Practically acknowledged so, by those that are under their Watch and Charge. The Apostle tells us what is Duty in this regard; 1 Tim. 5. 17. *Let the elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in word and doctrine.*

2. *BY hearty and assiduous* Prayers *to God for them.* They need our Prayers; and if we have a due Respect for them, it will make us fervent and frequent in offering them up to God in their behalf. How often therefore have we *Paul* earnestly asking Prayers for himself, of the Churches, which he directs his Epistles unto? And indeed, in our so doing, we not only shew our Love to them, but to ourselves too. They need great Assistance from Heaven, to help them in their Work, to influence them with fresh supply of Gifts, to embolden them in their discharge of Duty faithfully, to preserve them against great Temptations to which they are liable, to animate them under their sinking Discouragements, to keep them Humble, to supply them with Matter suitable and seasonable, to give them a door of Utterance; to afford good Success to their Labours, and give them to see the precious Fruits of their Endeavours: And in all this our *Profiting* is concerned; and all must come from God, and is to be expected in the way of *Prayer*; and no wonder if those Profit little by their Ministers, who are slighty in their Prayers for them. And it is but a Reciprocal Duty, in Answer to their Prayers for us.

3. *BY an Honourable* Maintenance *allowed to them.* It is a great Mistake in those who think that all that is done for the Support of the Ministry is *Charity* and *Alms*; and that accordingly Men are at their Liberty whether they will do any thing or nothing towards it; and that they have no other Rule in their doing, but their Arbitrary Pleasure. It is certainly an Act of Justice; and God hath ever since He had a Church in the World, taken Care of the Comfortable Supply of those who Serve Him in *Religious Orders.* It was so in the times of the Law: Hence that, 1 Cor. 9. 13. *Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar?* And he assures us, that the same Rule stands under the Gospel, *Ver.* 14. Yea, he proves it by many Arguments, thereby to let us know, that his particular Instance of not taking Maintenance of some Churches, was not to be a Rule for other Ministers, or improv'd by the People to withold their Dues from them. And tho' there may be different ways of Prudence for the Raising of this, yet these Two things are undeniable, *viz. That there is some Proportion of Men's Abilities to be observed*; and, *That all that are Partakers in their Labours, do owe a Portion to this*: Hence we have that, Gal. 6. 6. *Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth, in all good things.* And they have no Reason to think it much, as he gives a Demonstration, 1 Cor 9. 11. *If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things?* Faithful Ministers spend their Time for the Souls of their People; and it must therefore be but Reason, that they should see that they may Live without Fear for the Maintenance of their outward Concerns: and so some interpret that, 1 Cor. 16. 10. *Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do.*

II. *THERE is a suitable Entertainment due to them in all their* Ministerial Administrations. And as the *former* is in order to *this*, so it cannot be rightly expressed without this. It is for their Work sake, that they are to be Respected, 1 Thes. 5. 12, 13. *And we beseech you,*

you, brethren, to know them which Labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you. And to esteem them very highly in love for their works sake. And be at peace among your selves. Certainly then, There is a Respect to be paid to them in the *Work* it self which Christ hath called them unto; herein the great and main Duties of this Relation are concerned: And there are two Respects in which this may be considered;

[1.] IN respect of their *Doctrine.* The main and principal part of a Minister's Work lies in Preaching of the Gospel to that People to whom God sends them, and among whom they are orderly fixed. I am not here concerned to enquire how or in what way such Congregations are to be determined; or what Rules are to determine a Man's Duty in his fixing himself in this or that Assembly, peculiarly in such Places where there are more than One: But I think it undeniable, That all Christians that are setled in their Habitations, ought also to adjoyn themselves to one Society of Professors, and put themselves under the Dispensation of the Ordinances there, for this was the Design of particular Churches. Supposing therefore, that he hath thus disposed of himself, there are these Duties which naturally flow from such a Relation in this Regard under consideration;

1. HE *ought Ordinarily to give his* Attendance *upon the Preaching of such a Ministry, as is there Established.* I say *Ordinarily*, for there may be such Occasions offered him in the Providence of God, which call him to be elsewhere, and he ought not to neglect the Opportunity in the Place where he may enjoy it. And for this Reason there is a *Communion of Churches* necessary to be upheld: Nor is there Reason to be Censorious of such, as may on special Considerations, for once and away, Attend upon the Preaching in another Congregation, especially if in the same Town: But for such on the Sabbath, to go to other Towns for their *Curiosity* or *Prejudice*, when they are at a considerable Distance, when they have the Word Preached at their Doors, and in their *own* Congregation; this is not only a casting of *Contempt* upon their *own* Ministers, but also a *Profanation* of the *Lord's-Day*: And for such to Run *this* Day, or *part* of the Day, to *one*, and the *next* to *another*, meerly to please their *Fancy*, or *itching Ears*, is contrary to the Mind of Christ. *Paul* Writing to a particular Church, giveth that Caution, Heb. 10.25. *Not forsaking the assembling of your selves together, as the manner of some is.* And if many should drive this Trade, as there are *too many* that do, it would offer unworthy Discouragements to God's Stewards, who have taken Pains to provide their Spiritual Nourishment. Nor can a Christian with a regular Faith, ordinarily promise himself that Blessing and Profit from *another*, that he might from *him* whom God hath appointed to dispense to him.

2. THEY *should* Hearken diligently *to the Word of God, that is delivered by them.* As they should *Attend on* their Ministry, so they should *Attend to* it, and yield Obedience to the Will of God, which they declare. They should look upon them, not barely as Men, or such as have Gifts; but as such who are *Commissioned* by Christ, and sent on His Errand, to deliver His Message to them; and this should draw their diligent Hearkning to them; and to reckon that Christ Himself is now applying Himself to them: That was the Commendation given of some, 1 Thes. 2.13. -- *Ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God.* Hence they should come with a Resolution to do as they make a Pretence of; Jer. 42.5, 6. *Then they said to Jeremiah, The Lord be a true and faithful witness between us, if we do not even according to all things for the which the Lord thy God shall send thee to us. Whether it be good, or whether it be evil, we will obey the voice of the Lord our God, to whom we send thee; that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of the Lord our God.* A Negligent Hearer casts a Neglect and Contempt, both on him that is *sent*, and Him that *sends* him.

3. THEY *should* Ponder diligently *on the Truths which these declare unto them.* Though they ought to receive the Truths of God from them, as delivered with Authority from God Himself; yet they are not to build their Faith upon their Authority: For tho' they come from Christ, and have a Promise of His being with them in their faithful Endeavours; yet they are not Infallibly Inspired. And if they were, yet it is no Reflection upon them, but a Credit to them, when their Hearers do lay up their Doctrines in their Hearts, and take care to satisfy themselves, that this is the Mind of God: Hence they are so Commended, Acts 17.11 *These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scripture daily, whether those things were so.*

4. THEY *ought to* Bless God *for them, and Corroborate their Love to them, when they are made the Instruments of* Spiritual & Saving Good *to them.* They ought not to ascribe unto them the *prime* Efficiency of this, as if they did it by their *own* Vertue; they desire it not, but utterly renounce it, as he, 1 Cor. 3.7. *So then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth: but God that giveth the increase.* Nevertheless, if God have made use of them for our Saving Benefit, we are not only to Thank God for the *thing*, but to Bless God for *them*, whom He hath made Instruments of this Benefit. We should acknowledge *our selves* to be Seals of their Ministry, and Love *them* as our Spiritual Fathers: And we should Cheer their Hearts, by letting them know, that *their Labour is not in vain in the Lord*; but that *their travailing pains for us, till Christ is formed in us*, are not lost, or miscarry. *Paul* could say, 1 Cor. 4.15. *For though you have ten thousand instructers in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.* And, 1 *Thes.* 2.19,20. And sure we owe as much Love to our *Spiritual* Fathers,

Fathers, as to our *Natural* ones; at leaſt in ſome Reſpects.

5. THEY *ought to* Practice *according to the Doctrines that they are Inſtructed in by them.* The End of the Miniſtry is, as the *Converſion* of Sinners, ſo the *Edification* of Saints; and this is the preſent Comfort of ſuch as are the true Servants of Chriſt: And there is nothing that more grieves them, than to ſee that they loſe this Deſign, *Iſa.* 48. 4. The End of all Evangelical Truths is *Practice*; and if all our Hearing and Enquiring do not lead us to this, it is loſt upon us: All the Airy Commendations that we may give to their Sermons, are but Idle Compliments, if mean while we regard them not, but live as we liſt; nor can we throw more Scorn upon them: Hence that, Ezek. 33. 31. *And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they ſit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they ſhew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetouſneſs.*

6. THEY *ſhould avoid entertaining* Prejudices *againſt them.* The Perſon that will ſuffer fixed Prejudices at his Miniſter, doth thereby hinder his own Profiting under him: There are *Failings* in theſe, (for they are of like Infirmities,) theſe are to be Covered; there are *Dubious* things, theſe are to be interpreted with the moſt Candid Gloſſes that they will admit of; there are *Calumnies* and *falſe Reports* ordinarily rais'd againſt them, theſe are not to be *eaſily* believed & entertained. There was good reaſon for that Rule in this regard, 1 Tim. 5. 19. *Againſt an elder receive not an accuſation, but before two or three witneſſes.*

7. THEY *ought to* Conſult them *in their Spiritual Concerns.* There are frequent Occaſions wherein the People of God want Aſſiſtance, which poſſibly they do not meet with in the Publick Miniſtry, but muſt enquire for in a more Private way. We formerly obſerved, that God hath made it the *Miniſters* Duty to be ready to afford it, and it is the Duty of their *Hearers* to Addreſs to them; and if they do it Cordially, they may Hope to receive Help from God by them, to enlighten them in their dark Queſtions, to Reſolve their Doubts, to clear their Way for them, to ſtrengthen them againſt their Temptations; and to neglect them in theſe Caſes, is to deſpiſe an Ordinance of God: Hence that in, Mal. 2. 7. *For the prieſt lips ſhould keep knowledge, and they ſhould ſeek the law at his mouth: for he is the meſſenger of the Lord of hoſts.*

[2.] IN Reſpect of their *Diſcipline.* That there is a Diſcipline which Chriſt hath appointed to be upheld in his Churches, is very evident by the Goſpel: And that the Adminiſtration of this Diſcipline, belongs to the Presbytery in the Church, is equally evident: Peace and Purity cannot be preſerved in the Church without it; nor will Goſpel Order be obſerved. And here *Two* things,

1. THEY *ought to acknowledge their* Authority *over them, which Chriſt hath veſted them with-al.* If there be *Rulers*, there are *Ruled*; and theſe are Correlates; and are for that Reaſon to own the Relation, and the Obligations of it. True, They are not *Lords over God's Heritage*, are not left to Govern Arbitrarily; but they are *Overſeers, Rulers, Stewards*, which intimates, That they have a Power from Chriſt, to Exerciſe in His Church; and unleſs it be acknowledged by us, we are not like to pay a due Deference to it: If we deny their Office Power over us, we Reject the Diſcipline of Chriſt; and this do all thoſe, who Run from *one* to *another* upon every Diſguſt, and ſo think to eſcape Government: Such alſo are thoſe Churches, who Uſurp upon the Office of the Preſbytery.

2. THEY *ought to Submit to their* Reproofs *and* Cenſures, *which are Regularly Adminiſtred in the Name of Chriſt.* There is a Submiſſion required in the Goſpel, by Chriſt Himſelf; hence that, Heb. 13. 7, 17. *Remember them which have the rule over you, who have ſpoken unto you the word of God: whoſe faith follow, conſidering the end of their converſation. Obey them that have the rule over you, and ſubmit your ſelves: for they watch for your ſouls, as they that muſt give account: that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.* 1 Theſ. 5. 12. *And we beſeech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admoniſh you.* Theſe have the Authority of binding and looſing, both Doctrinally and Diſciplinarily; Joh. 20. 23. *Whoſe ſoever ſins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whoſe ſoever ſins ye retain, they are retained.* They have a Power to Reprove Sin in thoſe that are under them, Authoritatively, and that both Privately and Publickly; and to Adminiſter Cenſures upon ſuch as are Obſtinate and Impenitent; and take them off from thoſe who duly teſtify their Repentance: And Chriſt hath ſaid, That He will Approve and Ratify them, if diſpenſed according to Goſpel Rules: They ought therefore to receive them as from Him, and demean themſelves accordingly.

USE. LET us then *Think of theſe things; and when we at any time are ready to Deſpiſe the Perſons of Such, and count our ſelves too good to be Taught or Rebuked by them*; let us conſider, *They are ſent to us by Him who is the great Shepard and King of His Church.* And let the Image of His Authority in them, Suppreſs all ſuch up-riſings: And let us take heed of grieving them, leſt we ſo grieve the Lord Jeſus Chriſt and His Spirit: And this will be the way to Profit by them in this Life, and to meet them with Joy in that which is to come.

[APRIL 4. 1704.]

SER-

SERMON *CLXXXVII.*

WE have taken a brief Account of the Chief and moſt Comprehenſive Duties, Relative between *Superiours* and *Inferiours*, both *Natural* and *Political*. There are ſome *other Differences* in Providence between Men, which tho' they do not give a Civil Power *to* the one, or require a Civil Subjection *from* the other, yet, as God doth put a Difference, ſo ſhould they acknowledge it, and demean themſelves each to other accordingly: One of theſe, *viz.* That of *Age* and *Youth*, (in which the *Light of Nature* ſpeaks ſo much, and about which the *Word of God* ſpeaks ſo much,) we took ſome Account of. There are ſome others, which I ſhall but touch at, and paſs.

I. *THERE is a Difference in* Birth, *which God's Providence is pleaſed to put between ſome and others.* Tho' all Mankind have one Original, having one Firſt Father, whoſe Apoſtacy hath brought Diſgrace equally upon all his Poſterity, who do equally bear the blot of his Rebellion in their Eſcutcheon, Eph. 2.3.—*By Nature the children of wrath.* Nevertheleſs, There is a Civil Diſtinction made between *Families*, which makes ſome to be of an *higher*, others of a *lower* Degree, *Pſal.* 62. 9. God's Pleaſure Orders it to be ſo, and the well-being of Humane Societies requires it: And theſe muſt *Live* together; which intimates, That there ſhould be a mutual Reſpect and Honour paid each to other in this Regard alſo.

And here,

1. *IT is the Duty of thoſe that are* well-deſcended, *to endeavour to Commend themſelves to others, in a Carriage worthy their Deſcent.* There is a Civility and Courteſy, which theſe owe to the *Meaneſt*, which is the only way for them to retain a Report among Men. Thoſe that would maintain the Reſpect paid to their Anceſtors, muſt ſee that they imitate the praiſe-worthy Vertues, for which they were had in eſteem: They ought not to deſpiſe ſuch as are *Meaner*, but to ſet before them an Example of Good Behaviour; which is to expreſs it ſelf, in a Meek, Affable, Humble Converſation; and that is the way to purchaſe Honour to themſelves; and for want of it, they will ſoon fall into Diſgrace among Men. It was the Honour of *Timothy*, not that he ſprang of Good Parents, but that he Imitated them in their Vertues, 2 *Tim.* 1. 5.

2. *IT is the Duty of ſuch as are of a* meaner Deſcent, *to acknowledge it by putting a ſuitable Reſpect upon the other, according to their Birth.* There is an Honour derived to them; and God requires that it be paid to them, Rom. 13. 7. *Render honour to whom honour is due.* And the more worthily they carry themſelves of it, the more care there ſhould be to expreſs it. There is a Civil Deference to be paid them, and a Preference to be allowed to them; and that, tho' the Providence of God may bring them into Poverty: The neglect of this is therefore Threatned as a Judgment, Iſa. 3.5. ——*The child ſhall behave himſelf proudly againſt the ancient, and the baſe againſt the honourable.* Not but that ſuch may forfeit this Reſpect from Men by their vile Carriage; but the Frowns of Providence on them, in the Affairs of this Life, do not procure it.

II. *ANOTHER Inequality, which the Providence of God puts between Men, is that of* Riches *&* Poverty. And this, in the World's eſteem, is greater than it ſhould be, inaſmuch as it makes Men neither better nor worſe, being an External Thing. Nevertheleſs, It is to be obſerved, becauſe it is of the Over-ruling Hand of God: Hence that in Prov. 22. 2. *The rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all.* And here,

[1.] THE *Principal Duties of the* Rich *are*,

1. *TO take heed that they* Deſpiſe not the Poor, *becauſe they are ſo.* It is a thing too frequent for ſuch, eſpecially if they are raiſed from the Dunghill, to Scorn, Deſpiſe, and look with Contempt upon their Poor Neighbours, as if they were of another Species: But this is to abuſe the Favour of God, by whoſe Bleſſing they gained their Wealth. To be Rich and Humble, is a deſirable, but a very rare Combination. We are told, Prov. 17. 5. *He that mocketh the poor, reproacheth his maker: and he that is glad at calamities, ſhall not be unpuniſhed.* And ſuch are they, who taunt the Poor with their Poverty, as if it were their ſhame; and they muſt not open their Mouths before them: Such ſhould remember, That their Wealth makes them not better Men; Wealth and Folly do too frequently dwell under the ſame Roof, and a Rich *Fool* is no better than an *Aſs* in Fine Trappings. They ſhould alſo conſider, That they Pride themſelves in a thing of nothing, and which may in the Turn of an Hand forſake them; and then, their former Pride will expoſe them to the greater Contempt. Hence that, Prov. 23. 5. *Wilt thou ſet thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themſelves wings, they fly away as an eagle towards heaven.*

2. *TO* Relieve *&* Succour the Poor, *out of their Abundance.* No Man is Lord-Proprietor of his Eſtate; but is made a Steward of it by God, whoſe it is. Wealth is one of thoſe Talents which God beſtows upon Men, which they are to Occupy for Him, whereof they muſt give an Account to Him another Day: And He hath made the *Poor* to be the Objects of their Charity; and hath given theſe Charge concerning them, 1 Tim. 6. 17. 18. *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor truſt in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy: That they do good; that they be rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate.* And if they will lay out all upon gratifying their own Luſts, and mean while ſhut up their Bowels againſt ſuch as are in Want, and let them Starve, rather than Deny themſelves of their Superfluities, it will expoſe them to an uncomfortable Reckoning another Day.

[2.]

[2.] *THE Duties of the* Poor *on the other hand are*, principally,

1. *NOT to Envy, but to Rejoice in the Prosperity of their Wealthy Neighbours.* It is too much a Fault among Men, that they can hardly bear to see others Prosper, and themselves in Adversity; and herein not only shew their Discontent at the Providence of God, as unequal, but also to bear a Prejudic'd Spirit against them, & be always fretting at them, and seeking to undermine them: But they ought on the other hand to Rejoyce with them; *Rom.* 12. 15. and to be Thankful to God that He Blesseth them: *Envying* therefore is reckoned among the Works of the Flesh, *Gal.* 5. 21. And hence it is forbidden in respect of another's Prosperity, *Psal.* 37. 7. What if God will give another more in the World, than He will give to us, may He not do with His own, as He sees Good? And shall our Eye be Evil, because He is Good.

2. *TO pay them a due Acknowledgement for all the Kindness they receive from them.* There is a sort of Subjection due from the Poor to the Rich, inasmuch as they have a subordinate Dependance on them: We are therefore told, Prov. 22. 7. *The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.* When therefore God inclines their Hearts to Improve their Estates, either for the Publick Benefit, or for their Private Support and Supply, they ought not only to Bless God for *it*, but also for *them*; and acknowledge them in it, for which they should Love and Commend them, and Cordially Pray for God's Blessing to be upon them.

III. *ANOTHER Inequality which God makes between Men, is in regard of* Gifts, *whether* Natural *or* Acquired. There are Diversities of these, which God Distributes among Men, according to His Pleasure. Some have *large* Natural Abilities, and these also advantaged with great Attainments of Skill, Knowledge and Prudence; whereas others are *low* in both regards: These Gifts also are diversly distributed, 1 *Cor.* 12. *begin.* And these are conferred by God, to render Men Publickly Serviceable, and the better fitted to Profit others. Now,

1. *THOSE that do* Excell *in Gifts, ought to improve them readily for the Benefit of others, who need the Help of them.* God hath bestowed them for that end; and made them the Stewards thereof, 1 *Pet.* 4. 10. And if they do not thus Improve them, they hide their Talent in a Napkin. This should keep them Humble, and make them not to despise those that are Weaker than themselves, but acknowledge God's Kindness, in making this difference, and thus using them to His Glory by being Profitable: And this is to use them to the End for which they were Conferred, 1 *Cor.* 12. 7. And this will be the way to Honour themselves, and do Good in their Generation.

2. *THOSE that are* Inferiour *in Gifts, should highly Value the others, and thankfully make Improvement of them.* Man was made a Sociable Creature; and God hath seen meet that *one* should need the help of *another*: When therefore God makes any Useful by those Abilities which He confers upon them, and disposing of them to Serve others with them, they are not to be despited or maligned, but prized; doubtless herein they really Excell. We are told, Eccl. 8. 1. *Who is as the wise man? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? a man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness of his face shall be changed.* And we ought to account them Blessings; to be willing to Learn of them, and take Opportunities of Conversing with them, & enquiring of them; for we are told, Prov. 20. 5. *Counsel in the heart of man, is like deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out.* And since God hath divided these Gifts, there should be a mutual Preference accordingly; which seems to be the mind of, Phil. 2. 3. *Let nothing be done through strife, or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves.*

AND this may suffice to have been spoken concerning those Orders, between which there is a *Superiority* and *Inferiority*.

IN the next place, Our Catechism informs us, *That the Relation between* Equals, *doth also come under the Comprehension of this Command.* That all Mankind do, in some way or other, stand related each to other, is certain; and wheresoever there is a Relation, there is an Obligation which follows from it, and is accommodated to it.

NOW there are some Considerations upon which Men stand upon *Even* Ground, and there is no *Superiority* in them: And this Consideration may be there, where in other respects there may be a distance in Degree, as is evident.

NOW this *Equality* may come under a *double* Consideration, *viz.* Either *Common* or *Special*:

1. *THERE is a* Common *Equality, which there is between one Neighbour and another, considered as Neighbours.* Neighbour and Neighbour come under the *same* Denomination, and in that Regard stand upon one Ground; and such especially are those who stand upon a *Level*, and their Degrees are *Equal.* This also comprehends under it, Men that bear the same Breadth in the Place which they are in: And so are some Men in *Authority* alike, as well as Men of the *Common* sort. Now there is a Love which these owe each to other; for the Comprehension of the Second Table is expresst by Christ, Matth. 22. 39. *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* And this Love hath a Respect, not only to the *Five* following Precepts, but also to *this*, in Paying Honour one to another.

AND the more special Duties here are,

1. *TO maintain a due* Respect *each* for *other, by acknowledging each others Worth & Excellency.* And this is supposed to be mainly intended in the forcited, *Phil.* 2. 3. There is an Emulation which such are apt to entertain, by which they seek to *depreciate* their Neighbour,

bour, & elevate themselves above them. Whereas this Command requires the contrary. There is hardly any Neighbour, but we may see (if we look with Charitable Eyes) something in him for which he is to be Commended, and wherein he out-doeth us; and we should readily give him the Preference in it, and be always ready to Commend him for it: Hence that in Rom. 12. 10. *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another.* And when we hear them Commended for such things, we ought to be glad of it; and be so far from Detracting from it, as to give our ready and cheerful Assent to it: Yea, if they should be Preferred before us, not to Malign them, but to be well-satisfied in it.

2. *TO maintain a Civil, Courteous and Neighbourly* Conversation, *one with another*; To avoid Estrangedness, Scorn & Morosity: As in the fore-cited, *Rom.* 12. 10. Which is to be expressed in their mutual Behaviour. Neighbours should Live together as Neighbours, and not as Enemies; giving one another good Words, & not snarling & snapping; and ought to be ready to do one another good Turns, when occasion offers, as well as to receive them: This is the way to uphold the Ends of Civil Society, and preserve the Happiness of it; which, for want of this, will be very much impeded. Yea, They should account it an Honour rather to Serve than be Served; rather to Give, than Receive; rather to pay Respect to others than receive it from them: And indeed this is the most Rational way to be Respected, Honoured and Served by our Neighbour, and be well-esteemed by all that we Live among.

II. *THERE is a* Special *Equality made between some, which doth not arise from Nature, but Combination*; and this is that which is called *Friendship*: which is Recommended to us, not only by *Moral Philosophy*, but also by the *Word of God.* And the Truth is, The Necessity of Mankind, for their Well-being, calls for it; & there is no Living well in this World without it: He that hath not a Friend to whom he may open his Secrets, unburden his Griefs, & of whom he may ask and receive Advice and Help at all Times, is Miserable. And true Friendship Wisely laid, and duely maintained, is the greatest outward Felicity that can be here enjoyed: This therefore the Psalmist aggravates his Affliction by, Psal. 88. *ult. Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.* Now whatsoever *Disparity* there may be between Friends, in their Condition here; yet as they are Friends, so there must be a *Parity.* I shall not here speak all that might be, of this Noble Subject: only observe the *Special Duties* lying upon Men in this Relation.

1. *THE Love & Kindness between Friends, ought not to be* Common, *but* Special. They mistake, who think that we ought to Love all alike; for we have observed, That the Love is to be Calculated according to the Relation: Now this is a *peculiar* Relation, and calls for the most intense Affection. The Wise Man tells us, Prov. 18. 24. *A man that hath friends, must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.* And it is a Commendation which *David* gives to *Jonathan*, 2 Sam. 1. 26. *I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant last thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women.* And the reason of this will further appear, when we come to consider the things wherein this Friendship is to be employed. A Man should Love and Honour all Men; but True Friendship is a *contracted* thing, and extendible to but a very few. He who seeks to make *many* Friends, doth therein practically say, that he indeed seeks *none* at all; but is willing to rest contented in a *common* Love. The Scripture usually mentions a *Friend*, in the *singular* Number.

2. *EVERY Prudent Man ought to be very Cautious in the* Choice *of a Friend.* We observed, That this Relation is purely *Elective*; and therefore it calls for Deliberation, and is not to be taken up Rashly, and enter'd upon Inconsiderately. Every Man that may be fit for Human, nay Christian Conversation, is not qualified for being our Close Companion. It is true, We may be mistaken in Men; and our Friendship may be betrayed by them, whose *Hearts* are false, whilst their *Words* and *Carriages* are most smooth and obliging: this *David* proved to his sorrow in *Achitophel*, *Psal.* 55. 13, 14. But for all this, He that strikes up a Friendship in *Haste*, is likely to repent of it at *Leisure*; for there are special Qualities to be sought in a Person, whom we may expect to be able to make use of as a *Friend* on all occasions. And tho' there is often a sort of Natural Aptitude between such & such, for this Close Combination; yet there are those things, which are further to be enquired after, the want whereof will unfit them for it.

3. *THERE can be no true* Christian *Friendship, where there is not the Fear of God.* It is His Glory, that ought to be the last End of it; and all other Designs in it, ought to bear a due Subordination to *that*: so that tho' this Godliness be not all that is to be sought in it, yet it ought to be the Basis of all the rest. A Combination between Persons, separate from *that*, is not a *Friendship*, but a *Conspiracy*, and will not tend to the *Good*, but the real *Hurt* of those that are engaged in it. It was a close Reprimand given by the Prophet to him, 2 Chron. 19. 2. *And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer, went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord.*

4. *THE* Special Duties *between Friends, are such as these*:

1. THEY *must make great Allowances for Human Frailties.* There are none to be found in this World without them, and if Friendship be broken on account of these, it must be very short-liv'd. This is necessary in all Relations, and peculiarly in this, else Jealousies will be easily raised and fomented; whereas Candour calls for Charitable Constructions, and the best

Interpretations: And it is the nature of Love to cover many Frailties; and the more intenſe it is, the greater Allowances it will be willing to make.

2. THEY *ought to ſtick by each other, in Times of the greateſt Adverſity.* It is the Wiſe Man's Obſervation, Prov. 17. 17. *A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adverſity.* In Times of Proſperity, many will ſeek Friendſhip with a Man, and pretend to the greateſt Reſpect, and readineſs to Serve him: But he that will keep faſt at all Times, and when the Man is reduced to Diſtreſs, and all Men withdraw and forſake him, will be the ſame that he ever was, this is a Friend indeed; and ſuch an one was *Jonathan* to *David*. The Wiſe Man obſerves, Prov. 19. 4. *Wealth maketh many friends.* But one that will not be aſhamed of or afraid to ſtand by us, in our deepeſt Troubles, is more worth than all of them, though they were as many more.

3. THEY *ſhould readily open their Souls into each others Boſom.* Here is the great Benefit of having a Friend: to him we may freely and without fear diſcloſe our Minds, in things which it would be our folly to publiſh to the World. A Friend is called a *ſecond Self*; and there are thoſe things that are Secret, which we either greatly need Counſel about; or which oppreſs our Hearts, as long as they are kept pent up. And he that is now ſhy of his Friend, doth herein ſay, That he counts him not to be a Friend: Hence that, 2 Sam. 13. 4. *And he ſaid unto him, Why art thou, being the kings ſon, lean from day to day? wilt thou not tell me?*

4. THEY *ought to keep each others Secrets Faithfully.* And this neceſſarily follows from the *former*; elſe it would be Frenzy to impart our Secrets to another, if we could not Confide in him, that they were as ſafe, as if we had kept them lock'd in the Cabinet of our own Boſom. He that cannot keep Counſel, is uncapable of being a Friend indeed: Hence that, Prov. 11. 13. *A tale-bearer revealeth ſecrets: but he that is of a faithful ſpirit concealeth the matter.* A Man lays his Credit and Safety to Pawn, when he truſts another with his inward Thoughts; and if he Betrays them, he is not fit for Humane Society, much leſs for Intimate Familiarity.

5. THEY *ought to bear each others Burdens, and be at all Times ready to Comfort & Counſel one the other.* A Friend ſhould make his Friends Condition his own; and Reſent it as if he were himſelf in the ſame. *David* herein ſhews the Vileneſs of his Adverſaries, by telling how he carried it to them in their Trouble, in which he ſhews the Character of a Friend Pſal. 35. 13, 14, 15. *But as for me, when they were ſick,--- I humbled my ſoul with Faſting: --- I behaved my ſelf as though he had been my Friend or Brother.——But in mine Adverſity they rejoiced ——.* He is not worthy of the Title of a Friend, that hath not a tender Compaſſion upon us, & will readily expreſs it when he ſees us in Diſtreſs, and bowed down under Troubles: Hence that in Job 6. 14. *To him that is afflicted pity ſhould be ſhewed from his friend.* And how Pathetical is that Expoſtulation, Chap. 19. 21. *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me.*

6. THEY *ought to deal Plainly & Faithfully one with another.* Nor can Friendſhip be better Improved, or more kindly Applyed than by this, which is one principal Benefit of it. A Man cannot poſſibly be a *Flatterer* and a *Friend* too; and he that cannot bear a Rebuke from a Friend, is altogether unworthy of one: *David* reckoned it the greateſt Kindneſs to be thus ſmitten, Pſal. 141. 5. *Let the Righteous ſmite me, it ſhall be a kindneſs; and let him reprove me, it ſhall be an excellent oyl, which ſhall not break my head: for yet my prayer alſo ſhall be in their calamities.* And the Wiſe Man hath ſuch a Remark, Prov. 27. 6. *Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kiſſes of an enemy are deceitful.* And ſaith, Ver. 14. *He that bleſſeth his friend with a loud voice, riſing early in the morning, it ſhall be counted a curſe to him.* Though we ſhould not Betray our Friend to Diſgrace, yet we ought to give him Warning of his Danger: And if it be Hatred to a *Neighbour*, to ſuffer Sin upon him, for want of giving him a ſeaſonable Rebuke, (*Lev.* 19. 17.) much more is it to a *Friend*, who confides in us on this Account.

7. THEY *ſhould Delight in each others frequent Converſe.* There muſt be the greateſt Freedom between Friends; and they ſhould be often Refreſhing each other, by familiar and open hearted Communion: hence that, Prov. 27. 9. & 17. *Ointment and perfume rejoyce the heart: ſo doth the ſweetneſs of a mans friend by hearty counſel. Iron ſharpneth iron, ſo a man ſharpneth the countenance of his friend.* It is of the nature of *Love*, to ſeek much Intimacy with the *Beloved*, and accordingly to be as often as they can together; and a Neglect in this regard, will both hinder the Ends of this Relation, and tend to Diſtance and Alienation, which will in a little Time break the Bond aſunder: They ſhould therefore avoid all that would tend to breed Strangeneſs, eſpecially *Whiſperers* and *Tale-bearers*, who often *ſeparate chief Friends*, Prov. 16. 28.

8. THEY *ſhould maintain each others Reputation.* He is not worthy the Name of a Friend, that will not ſtand up for his Friend when he hears him Reproached, Reviled, Slandered; and will not as deeply Reſent it, as if done to himſelf. It is true, He ought not to Lye for his Friend, or do any Sinful thing in his behalf; but when he is wronged in his Name, and expoſed by the Malevolent Tongues of others, he ſhould ſhew himſelf, by taking his part, defending his Innocence, and excuſing his Imperfections; ſuch was *Jonathan*, 1 *Sam.* 19. 4. & 20. 32.

9. THEY *muſt Nouriſh this Friendſhip with all good Offices.* We are adviſed, Prov. 18. 24. *A man that hath friends, muſt ſhew himſelf friendly.* There are the Teſtimonials of *ſingular*

singular Kindness, which must be often repeated to Nourish the Ardours of their Love, and these must be mutual. There are in the Nature of Fallen Man, Jealousies too easily kindled, which are as Water cast upon the Fire of *Love*; and every Slight, or seeming Unkindness, is apt to foment them: The best way to prevent these, is to take all Advantages, to continue New Tokens of our Constant and unshaken Friendship. And having such a Friend, let us not be given to Change; but endeavour to keep it firm to the end; taking his Advice, Prov. 27. 10. *Thine own friend and thy father's friend forsake not; neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: for better is a neighbour that is near, than a brother far off.*

THUS have we briefly considered the *Affirmative* part of this Command; which well thought of, will serve to Humble us for our short-comings; and drive us to CHRIST for His Grace to help, and Righteousness to cover the Imperfection of our own.

[MAY. 2 1704.]

SERMON *CLXXXVIII.*

QUESTION LXV.

WHAT is forbidden in the Fifth Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Fifth Commandment forbiddeth, the Neglecting of, or doing any thing against, the Honour and Duty, which belongeth to every one in their several Places and Relations.

IT is a general Rule, That when *Precepts* are understood, the *Sins* against them are Rationally inferred: *Rectum est index sui et Obliqui.* And it is counted sufficient, in the laying down the Doctrine of any *Science*, to give the *Positive* Precepts or Canons which belong to it: But in the Doctrine of *Religion*, it is therefore not enough only to lay down what is *Truth*, but also to discover *Error*; not barely to tell what is *Duty*, but also to point out what is *Sin*, by reason of the Pravity and Indisposition of our Corrupt Natures, which are too apt to *call Evil Good, and Good Evil*, &c. Isa. 5. 20. Nevertheless, Having more distinctly laid open the several *Duties* contained under the *Precept*, I shall very briefly pass over the *Negative* part of it.

WE have also *formerly* considered, That a Command may be broken in *Two* regards, *viz.* Either by *not* doing the things *required* in it; or by *doing* the things which are *contrary* to it: Accordingly our *Answer* tells us, That in this Command is *forbidden*, both the *neglect* of, and the *doing* that which is against, the Honour and Duty, which is due *to* and *from* Persons, in that Order and Relation which God hath placed them in: When the Relation is not acknowledged, and the Respect belonging to it, is not paid; but a contrary Carriage is expressed.

I shall here wave the *distinct* Consideration of the *Sins* of *Omission*, by which this Precept is violated; inasmuch as the *not* doing of the things before-mentioned as *Duties*, fully discovers them. And as to the *Sins* of *Transgression*, or Violation offered to this Command, some brief Intimations may suffice: And we may take them up in the Order wherein we considered them under the *former* Answer.

First, *PARENTS* are guilty of Transgressing this Command;

1. WHEN *they deny their Children suitable* Maintenance, *according to their Part and Ability.* We are told, 2 Cor. 12. 14. *For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.* When therefore they do withhold from them, that which is due, and within their Power, they certainly discourage them, which ought not to be; *Col.* 3. 11. And we are told, 1 Tim. 5. 8 *If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.*

2. WHEN *they withhold from them the* Means *of Spiritual Good.* Parents are mainly concerned for the *Souls* of their Children: When therefore they not only neglect their Instruction, but also restrain them from the Opportunities and Advantages of Saving Knowledge; will not allow them Time to Read the Scriptures, to Attend upon the Means of Grace to Wait upon Catechising, which is peculiarly designed for the acquainting of *Young Ones* with Saving Truths; they Transgress this Command, which requires, that they *bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, Eph. 6. 4.

3. WHEN *they bring them up with over-fond* Indulgence. There is a Government of Children, which belongs unto Parents by a Natural Right; and God requires it of them; and if we part with it, and suffer them to have their Wills in all things, and they must not have a Check or Reproof, they sinfully Omit their Duty. This was the thing Charged upon *David*, in regard of *Adonijah*, 1 Kings 1. 6. *His father had not displeased him at any time, in saying, why hast thou done so?*

4. WHEN (*on the other hand*) *they treat them with* Cruelty. Bitter Carriages to Children is unnatural; and must needs offer great Discouragement to them, and provoke them to take unhandsome Courses, contrary to Col. 3. 21. *Fathers, provoke not your Children to anger, lest they be discouraged* Nay sometimes that which will not consist with the Discovery of Parental Love, is here a Fault.

5. WHEN *they Command them to do things that are* Sinful. This is one way, in which we may be Partakers in other Mens Sins, and Contract the Guilt of them to our selves: Nor can Parents shew more want of Love to their Children, than to be their Advisers & Instructers in such things as are Breaches of God's Holy Law, and thereby exposing themselves to God's Holy Anger: Herein *Rebeckah* was unkind to *Jacob*, &c. and he smarted for it, *Gen.* 27.

6. WHEN *they set them an* Evil Example. Children are apt to Imitate their Parents, and in nothing more than in things that are *Evil*, to which their Corrupt Natures incline. When *Parents* will Swear, Curse, keep Evil Company, live Idly, be Drunk, and neglect Religious Orders in their Families; no thank to them, if their *Children* do not take after them, or do worse. It is Recorded, 1 Kings 22. 52. *And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother; and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin.* And, 2 *Kings* 8. 27. 2 *Chron.* 22. 3, 4.

7. WHEN *they with-hold from them* seasonable Marriage: And that either by forbidding them, or with-holding due Encouragement from them. The Laws of all Civiliz'd Nations, have provided a Remedy against this; and many Tragical things have been the Just Punishments of this Unnatural Carriage of Parents.

Secondly, *CHILDREN* render themselves guilty of the Breach of this Commandment; when,

1. *THEY* Rebel *against their Parents* Lawful Commands. The Command for this, is abundantly urged in the Word of God; and the very Light of Nature discovers it: So that what their Parents do Lawfully Command them, they cannot without Sin refuse Obedience unto. It was Impudence in the Son, who, when his Father bad him *go to Labour in his Vineyard*, said, *I go not*, i. e. *I will not go*; Matth. 21. 18.

2. WHEN *they* Despise *and carry themselves* Insolently *towards their Parents.* This is contrary to the Honour which God hath required: Hence this is Cautioned against, in Prov. 23. 22. *Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and Despise not thy mother when she is old.* And severely Threatned, Chap. 30. 17. *The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.* Parents have their Infirmities; and as they grow in Years they will Increase; and for Children to Scorn them for this, is Brutish.

3. WHEN *they break from* Family Government, *and keep no Orders.* They come and go when they will; keep what Company they please; and Absent themselves as they please, at all Hours of the Day or Night; and will not be restrained by all the fair Means that can be used with them, being Impatient of all Subjection: God hath appointed a severe Law against such as these; *Deut.* 21. 18, 19, *& onwards.*

4. WHEN *they* Rob *them of, or Prodigally* Waste *their Estates.* Parents ought to Nourish their Children: But the disposal of this is in their hand; and Children have not the liberty to take and spend at their Pleasure. And it is not only a real Robbery, but also a despising of their Parents Authority: Hence forbidden, Prov. 19. 26. *He that wasteth his father, and chaseth away his mother, is a son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach.*

5. WHEN *they Neglect the* Care *of their Parents, who are brought to Necessity*: They harden their Hearts against them; and will rather suffer them to Perish, than afford them the necessary Succours, which their Condition calls for: This also directly crosseth the Precept of God, 1 Tim. 5. 16. *If any man or woman that believeth, have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.*

Thirdly, *HUSBANDS* and *Wives* may break this Command.

And that,

I. *IN regard of the* Joynt *Duties, that are in Common between them.*

1. WHEN they Live in *Discord* When they maintain Quarrels one with another; and at all times Provoke each other: This is contrary to that Conjugal Love, which is the Bond of that State, which obligeth them carefully to please one another, 1 *Cor.* 7. 33, 34.

2. WHEN they *withstand each other* in the Government of the Family. These have a *joynt* Care of the Education of their Children, and maintenance of Authority over their Family; and when they Disagree, and what the one doth, the other undoeth, or withstands; what can this tend to, but the subverting of Family Government; and thwarts the Duty of upholding each others Authority.

3. WHEN they are *False* one to the other. When they break the Marriage Bond, and defile the Marriage Bed, and thereby dishonour one another. This also comes under the *Seventh* Command; but we here observe it, as inconsistent with that Conjugal Love which is required in *this* Command, against which God's Law was very severe.

II. *IN respect to the Duties proper to* Each *of these.* Here,

[1.] *HUSBANDS* are Chargeable with Sin against this Command;

1. WHEN *they carry it* bitterly *to, and* insultingly *over, their Wives.* When instead of making them their Companions, they treat them as Slaves; and make their Condition sordid and very uneasy; contrary to the Precept, Col. 3. 19. *Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.* And 1 *Pet.* 3. 7.

2. WHEN *instead of taking Care for their Comfortable Support, they spend their Time and Estate in* Riotous *Living.* It is a general Rule, 1 Tim. 5. 8. *If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied*

denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. And the Wife hath a peculiar Interest in this. And if the Husband either Lives Idly, or Wastes that which should be for her Comfort, in Drinking, Gaming, or any other Leud Course, he is Guilty.

[2.] THE *Wife* is here also Guilty;

1. WHEN *she* usurps Authority *over her Husband, and tramples upon his Authority.* When she despiseth him in her Heart, and insults over him in her Carriage, and is never Content with any of his Administrations; but is always finding Fault, and Contradicting him: Such a Wife was *Jezabel.*

2. WHEN *she makes a* Slave *of him, to maintain her Pride & Prodigality.* She cannot be content with his Condition; but instead of *Sobriety*, she must be Equal in things with her Neighbours, or he shall have no quiet living.

3. WHEN *she refuseth to do* her Part, *for the preserving of the Order and Support of the Family.* She regards not how things are Wasted; and counts herself to be *too Good*, to use Care and Industry in her place; and matters not what goes to *Rack*, so she may Live in Idleness. This is contrary to the Character of a Vertuous Woman, *Prov.* 31. 11, *&c.*

Fourthly, THIS Command may be broken, either by *Masters* or *Servants.*

(1.) *MASTERS* may render themselves Guilty in this;

1. WHEN *they carry themselves* Cruelly *to their Servants.* It is a Command, Eph. 6 9. *And ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatning.* And this Cruelty is exercised in *Words*, when they Treat them as Dogs, and give them all scornful Titles, as if they were Creatures of another Species; threaten them with all severe Menaces: And indeed, Partly by with-holding from them, their due *Support of Life*, allowing neither for Food or Raiment that which is convenient: Partly by exacting *Labour* of them, beyond their Strength and Ability: Partly also, by barbarous using of them with *Blows* All Inhumanity in these regards, is a woful Usurpation upon this Relation, contrary to, Col. 4. 1. *Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a master in heaven.*

2. WHEN *they will not afford them the* Means, *for their spiritual and saving Good.* They will not Instruct them at all, nor give them Time to Read, Hear and Learn those things, by which they may be Instructed in the way to Eternal Life: Nay possibly, keep them back purposely from such Advantages. This is contrary to the Practice of *Abraham*, *Gen.* 18. 19. These forget the Account they must give to God another Day, of their *Servants* Souls.

(2.) *SERVANTS* will here also be found Faulty;

1. WHEN *they* Resist, *and rise up against their Master's Authority*: Either refusing to do what they *lawfully* require of them, (for doubtless, Masters are not to be Obeyed in any Sin,) or by murmuring at their Service, and doing it against their Wills; or by refusing to submit themselves to due Correction for the Faults by which they have deserved it; contrary to the Command, 1 *Pet.* 2. 18.

2. WHEN *they are* Unfaithful *to their Masters and do them wrong.* And that, either in their *Time*, by Idling it away, or Running away, or by employing it for themselves, to their Master's loss and damage; by Working deceitfully, and only with *Eye-service*, which is forbidden, *Col.* 3. 22. Or by Filching and Purloining, wronging them in their *Estates*, either by spending it upon their Lusts, or taking it to themselves to make an Estate of; contrary to *Tit.* 2. 10.

Fifthly, THIS Command may be Transgressed, both by the *Aged* and *Younger* Persons as such.

1. *AGED* Persons are here Guilty, when they set an *Evil Example* before the *Younger*, in their Conversation. And this is, When in any thing they Live contrary to the Character, Tit. 2. 2. *That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.* For *Old* Persons to be Intemperate, and given to Excess in Drink, (which is a thing too frequent,) it is a vile Reproach to them; to see them Covetous and Scraping, as if they were to Live here forever, or would carry something away; to have them Swear, Curse, take God's Name in vain, is an ill Sight, and a miserable Example: Well then might the Wise Man use that limitation, Prov. 16.31. *The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.*

2. *YOUNGER* Persons break this Command, by a *Contemptuous Carriage* toward those that are *Aged.* When they Despise them for their *Age*, which doth it self call for a Respect; or carry it Insolently towards them for the Infirmities, (whether *Natural* or *Moral*,) which they labour of; when they despise that Precept, Levit. 19. 32. *Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the Lord.* When they think themselves Wiser than the Ancients, and so scorn their Advice; laugh at them for their Piety, and shew Contempt to them for their grave Instructions; and with *Rehoboam*, forsake the Counsel of the *Old* Men; and are so far from *following* their *Good Example*, that they make a *Mock*, or *Scoff* at it.

Sixthly, THIS may be Considered respecting *Magistrates* and *Subjects.*

(1.) THE *Civil Magistrate* may here be Guilty;

1. *BY* Enacting *of Evil Laws.* We read, Psal. 94. 20. *Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law.* And these may be Evil, which either *Ratify* a *False* Worship, or tend to the *Suppression* of that which is *Right*: As also whatsoever are *Unjust*, and contrary to the Civil Happiness of a People, or Subversive of those Liberties and Immunities, which by the Law of Nature belong unto them.

2. *BY*

2. BY Tyranny *over their Subjects*: Which is exercised, when Men in Power, without Law, invade the Liberties and Properties of the Subjects; and thereby Oppress them: When they Usurp an Arbritary Government, and make their own Will their Law, in whatsoever may gratify their Ambition or Covetousness. This is expresst in that Warning given to *Israel*, 1 Sam. 8. 11, *&c.*

3. BY wresting *of Judgment.* This belongs to the Executive Power: When the Laws are either Superseded; or by perverse Glosses and Misinterpretations improved to *wrong* the Innocent, and *favour* the Nocent; when Good Men shall be injured, and Ill Men favoured: Hence that, Lam. 3. 36. *To subvert a man in his cause, the Lord approveth not.*

(2.) *SUBJECTS* do notoriously Sin against this Command;

1. BY *a* Contemptuous Carriage *towards their Persons & Government.* When their Authority is despised, and their Laws disregarded; and Men without regard, break their Good and Just Laws: What is this but to reproach the Government, contrary to that Subjection, *Rom.* 13. 1.

2. BY murmuring *against, or* speaking Evil *of Rulers, even the Best*: Yea, often the Best are most uneasy to a People, and they cannot bear them; and nothing can please them, but these must be Reviled as if they were the Plagues of the Place. This is a thing which is reproved, Jude ver. 8. *And speak evil of dignities.*

3. BY Insurrection & Rebellion. In what Case a People Oppressed by their Rulers may with-stand the Oppression, is not a thing I now Dispute: But for them upon every Disgust, Tumultuously to Rise, and throw all into Confusion, is a thing no way warrantable; but provoking to God.

4. BY *fraudulent* with-holding *of their* Just Tribute, *for the Upholding of Government*: In what Cases the Subject may hide from Knowledge, what the Law exacts, I will not here Enquire, it being a nice Case; but God hath made it a Duty, Rom. 13. 7. *Custom to whom custom is due.* And *Fraud* here is a Sin.

Seventhly, *MINISTERS* also, and *Church-Members*, are here Concerned.

(1.) *MINISTERS* may notoriously break this Command;

1. BY *Preaching & Instilling of* False *Doctrines.* Hereby they do what in them lies, to destroy the Souls that are under their Charge, whose Duty is expresst, Jer. 3. 15. *And I will give you pastours after mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge & understanding.* Such Preachers are therefore called the *Ministers of Satan*, 2 Cor. 11. 15.

2. BY *an* Evil *Conversation.* They are to be Ensamples to their Flock, and Preach by their *Lives*, as well as by their *Doctrines*: When therefore they lead ungirt Lives, and contradict their *Preaching* by their *Practice*; they do not shew that Love of Souls, which they ought to do. *Paul* could say, 1 Cor. 11. 1. *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.*

3. BY *their taking* other Employments, *which hinder them from discharging their Duty.* Their Duty is to be in these things, to make their Ministry their Calling; if therefore they lose themselves in other Business, which unavoidably takes them off from this; it is their Sin, 2 *Tim.* 2. 4.

4. BY *Usurping a* Power *over their Flock, which Christ hath not vested them withal.* There is a Power which they ought to assert; but a Domination is not granted them; and if they assume it, they become Guilty. 1 Pet. 5. 3. *Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.*

(2.) *CHURCH-Members* may break this Command;

1. BY *assuming to themselves an* Authority *which belongs not to them.* When they Challenge a Liberty to themselves, which is Subversive of the Authority of the Eldership; and do not Submit to the Regular Government of their Elders, contrary to, Heb. 13. 17. *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit your selves: for they watch for your souls as they that must give account: that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*

2. BY *disorderly* Rejecting *the Relation which they bear to their own Elders*: As if they were entirely at their own Liberty, to rend themselves away, without any regard had to those whom the Holy Ghost hath made their Overseers; which tends to the Ruin of Church-Order.

3. BY *with-holding from them their Comfortable & Honourable* Subsistence. When they thus Oppress them and their Families; and drive them from their proper Work, to seek their own Support, without which they must suffer Hunger and Want; contrary to, 1 Cor. 9. 14. *Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel, should live of the gospel.*

4. BY *maintaining continual* Brawls & Contentions *with their Ministers.* Always finding Fault with their Administrations, and seeking to undermine them; which is to Discourage them in their Work; and Contradictory to that Honour which they ought to pay them.

Eighthly, THERE is a Breach in this Command, between those that are *Well-Descended*, and such as are of a *Lower* Degree.

1. WHEN *the* former *carry it* unworthy *of their Progenitors, and that Honourable Birth they are Owners of*: When they are a Disgrace rather than a Credit, to their Birth and Education.

2. WHEN *the* latter Despise, *and cast* Contempt *on the other*: This proceeds from a *Levelling* Spirit; a disowning the Difference, which God's Providence hath made.

Ninethly, BOTH *Rich* and *Poor* may be here Guilty.

1. THE *Rich*: When either they *Despise* the Poor for their Poverty, wherein they cast Reproach upon their Maker; or when they refuse to *Relieve* the Poor, out of the Liberal

Portion

Portion, which God hath put into their hands, whereby they with-hold from God that which is His due, and He hath required.

2. THE *Poor*: When they either *Envy* the Prosperity of their Neighbours, which contradicts the Love they should bear to them, or are *Ungrateful* for all the Kindnesses they receive from them.

Tenthly, THERE is a Fault here, both in those that *Excell* in *Gifts*, and such as are *Inferiour* in them.

1. *WHEN the* former *with-hold, and will not improve them for the Good of the other*; contrary to 1 Cor. 12. 7. *The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.*

2. *WHEN the* latter *Scorn to be Instructed by the other, but Despise them*: And particularly, when such are not regarded in Election to Places of Service, but laid aside; and others that are no way fit, are preferred before them.

Eleventhly, THIS Command is Transgressed by *Equals*;

1. *WHEN* Neighbours *Live together Unneighbourly.* When they maintain Estrangedness among themselves, Live in Quarrels and Strife, deny one another Neighbourly Kindnesses, seek to Undermine one another in their Affairs; and instead of doing *Good*, do *Hurt* to each other.

2. *SPECIAL* Friends *are Guilty of Transgression, when they do any thing that is contrary to that near Bond of Society; and tends to hinder the Ends and Benefits of it.* More peculiarly, When they *Desert* their Friend, in a Time of *Adversity*, which most of all calls for their *standing by* him; when they *Betray* each others Secrets, & thereby expose them to Disgrace and Mischief: When they do not faithfully and seasonably *Advise* one another; but on the other hand, give Advice or Encouragement to that which is *Sinful*, and will expose them to God's Anger, and Suffering in the World: When instead of maintaining each other's Reputation, they undermine and expose each other, by entertaining *Calumnies* against them, or publishing their *Infirmities* to others.

THESE, and whatsoever else of like Nature, are the *Transgressions* of the *Fifth* Command: By which we are taught what need Christians have to be very Wary to themselves, lest in one Relation or other, they Violate the Command, and procure God's Displeasure.

[MAY 30. 1704.]

SERMON CLXXXIX.

QUESTION LXVI.

WHAT is the Reason annexed to the Fifth Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Reason annexed to the Fifth Commandment, is a Promise of long Life and Prosperity, (as far as it shall serve for God's Glory and their own Good) to all such as keep this Commandment.

THE Words here referred to, are expresst in the Command, *That thy Days may be long* &c. In the *Hebrew* Text it is, *That they may Prolong*; and is supposed nextly to refer to *Father* & *Mother*, for the Word is of an *Active* signification: For altho' God hath the disposal of Life and Death in His hand; yet that is sometimes referred to the Instrumental Cause, which firstly belongs to the Principal Efficient. Now *Parents* may be said to Prolong the Days of their *Children*, as Moral Causes; and that is by their Faithful Endeavours to Educate them in the Fear of God, which is the way to lay up a Blessing for them: And the way for *Children* to come by, and Inherit this Blessing, is for them carefully to Comply with the Duties required of them in this Command: And in *this* sense it stands to direct *Parents*, how to express their Best Love to their *Children*; and quicken them to Care in their Religious Education. But if we, with our Translation, take it to be an *Enallage* of the *Active* for the *Passive* or *Neuter*, this is not infrequent in the *Hebrew* Language, and then it is, *That thou mayst be long-lived*; and so the Apostle interprets it, Eph. 6. 3. *That it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on the earth.* And so it is directed to *Children*, to excite them to their Duty. And we are here to take it *extensively*, to *all* the Relations in every Order of Men, which we *before* observed to come under this Command.

BUT for a more full & clear taking up of the mind of this Reason, we may consider the *severals* contained in the *Answer*, and refer them to the Words of the *Precept*; which will shew us, of what Importance it is, that all Ranks of Men be very Careful in the discharge of the Duties here required of them.

HERE then we may Consider,

I. *THE* Nature *of the Reason is expressed.* It is called a *Promise*: And so the Apostle interprets it, Eph. 6. 2. ——*Which is the first commandment with Promise.* The Words themselves are properly an *Encouragement* or *Motive*, *That it may be well with thee*, &c. But whatsoever Encouragements God gives unto Men in His Word, they carry the Nature of a *Promise* in them; for He doth not go about to Deceive Men: Nor can any thing be a greater Motive to a Man, than a Prospect of Good, in the Pursuit of the thing that is before him; the hope of Enjoying whereof in such a way, excites him to Prosecute it: Nor can a Rational Hope have greater Security, than from a Word of Promise made

made by God Himself, who cannot Lye. There seems also in the Encouragement to be intimated a *Rationality* of the thing it self; for, Orders observed among all Ranks of Men, hath a natural Tendency to the upholding and establishing of Peace among them; and Peace is big with manifold Blessings. The Apostle tells us not only that there is a *Promise*, but that it is *the First Command with Promise*: And we may here Consider how; for we know that there is a *Promise*, subjoyned to the *Second* Command, of *shewing Mercy*, &c. Some think that the Apostle intends, that it is the *First* Command with Promise in the *Second* Table; others that it is the First *Affirmative* Precept, that hath a Promise Connected: But it rather intends, That it is the First with a *Special* Promise, to particular Obedience to *One* Command; the former being *General*, referring to the *whole* Law, and pointing only to *Mercy* in general; whereas this Intimates a particular Benefit.

II. *THE* Subjects *of this Promise*; *or those who have Right & Title to the Benefit laid up in it*; viz. *All such as do keep this Command.* This also is implied in the Words; for as the *Precept* it self is Indefinite, and amounts to an Universal; so is the *Promise* Co-extensive with it; it being offered to *All* for their Encouragement to Obey it: Only it is to be observed, That the *Promise* is *Hypothetically* Connected with the *Command*; Obedience to it being prescribed as the Medium to obtain it; so that if a Person neglect his Obedience, or Transgress this Command, he forfeits all Claim to the Good engaged in it. For the Rule *formerly* observed, viz. *That where the* Affirmative *or* Negative *is mentioned, the* contrary *is implied*; is true of the *Reasons* of the Command, as well as of the *Precepts* themselves: And it is to be observed, That the Word of God utters severe and awful Threatnings against them who Violate this Command: Deut. 27. 16. *Cursed be he that setteth light by Father or Mother. Prov.* 20. 20. & 30. 17. So that *Disobedience* to this Command, doth not only cut off the Entail of the *Blessing*, but also brings the Man under a *Curse* of God; which ought to be well considered: But every one that is *Faithful* to this Duty, is Owner of the Promise, and shall not fail of the Good of it; tho' as to the *Manner* of the Performance of it, we shall presently consider.

III. *THE* Benefits *which are contained in this Promise*, *which are* long Life & Prosperity: *That thy Days may be long in the Land*, &c. This Promise, as it was given by God to Israel from Mount *Sinai*, had doubtless a special respect to that People, and to the Land of *Canaan*, which God had given to them by Promise, and to which he was then Conducting of them. But that it had a respect to the People of God in all Ages and Nations, whom he should bring into the Covenant with Him, is very certain: For which reason the Apostle urgeth not only the *Precept*, but also the *Promise* upon his *Ephesians*, who were Originally *Gentiles*; Eph. 6. beg. *Children, Obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother, (which is the first commandment with promise) That it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on the earth.* Nor are we (as some do) to Limit the Temporal Promise of the Old Testament, to Spiritual things under the Gospel, so as to exclude those that are Temporal from them; for the Apostle assures us, 1 Tim. 4.8. *Godliness is profitable to all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.* Peter applies that in *Psal.* 34. 12, 13. to Christians for their Encouragement, 1 Pet 3.10, 11. *For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him eschew evil, and do good: let him seek peace and ensue it.* Now these Benefits are here reduced to *Two* Heads, *viz.*

1. *LONG Life* it self. And that this did nextly intend a Temporal Life, appears, because it is said to be *in the Land*; and the Apostle interprets it of the *Earth*, Eph. 6. 3. Long Life is in it self a *Blessing*; Death, and that a Bodily one, being the fruit of the *Curse*, and brought into the World by *Sin*, Rom. 5.12. It is therefore threatned as a Judgment, to cut Men off in the *midst of their Days*: For tho' the Sin of Man, hath put a great deal of *Death* into *Life* it self, which renders it very uneasy to the Man; yet both a Man naturally desire it, and it affords him many Advantages, which if he aright improves, will tend to his Felicity. Hence that is declared a Blessing, Job 5. 26. *Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in, in his season.* Zech. 8.4. *There shall yet old People dwell in the Streets.*

2. *PROSPERITY*: Under which are comprehended all sorts of Blessings. And that this is included in the Promise, is evident, because God Himself so Expounds it in Deut. 5.16. —— *That thy Days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee.* Philosophers define Life to be an Act with Delight; intimating, That so much of Sorrow as the Life is incumbered withal, so much of Death is in it; and tho' it is God's Pleasure, that the best of Men shall meet with many Troubles in this Life; yet this Promise in it contains so much of Relief against, and comfortable Support under it, as shall make it become a Blessing to them.

NOW under this *Prosperity* there are these things principally included;

1. *HEALTH of Body.* Hence we have that Promise, Prov. 3. 8. *It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.* Sickness of Body is one of the Appendages of Death, in that it disturbs the Man's outward quiet, and takes him off from the Business of his Life; and tends to hasten his Dissolution: It is therefore one of the Blessings promised to the latter Estate of the Church, and a fruit of their Reconciliation to God, Isa. 33. 24. *And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick*: *i. e.* They shall have no occasion to say so; and therefore Sicknesses sent among a People, are annumerated to these Judgments, which proceed from God's Anger.

2. *PEACE*

2. *PEACE & Quiet from the Molestation of Enemies.* And this is included in their Living long in the Land of their Inheritance, which calls for *Peace*, to make it a Blessing indeed. It is therefore a frequent Threatning of Men for their Sins, that God will take away *Peace* from them, and let in their Enemies upon them to lay them Waste, and to carry them into Captivity: When therefore the Psalmist saith, Psal. 37. 34. *Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land.* It intends a Living Safely from the Incroachments of the Adversary, and enjoying Peace among themselves; to keep them from Inward Broils, and Attacks from Abroad.

3. *A Flourishing State of outward Prosperity in all their Affairs*: Good Success in their Undertakings, according to that Comprehensive Promise made concerning such, Psal. 1. 3. *And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.* Men therefore that enjoy Prosperity, are said to *Live*, 1 Sam. 25. 6. The Comfort of Man's Life hath a Subordinate Dependence, on the Supplies of the Good things of the World, which were made for the Support of the Outward Man: Extream and Pinching Poverty being one of the Evils, which make Man's Life a Burden to him; and is therefore one of the Penalties inflicted on Man for Sin.

4. *ETERNAL Life is also without doubt included in it*; And may well here be supposed to be Promised to those that do Sincerely and Evangelically Discharge the Duties here required: Not but that Men may be acted with Moral Principles, and do things Conscientiously, which are the Matter of Duties, (without a Principle of Regenerating Grace in them,) which yet God may take so much Notice of in His Providence, as to give them long Life and Prosperity in *this World*, which was all they sought after. Nevertheless, That this Promise grasps *Eternal Blessedness* in it, will be evident, if we consider that this Promise was *Typical*, and had therefore a designed Reference ultimately to Spiritual and Eternal things: The Land of *Canaan* was therefore a Type of *Heaven*; and all the Blessings of it, were a Representation of *Spiritual* and *Eternal* Blessings, tho' not excluding of those which are *Temporary*, so far as they had a Subserviency to these. And hence the Blessings Promis'd in *that* Land, are said to be *for ever*, because they were, (tho' in themselves *Temporary*,) yet shadows of those things that are to come, which are *Eternal*.

IV. *WE have the* Limitation *of this Tenure, in regard of the Dispensation of Good laid up in the Promise*: *So far as shall serve to the Glory of God, and their Good, who are thus Obedient.* This Limitation indeed is not expresst in the Body of the Precept, but is to be understood according to the general Rule given by God in His Word: That general Interpretation given by God himself, may here suffice, Jer. 18. 7,8. *At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it. If that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.* And that particular Menace may further Illustrate it, 1 Sam. 2. 30. *Them that honour me, I will honour, and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.* It is true, There are some Absolute and Inconditionate Promises and Threatnings Recorded in the Word of God, which are the expres's Declarations of God's Purposes, and are therefore like them Immutable; of such we have that, 1 Sam. 15. 29. *And also the Strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent: for he is not a man that he should repent.* But in *others* there is a Reserve; and that not only on the *Hypothesis* of Men's Behaviour, but also on the *Account* of God's Sovereign Wisdom and Pleasure.

NOW the *Limitations* here mentioned are *Two*;

1. *SO far as shall be for God's Glory.* That is His own Last End in all His Works, Prov. 16.4. *The Lord hath made all things for himself.* Sometimes it is most suitable to God's Holy Ends, that the Godly should be exercised with all sorts of Trials and Afflictions, in which this among others is included; and He hath not parted with His Prerogative on this Account; and this more peculiarly when they are called to Suffer in his Cause, and for the Defence of His Truth, as in Times of great Persecution.

2. *SO far as is for their Good.* God in all His Promises, and the Performance of them, hath a regard (next to, and in Conjunction with His own Glory,) to the best Good of His Children: And as He ever intends them Real Good, by all that He doth to them, so He reserves the Judgment of what is best for them, to Himself; for He hath Promised, Rom 8 28. *That all things work together for good, to them that love God.*

HERE therefore for a more Clear and Satisfactory Account of this Affair, give me leave to obviate a Doubt or two which ly in the way.

[1.] IT is Objected, *That there is no* Difference *in the Providence of God on this Account*: But such as are notorious Breakers of this Command, Live as long, and Prosper as much, in this World, as those who are never so Careful on this Account: And hence Men are ready to think that it is all one on this Account, and that God Dispenseth things Promiscuously.

Answ. IT is not to be denied, but that God doth sometimes suffer it in His Providence, that Men notoriously Wicked do Prosper; and that such as break all the Bands of Order in the World, live Long, and flourish in Worldly Prosperity; and this is oftentimes an occasion of Stumbling to Good Men: Hence we have such an Enquiry on the Observation, Job 21. 7, &c. *Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?*— But this ought not to Prejudice us at God's Providence, or make us to think ever the better, of Prosperous Wickedness. Here therefore let us observe,

1. THAT *God hath Holy* Ends *in suffering it to be so in the World.* These are many and mysterious: He Wills it to be seen, that His

Love and Hatred are not to be judged of by the *outward* State of Men in this Life, Eccl. 9. beg. *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them.* He hath seen it meet to make use of such Men as *Tools*, by whom to Punish a Sinful World for their Wickedness; who are hereby fitted for such a Service, *Isa.* 10.5. He will hereby try the Faith and Patience of his own, and sometimes Chasten their Follys, and put them upon securing to themselves a better Portion than any in this Life; and make them to walk more steadily in a Life of Godliness. It is the Day of His Patience and common Benignity, which he will have the Vilest of Men to Taste of here, Matth. 5. 45. *For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*

2. *THERE is a vast* Difference *between the Prosperity which God affords to such, and that which he hath promised to the Godly and Obedient.* There may may be no *outward* or *sensible* Difference indeed, but there is a *Real* one; the one is a fruit only of His *Common* Providence, the other proceeds from His *special* Love, and is an Effect of it; *these* therefore hold upon a better Tenure than *those*: The Psalmist therefore hath that Observation, Psal. 37. 16. *A little that a righteous man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked.* Hence,

3. *THE long Life & Prosperity of these Men, are under God's* Curse, *which is all this while at work for their Ruin.* Such Turbulent Men, who break all Order, and disturb the Tranquillity of Humane Society, and Prosper in it, are not only under the Threatning, which shall in due time take Place upon them effectually, if they Repent not; but by the Secret Judgment of God, it ripens them for Destruction, & in due time their foot shall slide: It is an awful Word, Psal. 92. 7. *When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish: it is that they shall be destroyed forever.* God is therefore brought in *Laughing* at them, *Psal.* 37. 13. And it is the Wise Man's Remark, Eccl. 5.13. *There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.* They are but as *Beasts* fed in a fat Pasture, reserved for the more fearful Plagues: Hence that in, Prov. 1.32. *The prosperity of fools shall destroy them.* And we have *David's* Observation, *Psal.* 37. 35, 36.

[2.] IT is further Objected, *But how often do we see that the Best of Men, & such as carried themselves most Orderly in their Rink and Station, have the* Shortest *Lives, and meet with the* most *of* Adversity *in this World*: How then is this Promise accomplished for them; or what Encouragement can they gather from it?

Answ. THIS indeed hath been a great stumbling Block to the Godly in all Ages: For this *Job's* Friends Censured him; and how many Holy Men have we on Scripture Record, who were brought to a Loss about it: The Psalmist Confesseth, Psal. 73. 2, 3. *But as for me, my feet were almost gone: my steps had well-nigh slipt. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.* Ver. 13. *Verily, I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.* The Prophets Demurred upon it, Jer. 12. 1. *Righteous art thou O Lord, when I plead with thee: yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?* — Hab. 1. 13, 14. But the Word of God gives us abundant Relief in this Case.

HERE then Consider,

1. THAT *God sometimes Punisheth the Sin of* Superiours, *in Afflicting of their* Correlates. It is an awful Menace in the Second Command, Exod. 20. 5. --- *Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.* And how often do we see the Sins of Rulers bring Judgments upon their Subjects: Did not *David's* do so upon Israel, 2 *Sam.* 24. *Chap.* And did not *Achan's* Sin bring Destruction on his whole Family, *Josh.* 7. *Chap* Nor do the most Holy of them escape, when God sees meet thus to Punish them. *Jeroboam* had but one Pious Son, and he must Die, for his Father's Punishment, 1 *Kings* 14. 13. And the Equity of this God will make to appear one Day, whatever Prejudices Men may now entertain against it, because of their Ignorance and Pride.

2. THAT *God many times takes such Early out of the World in* Mercy *to them.* Though long Life be in it self a *Blessing*; yet, as things may be Circumstanced, it is a *Mercy* to Die: It may be a Judgment to *others*, but to the Persons *themselves*, it is a signal and distinguishing Favour; such God declared that of the Death of Young *Abijah*, in the fore-cited, 1 *Kings* 14. 13. When great Miseries and Calamities are coming on a Miserable World; when Storms of Distress and Calamity are hastening: It is now no little Kindness which God affords to some, to remove them out of the reach of Storms and Tempest; for we are told, Isa. 57. 1. *That the Righteous is taken away from the evil to come.* And the Grave is one of those Chambers, *&c.* Isa. 26. 20. *Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers; and shut thy doors about thee: hide thy self as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be over past.* He calls them as he did *Lot* out of *Sodom.* And it was by a short Life, and immature and violent Death, that God brought to pass that Promise which he had made to Godly *Josiah*, 2 Kings 22. 20.

3. THAT *God many times calls such to suffer for His* Truth *sake, which is their Honour and Happiness.* Notwithstanding the Promise of *long Life* and *Prosperity*, God hath warned His People to expect to suffer *Tribulation* and *Persecution* for His Name-sake and the Gospel: Christ thus warned His Disciples, Joh. 16. ult. *In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.* And *Paul* tells us, that it is the common Lot of the Godly, *Acts* 14. 22. Now this doth not

Contradict

Contradict the Promise, but only Modify it; for if God's Glory be concerned, as here it is, He Reserves a Liberty: And that is so far from Hurting them, that it affords them a special Advantage to Glorify God, and turns to their Comfort and Felicity: Hence that of Christ, Matth. 5. 11, 12. *Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsly for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven.* And of the Apostle *Peter*, 1 Pet. 4. 14. *If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory, and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.*

4. THAT *God evermore Sanctifies this short and troublesome Life to them for their Good.* As He consults His own Glory in it, so He doth not forget to promove their real Benefit by it, *Rom.* 8. 28. The Best of the *Jews* were first carried Captive to *Babylon*, which look'd as if it had been Severe, but was really for their Advantage: Hence that, *Jer.* 24. 5. God sees that it is needful & best for them that it should be so, which He hath ever an Eye at; 1 Pet. 1.7. *That the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold which perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise, and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.* Sometimes by their Folly they put Him upon it, and by this Means He cures it; to be sure, the great End of it is expresst in *Deut.* 8. 16. & *Isa.* 27. 9. God's great Design in all His Dispensations to His own, is to make them meet for the Inheritance; and this Design he fails not of carrying on, by such Providences as these. And whilst they Experience the Operation of His Spirit with these, they are abundantly satisfied in the Care and Faithfulness of God herein manifested.

5. THAT *God hath given eminent Instances of His Literally fulfilling of this Promise to such in* this Life. It is true, the Just is to Live by his Faith; and accordingly to wait for the Accomplishment of every good Word of God, in His Way and Time: But as He hath given Notorious Instances of His Punishing the horrid Breaches of this Command, for Men's Warning; so of His signal Fulfilling the Promise for such as have been Obedient. The very *Pagans* themselves have observed, That often a *short* Life and a miserable, hath been the Lot of such as were Disobedient to their Superiours; but a *long* and happy, to such as were Exemplary upon this Account: And many like Instances have been Collected by Christian Historians; and these are Earnests of the Security of the Promise to all such.

6. THAT Eternal Life *shall, without fail, Compleat this Promise for them.* This therefore we before observed, to be comprehended in the Promise; and doubtless, Life Everlasting hath in it the whole of Blessedness that the Creature can desire, or be Happifyed by: And whatsoever is made an Effectual Medium of bringing them to this, must needs be a part of their Inchoate Felicity: And tho' God may try their Faith and Obedience, by a *troublesome* and *short* Life, yet this also shall turn to the Fulfilment of the great Promise: And that also shall be Verified in them; Isa. 65.20. *There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old, but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.* He hath Lived long enough, and happily enough, who is here made meet for Eternal Glory, and so wafted over to Enjoy that Long and Blessed Day of Eternal Life, where all Temporary Promises shall be swallowed up, and compleated with over-weight.

USE. GIVE me leave to shut up this Discourse on this Command, with a *Lamentation* for the woful *Neglects* and *Transgressions* of this Precept among us. And I am perswaded that it is no small ground of God's Controversy at this Day, with this Sinful Land. God may say as, *Jer.* 2. 34. What Order of Men can say, We are Innocent? Is there not a neglect in all sorts of Superiours, in the discharge of their Duties Relative? And is their not also a woful Rising up of Inferiours against their Superiours, whether in Natural, Civil or Ecclesiastical Subordination? In special, Do not Parents neglect the due Education of their Children, and Children rise up against the Government of their Parents? Is not there a Spirit of Discontent and rising up against the Magistracy and Ministry? Do not Young Men Despise those that are Aged; and cast Dirt upon them, supposing themselves to be Wiser? Are there not abounding Contentions between Neighbours; and the Time come when there is no Trusting in any Friend?

AND as these things have a natural Tendency to Disturb the Tranquillity of a People, so they are highly Provoking to that God, who is a God of Order. This doubtless is an Ill Presage; and calls us all into the Dust and Trembling, to expect a Severe Testimony in Providence against these things.

ONLY let me offer this Word of *Encouragement* to such as Run not with the Stream of the Times; but do carefully *Comply* with God's Command on this Account, and Mourn for the Sins which they cannot Reform: That God will observe and acknowledge your Fidelity; and it shall go well with you and yours in the Evil Day; either you shall be marked for Deliverance, or preserved in perfect Inward Peace, till you are Removed where you shall Enjoy Length of Days, even Life for evermore.

[JUNE 27. 1704.]

SERMON CXC.

QUESTION LXVII.

WHICH is the Sixth Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Sixth Commandment is, *Thou shalt not Kill.*

WE obſerved, That the *Fifth* Command peculiarly Reſpects the *Orders* which God hath placed among Men, and the *Relative Duties* ariſing from theſe Orders. Now as all the *other* Commands in the *Firſt* Table, may be reduced to the *Firſt* Command, ſo may all that *follows* in *this*, be referred to the *Fifth*. Yet becauſe there are the Common Concerns of Men one with another, which refer not ſo much to any *Special* Relation, as to Mankind in *General*, conſidered as a Sociable Creature, and under a neceſſity of Dwelling together, and maintaining Communion; and there are ſeveral ſorts of Good things which they are concerned in, in every whereof their Love one to another, ought to exert it ſelf in promoting their Good and Benefit thereby, and avoiding the doing them Harm: Theſe therefore are laid in the *following* Precepts.

THERE are diverſe Diſtributions given of theſe Precepts; which Difference mainly ariſeth from various Thoughts about the ſpecial Deſign of the *Tenth* Command; for, That there muſt be ſomething *ſpecial* aimed at in every Precept, we formerly obſerved; inaſmuch as the Decalogue is an Epitome of the whole Moral Law; and yet that the *Tenth* hath a reſpect to the ſame Subject matter, which is laid down in the *Four* nextly going before it, is manifeſt by the Words of it. And there are two Opinions here, which bid faireſt for our Information in this matter.

SOME would have the *Four* following Commands to refer to the ſeveral Kinds of Good which we ought to ſeek for our *Neighbour*; and the *Laſt* to his Proſperity in each Kind.

OTHERS think that the *former* reſpect the things themſelves, which are Committed againſt our Neighbour in either of theſe; and the *Laſt* the firſt Motions of Original Sin in us, which have not gained the Conſent of our Will. But this may be further Deliberated, when we come to the *Laſt* Command.

AS for thoſe who think, That in the *former* there is only forbidden the *Outward* Act, and in the *latter* the *Inward* Deliberations and Concluſions of the Heart; they are to be rejected; for the Law is *Spiritual*, Rom. 7. 14. And therefore every Precept of it commands the *Heart*, as well as the *Life*.

NOW the *Four* following Commands, may be reduced to Two Heads, 1. Such as refer to our Neighbours *Perſon*, in Command *Sixth* and *Seventh*. 2. Such as refer to his *outward Concerns*, in Command *Eighth* & *Ninth*. And under each of theſe, there are alſo Two things pointed at, [1.] In reſpect of his *Perſon*, 1. His *Life*. 2. His *Chaſtity*. [2.] In regard of his *outward Concerns*, 1. His *Goods*. 2. His *Credit*. Which muſt be *diſtinctly* conſidered.

THE proper Subject of the *Sixth* Command, is the *Life of Man*, *Thou ſhalt not Kill*. The Meaning whereof follows to be Enquired.

QUESTION LXVIII.

WHAT is required in the Sixth Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Sixth Commandment requires, all lawful Endeavours to Preſerve our own Life, and the Life of others.

THE Words in the Precept are *General*; ſome therefore have extended it to all things that have *Life* in them, and made the Precept unlimited: But the Word uſed in the *Hebrew*, is obſerved by Criticks, to be uſed only with reſpect unto *Mankind*; and doubtleſs the Command hath a principal regard to *them*, tho' all regard to the Life of *other Creatures*, is not to be excluded; for we read, Prov. 12. 10. *A righteous man regardeth the life of his Beaſt.* Nevertheleſs, God hath put the Lives of *Beaſts* and *Plants* under the Diſpoſal of *Man*, for their Uſe and Benefit.

THE great and main Duty therefore required in this Command, is uſually called *Humanity*; which conſiſts in a tender Regard to and Care of the Life of *Man*; and that of *Beaſts*, no further than it prohibits *Cruelty* to be exerciſed towards them.

AND how far the *Life of Man* is concerned in it, will come to be conſidered in the ſequel.

HERE then we may obſerve,

I. THE *Subject* about which this Duty is to be exerciſed, viz. *Life*. And this being the main and principal thing, ſeems to challenge the firſt Place in Order of theſe particular Precepts; for *Killing* of a Perſon properly intends, the taking away of his Life from him; which is accompliſhed by procuring the ſeperation of Soul and Body. Now, As Man conſiſts of Two Eſſential Conſtituent Parts, *Soul* and *Body*, and there is a Life of *Both* to be conſidered, the one a *Spiritual*, the other a *Natural*; ſo we may look on them both as coming under the Comprehenſion of this Precept: For all the Duties of Love to Man are reducible to one or other of the Precepts of the *Second* Table: And to which

of

of them can the Life of the *Soul*, be better applied than this?

AND under *Life* is comprehended all the *Convenience* and *Comfort* of Life, or whatsoever is requisite to the Health, Ease, Freedom, Satisfaction, by which the Life may be rendred Delightful.

II. THE *Comprehensive Duty* of this Command, is, *the using all lawful Endeavours for the Preservation of Life.* There is an *Affirmative*, as well as a *Negative* part in every Precept: So that it is not enough to Abstain from doing any thing which directly tends to the *shortning* or taking away of the Life; but there are the proper Means to be used for the *continuance* of it, and maintaining the Health, Vigour and Comfort of it: And this requires not only good *Words*, but good *Deeds*, which is plainly intimated by that of the Apostle, Jam. 2. 15, 16. *If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food: And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be you warmed and filled: notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit?* It comprehends the Desires of it, and where the Desires are regular, they will be followed with Endeavours answerable; only these Endeavours must be such as are *Lawful*; for the Precept not only requires the Use of Means for an End, but sets *Bounds* to the Means, beyond which it is not permitted that we pass: For that is a general Rule, which hath no Exception, that *we may not do Evil that Good may come of it.* And the principal *Limitations* here to be observed, are such as these:

1. *IT is no way lawful for a Man to* deny his Religion, *that he may save his Life.* This hath often been the Case of the Godly, in Times of Persecution; and many of the Martyrs have been offered their Lives on these Terms: But it is a constant Rule, that *one* Command is not to be broken, under pretence of keeping *another*, for there is no Clashing of Duties: But for a Christian to Renounce his Religion is a Notorious Breach of the *First* Command: And we are told what our Duty is in this regard, 1 Pet. 3. 14, 15. *If ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terrour, neither be troubled; But sanctify the Lord in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.*

2. *NOR is it lawful for any to* tell a Lye, *to preserve his Life.* As little a matter as many make of speaking Falsly upon every trifling occasion; yet he pays too dear to redeem his Life, who will *Lye* for it; that is a Sin as much forbidden in the *Ninth*, as *Murder* in the *Sixth* Command; and by thus doing, he also hurts the Life of his *Soul*, which is of incomparably greater worth, than that of his *Body*: And if he may not do it for *himself*, surely he ought not to do it for his *Neighbour*. Nor will the Examples of the Godly in Scripture, justify this, it being their Sin.

3. *NOR may we* Resist lawful Authority, *to defend Our, or our Neighbour's Life.* We observed under the *Fifth* Command, That God hath ordained *Civil Government*, and requires due Subjection to it from the *Subject*; nor can Human Society consist without it: Their wholsome Laws are therefore to be *Complied* withal, and not forcibly *Resisted* by us if Criminal: Much less may we Rescue *others* from it by Force; for this were to break the Orders established by God: Whereas the Apostle tells us, Rom. 13. 5. *Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.*

4. *NOR ought we to* with-hold our Testimony *against Capital Offenders, when lawfully called for.* When Men are Arraigned for such Crimes as the Law of God, as well as Men, Adjudgeth them to Death, and we are required to give our Testimony against them, we are not in Pity to their Lives, to *Refuse* it; because hereby we Provoke God, and do what lies in us, to procure a Publick Guilt. We are therefore advised, Prov. 28. 17. *A man that doeth violence to the bloud of any person, shall flee to the pit, let no man stay him.* Deut. 13. 6, ——9.

III. THE *Object* of this Duty is, *Ourselves* and *Others.* The Command is expresst *Universally*, and so it grasps *Mankind* under it, according to the forecited Limitation, *i. e.* so far as it may be done *Lawfully.* The Object of the Love required in the *second* Table, is our *Neighbour*, Matth. 22. 39. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.* i. e. *Mankind.* And this doth not exclude, but include, a Man's *Self*; for regular *Self-Love*, is the Rule of our *Loving our Neighbour*, which presumes it. But that we mistake not in this Affair, let us more particularly Consider, that all *Killing* is not here prohibited. Now there are Cases in which it is *Lawful*, nay a *Duty* to put Men to Death, and be Accessory to it; and it would be a *Sin* not to do it.

MORE particularly,

1. *IT is warrantable in a just* Self-Defence. Casuists handle this Case warily, and with good Reason; for out of doubt it ought not to be, but upon *unavoidable Necessity*; for the Man is in this Case, *Plaintiff, Witness, Judge*, and *Executioner*, which is too much, except there be no avoidance: But when a Man is set upon by such as offer forcibly to take his Life from him, and hath no other way to save his own, but by taking the Life of the Aggressor; the Law of *Self-Preservation* obligeth him to do it: And when we see our Neighbour set upon by *Murderers*, who offer to take away his Life, and there is no other way to Rescue him; the Law of *Loving our Neighbour as our selves*, warrants it. Only we must take heed that it be not in *Revenge*, or standing meerly upon a Spirit of *Honour*, or barely to Rescue our *Goods*, taken away by a *Robber*; but for the Preservation of *Life it self*, when threatned: Tho' some add, Where a *Rape* is offered, and the *Chastity* can be no other ways defended.

If

If therefore we can Defend ourselves by *Flight*; or in our Defence put the Aggressor to *Flight*, or *disable* him from accomplishing of his Purpose upon us, it is not lawful for us to *Kill* him, because it belongs to the Order of *Civil Magistracy* to Avenge Injuries done on us, which we are not to take out of their hands, but upon *Extream Necessity*; but then the Light of Nature teacheth it, and it belongs to the Duty of *Preservation* of the Life, directed to in the *Precept*: And to this belongs that of the Wise Man, Prov. 24. 11, 12. *If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain: If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not: doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?*

2. *THIS Command doth no way Infringe the* Power *of the* Civil Magistrate, *to Punish Capital Crimes with* Death. That *Civil Magistracy* is an Order, ordained by God; and that they have a *Sword* put into their hands, which they are to use as the *Ministers of God*, was taken Notice of under the *former* Command; and is asserted by the Apostle, *Rom.* 13 *begin.* Where therefore God Commands him to put any to Death; he by his Office owes Obedience to that Command: He doth not Sin by *Killing*, but would Sin if he did *not* Kill. Now that God hath by His Precept ordained *Capital Punishments* for *Capital Crimes*, is evident in the Holy Scriptures: And that there are such Capital *Crimes*, which call for such *Punishments*, Experience it self tells us; and without it, the Publick Tranquillity could not be preserved. And it is in vain pretended by some, That these Laws belonged to the *Jewish Polity*, and are not of Force to *Christians*, and in the New-Testament Times: Doubtless it was a *Moral* Law, Gen. 9. 6. *Whoso sheddeth man's bloud, by man shall his bloud be shed.* And this did not give every Man leave to do it of his *own* head, but made it a Duty of the *Civil Magistrate*, to take Care about it: And that it abides in Force in the Gospel Times, is evident from that of our Saviour, Matth. 26. 52. *For all they that take the sword, shall perish of the sword.* Which was not a Prediction of what should *always* be, for then it had not been True; but a Reference to *this Law*, to the Penalty whereof, all *Murderers* were liable: And there are notorious Crimes, which if not Punished with *Death*, by lawful Authority, will bring Guilt upon a Land, and expose it to the awful Judgments of God. It is therefore given as one part of the Character of a Wise King, by *Solomon*, Prov. 20. 26. *A wise King scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them.* And in vain do our Adversaries plead that these things were warrantable *before* Christ, but that the *Gospel* requires another Spirit; for Christ did not come to destroy the *Order* which God sat up among Mankind, or lay open the World to all Mischiefs, without any Guard against them; which could not be, unless *Capital Laws* be in force, and a Power of *Executing* them, be in some *Order* of Men. When therefore the Gospel approves of *Civil Rulers*, and puts the *Sword* into their hand, certainly, it doth not together with that, make it a *Sin*, for them to apply it as the Case requires.

3. *THIS Precept doth not interdict Christians the Liberty of* making War, *upon their Oppressive Neighbours.* It is true, *War* is an awful thing in it self, and the *Miseries* attending it are such, as would make Men of Understanding to avoid *Rashness* in Undertaking of it: Hence that, Prov. 20. 18.—*With good advice make war.* It is certain, That in War *Bloodshed* cannot be avoided; but it is as sure, That God approved and appointed His People to make War, under the Law of *Moses*, and by the *Moral* Law; and that this was Abolished by the Law of *Christ*, *Socinians* in vain attempt to prove. Christ came not to *Abolish* the *Moral* Law, or the Law of *Nature*; nor did he make *void* Civil *Polity*, or Civil *Magistracy*, but *confirmed* it, and appointed that *Cæsar* should have his Due. The Apostacy hath Rowled the World into Confusion, and Men are become *Wolves* to one another: Now *Magistrates* are by their Office, to *Defend* the Righteous, and *Suppress* the Unrighteous; and that not only by the Administration of Just Laws over their *Subjects*, but by Securing their Dominions from the Injurious Oppressions of their Neighbours: And that by a Just Defence of them from the Invasion of Enemies; and Avenging the Injuries that are offered them, by such as are in Hostility against them: They are therefore called *shields of the Earth*, Psal. 47. *ult.* and *Avengers*, Rom. 13. 4 But I am not here to lay forth all the Causes which refer to the *Lawful* making of War; but only shew, that the thing it self doth not *Interfere* with this Command: We therefore not only Read in the *Old* Testament, of the *Wars of the Lord*, so called, because taken up by His Approbation and Appointment, and for His Cause; but this also is confirmed in the *New* Testament: When the Soldiers came to *John* Baptist, to enquire their Duty, he doth not *Censure* their Calling, (which he would if it was Unlawful,) but only *Regulates* it, *Luke* 3. 14. And what else can we gather from these Texts, 1 *Tim.* 2. 3, 4. *Rom.* 13. 6. Luke 22. 36. *He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.* Nor is that Precept Prophetical, Rev. 18. 6. *Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double, according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double*: to be interpreted meerly *Spiritually*, but also *Temporally*; and refers to the Ruin of *Antichrist*. In a word, If it be no Breach of this Precept, to Punish Offenders with *Death*, if the Cause be *Capital*, it cannot be so to make *War* upon the open *Enemies* of a People, who seek their Hurt and Ruin.

WE may now proceed to lay forth this Duty in the several *Parts* of it, or *Particulars* contained in it; and that both in respect of *Our selves* and *Others*.

I. IN respect of *Our selves*. There is a *Self-Love* which is *condemned* in the Word of God, which

which is to be avoided; but there is a *Self-Love* which is *Commanded*, and not to exerciſe it contrary to Nature: Hence that, Eph. 5. 29. *For no man ever yet hated his own fleſh; but nouriſheth and cheriſheth it.* Here then, It is every Man's Duty to love his own Life, to deſire the Continuance of it, and to take Pleaſure in it; and accordingly to Uſe the proper Means for the Preſervation of it: For the Reaſon of this Conſideration is uſed by the Spirit of God, as a Motive to excite Men to Duty, Pſal. 34. 12. *What man is he that deſireth life, and loveth many days, that he may ſee good?* And God hath put into Human Nature a Principle which craves Life, and avoids Death, and is afraid of the Approaches of it: For which reaſon it is called the *King of Terrors*; and therefore we are aſſured, that nothing in this World can ſtand in Compariſon with it, but can be parted with for the ſake of it; this *Satan* knew and urged, Job 2. 4. *And Satan anſwered the Lord, and ſaid, Skin for ſkin, ye all that a man hath, will he give for his life.* And proportionable to this *Love*, if it be real, will be the *Endeavour*; for as the Affections are moved, ſo will the whole Man be managed.

NOW the Duties are many and diverſe, according to the next Subject which is concerned, viz. *Soul* and *Body*. Hence,

[1.] IT is every Man's Duty to uſe all Endeavours, to Preſerve the Life of his own *Soul*. As there is a *Bodily*, ſo there is a *Spiritual* Death, which infers a contrary Life, whereof this Death is a Privation. Now as a *Natural* Death conſiſts in the ſeparation of the Body and Soul, ſo the *Spiritual* in the ſeparation of the Soul from the Favour of God; hence that, Pſal. 30. 5. *In his favour is life.* Now, this Life is the Man's firſt and moſt weighty Concern to ſeek the ſecuring and advancing of; as will be evident from the Preferrableneſs of it before the other, Matth. 16. 26. *For what is a man profited, if he ſhall gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul? or what ſhall a man give in exchange for his ſoul?* A Man may loſe his Bodily Life and be *Happy*, but if the Life of his Soul be loſt, he is *Undone* for ever, Ver. 27. *For the Son of man ſhall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he ſhall reward every man according to his works.*

NOW there are the *Means* appointed by God, and declared in the Goſpel, which it is every Man's indiſpenſible Duty to Uſe, in order to the obtaining the Salvation of his Soul; which he cannot Neglect, without incurring the Guilt of *Self-Murder*. And here,

(1.) *HE muſt ſeek earneſtly the* Recovery *of the Life of his Soul.* It is the woful Infelicity of fallen Man, that he is born under the Efficacy of Spiritual Death; hence that, Eph. 2 1. *——Who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.* And there is a *double* Efficacy which this hath upon him, it hath left him without any *Life of Grace*, having ſtript him of the Image of God, wherein this Life conſiſted; and hath laid him under a *Curſe of Death*, which holds him faſt bound to ſuffer the Wrath of God in his Soul, Ezek. 18. 4. *The Soul that ſinneth, it ſhall die.* Now this is not a Condition to be Contented in, but the diſcoveries of it in the Word of God, are to raiſe him to ſee his Woful Miſery by reaſon of this; and put him upon Enquiry, Whether there be not a Way, by which he may be Delivered from it: This Senſe put the very Jaylor upon ſuch an Enquiry, Acts 16. 30. *What muſt I do to be ſaved?*

(2.) *HE ought therefore to Uſe the* Means, *for obtaining of this Delivery.* God only can by his mighty Power Reſcue him; but He hath ſhewn us the Way in which we are to ſeek it, and made it our Duty to apply ourſelves thereto, in order to our compaſſing of it; and the neglect of theſe Means will make the Sinner inexcuſable, and bring the Blood of his Soul upon his own head. Theſe Means are then to be carefully Attended on, and God is to be ſought to for His Bleſſing in the Uſe of them.

AND there are *Two* things which the Sinner is peculiarly to ſeek in the Uſe of Means:

1. HE *muſt ſeek* Reconciliation *to God, thro' Chriſt.* God's Anger is the Soul's Ruin; till that be removed, it is under the Power of Death, by reaſon of the Condemnation which is paſt upon it. There is a Reconciliation made by Chriſt, and is offered to Sinners by the Goſpel, and they are urged to embrace it, 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20. *To wit, That God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as tho' God did beſeech you by us: we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead be ye reconciled to God.* And the way to obtain it, is by Faith in Chriſt, by which we are Entituled to Pardon, Peace and Glory, Rom. 5. 1. *Therefore being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God, thro' our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* And this Faith is God's Gift, which muſt be ſought of Him thro' Chriſt, Eph. 2.8. *For by grace are ye ſaved, thro' faith; and that not of your ſelves: it is the gift of God.*

2. HE *muſt alſo ſeek for the* Renovation *of the Image of God upon him, that ſo he may Live again to the Glory of God.* A Power to Serve God in Newneſs of Life, belongs to the Life of the Soul; by it a Sinner paſſes from Death to Life; and without it, he can no more do *Spiritual* Actions, than a dead Man can do thoſe that are *Vital*: This alſo muſt come from God, and He will be ſought to do it; Ezek. 36. 37. *Thus ſaith the Lord God, I will yet for this be enquired of by the houſe of Iſrael, to do it for them.* And the Promiſe is made to Seekers, Matth. 7. 7. *Ask, and it ſhall be given you: ſeek, and ye ſhall find: knock, and it ſhall be opened unto you.* When God laid that Command on them, Ezek. 18. 31. *Caſt away from you all your tranſgreſſions, whereby ye have tranſgreſſed, and make you a new heart, and a new ſpirit, for why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael:* It doth not ſuppoſe that they can do it of themſelves; but that they ſhould reſtleſly, in a ſenſe of the Want of it, wait upon God in all the Means for it, as thoſe that cannot be ſatisfied without it.

(3.) *HE*

(3.) *HE ought to use utmost* Endeavours *for the Maintaining, Preserving and Strengthning of this Life in him, when obtained.* He is not to think that his Business is done, when he hopes that he is by Grace passed from this woful Death, to Spiritual Life; the Life of the *Soul* needs Maintenance, as well as that of the *Body*; and ought therefore to be as Industriously endeavoured.

AND here there are these *Two* Duties incumbent,

1. *TO use all proper* Helps, *for the Maintenance and Growth of this Life in us.* God hath appointed and provided such Helps, and affords them to us, and unless we diligently Improve them, our Souls will Languish; hence that Direction, 1 Pet. 2. 2. *As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.* God hath made it our Duty, to Endeavour to grow in Grace; 2 Pet. 3. 18. *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* And how is that done, but by applying ourselves to that which is the true *Manna*, that comes from Heaven? The Word, the Ordinances of God's House, Prayer, Meditation, Sacraments, Converse with the Children of God, are Ordained for this End; and if neglected, or slightily attended, our Life will flag, our Grace will languish.

2. *TO avoid all those things, which have a real tendency to* wound & weaken *our Spiritual Life*: There are the things that will of their own Nature do so; and we are in no little Danger of, if we do not use the more Care in avoiding of them: And tho' God will not suffer this Life to be lost in His *Regenerated*, yet they will bring it very Low. Such is the Indulgence of the remaining Lusts in us, by over-gratifying our Sensitive part; against which we are for that reason warned, 1 Pet. 2. 11. *Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.* Such is our over-much Familiarity and Intimacy with vain Persons, which will tend to deaden our Grace, and enliven Concupiscence in us; Prov. 13. 20. *He that walketh with wise men, shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.* Such is our over deep engaging of our selves in the Affairs and Incumbrances of this Life, which tends to stifle the fruits of Grace that are in us; Matth. 13. 22. *He also that received seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word: and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.* And there are a great many more things of like Nature; which, if we would maintain the Life of our Souls in Health and Vigour, we ought very watchfully to avoid, else we shall be Guilty.

USE. THIS may then serve to discover to us, *the great Folly and Misery of the most of those that Live under the Gospel.* Nor is it a thing only to be feared, but too manifestly to be observed, that the bigger Number by far, of those that would be thought Christians, are little or nothing Sollicitous for their *Souls* Life and Health; but leave all their Spiritual Concerns at peradventures, and say they will trust God with them; whilst all their Plots and Pursuits are for the *Body* & outward Man, as if that were to bound all their Care and Endeavour. How few believe that their Souls are Dead & Undone; or seriously seek their Recovery; but think all is well? How much the things of this Life and Time thrust out and put by the Spiritual Religious Duties, whereby they may maintain the Life of their Souls by Communion with God! Certainly these despise and wrong their own Souls; and how Wise soever they think themselves for the present, the Time will come when they shall Repent of their Folly, and Bemoan it bitterly, and Wish they had done as much for their Immortal Souls, as ever they did for their Perishing Bodies.

[JULY 25. 1704.]

SERMON *CXCI.*

[2] IT is every ones Duty, to Use lawful Means for the Preservation of the Life of his *Body*. Tho' this be the least part of the Man's Care, yet it is not to be neglected; the *Body* being the Soul's *Organ*, to Glorify God withal, and Redeemed by Christ, and an essential Constituent part of Human Nature, and capable of being made a Temple for the Holy Spirit to dwell in.

AND here more particularly,

1. *IT is our Duty to* Defend ourselves *against all Unjust Violence that may be offered us.* Doubtless *Self-Preservation* is a Principle rooted in Nature, and warranted by this Precept. He that suffers his Life to be taken from him, by one that hath no warrant from God for it, when he might Preserve it, either by standing on his Guard, or saving himself by Retirement, will incur the Guilt of *Self-Murder*; since God hath Commanded him to seek the Continuance of his Life; and Nature it self teacheth every Creature to *Defend* it self when Assaulted: Why else did Christ give that Precept to his Disciples? Luk. 22. 36. *He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.*

2. *TO avoid all those things, by which his Life will be unnecessarily* Exposed. If God calls him to it, he must Expose himself, and commit it to Him; but needlesly to do it, when he hath no Call, but meerly for Ostentation, or to gratify some Lust, is a Breach of this Precept; it is a daring of Providence, and can never be an Act of Faith in God, but is sinful Presumption. When the Devil Tempted Christ to throw Himself down, &c. We find how our Saviour answered him, *Matth.* 4. 6, 7. And if Men should lose their Lives in such undertakings, their Blood will be on their own Heads.

3. *TO*

3. *TO use all the proper Means which God hath appointed for the* Support *of our Life.* Our Bodily Life depends on such *Media*, as are made fit for the Sustentation of it, without which it must needs go to Decay; these are called a *Stay*, and a *Staff*, Isa. 3. 1. And to be deprived of them, is reckoned as one of the Judgments of God. We ought therefore to seek a Supply of these, and to make use of the same for this End, which is the Ordinary way in which God Preserves us: We ought therefore if God afford it us, to allow our selves Food convenient for the comfortable Relief of our Bodies; and to deny it to our selves, either thro' Parsimony, or on Religious Pretexts which are Superstitious, is a violation of our Duty: Hence that, Eccl. 5. 19. *Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoyce in his labour; this is the gift of God.*

4. *TO make use of things which are for the* Preservation *of the Health of the Body, and* Recovering *it when impaired.* Sickness is a degree of Death, and we are many ways exposed to it; and are therefore concerned to look after our Health, and to Guard against all that hath a natural tendency to impair it.

AND here these things are to be attended;

1. WE *are to Arm our selves against the Injuries of the Seasons with suitable Apparel.* In this respect the Consideration of *Apparel*, belongs to the *Sixth* Command; and *Food* and *Raiment* are reckoned the necessary Supports of Life, 1 *Tim.*6.8. And this is the first thing to be regarded in our Choice of Apparel, *viz.* The *Preservation of our Health*, which would on defect of it be exposed.

2. WE *ought to use Moderation in Meats & Drinks.* This also, as it hath a regard to the Preservation of Life, is to be referred to in this Precept, *Excess* in this being very pernicious to the Health, and a Cause of such Diseases as destroy the Comfort of Life, and tend to shorten it, by bringing on the Body such Maladies, as tend to precipitate our Dissolution: As God hath given us these things for our Use, so He hath forbidden us all Excess in them; and that not only because we shall hurt our Souls, but also because we shall damnify our Bodily Life thereby: Hence that, Eccl. 10. 17. *Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is son of the nobles; and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness.*

3. WE *should also be Moderate in our Bodily Labour.* God hath made it Man's Duty to be Diligent in his Calling, but He hath not bidden him to Surfeit his Body, and so hasten his own Death by excessive Labour, or tiring out of his Spirits, by uninterrupted pursuit of it. Our Labour is to be proportioned to our Strength and the Vivacity of our Spirits, which cannot hold out without Respite: And it would be a Vanity for a Man to Kill himself in his Endeavours to provide for the Continuance of his Life: It is therefore a Duty sometimes to Divert and Recruit our tired Bodies and Spirits, with innocent and convenient Recreations, Psal 104. 23. *Man goeth forth to his work, and to his labour until the evening.*

4. WE *ought to make use of Remedies for the Preventing or Healing of Bodily Maladies.* God hath in His Providence provided us, not only with *Food*, but also with *Physick*; and there are things proper for the Ordinary Maladies which we are liable to; and tho' the Success depends on God's Blessing, yet we are not to Tempt Him by Omitting the Means, which He gives us Opportunity of Using: Our Saviour hath that Remark, Matth 9. 12. *They that be whole need not a physician, but they that be sick.*

5. WE *ought to maintain a Quiet & Cheerful Temper of Mind, and avoid all those uneasy Frames which leaven our Spirits.* We should not nourish Melancholick and Discontented Frames in our Minds; and that not only because we Dishonour God hereby, but also because it tends to the shortning of our Lives, and renders them for the present very uneasy: Hence we have that Observation of the Wise Man, Prov. 17. 22. *A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.*

II. IN respect of *Others*, or our *Neighbours*, whose Lives also we are enjoyned to seek the Preservation of. And there are *special* Duties here required of us, if we would not be defective in our Duty on this Account. But because Love to *our selves*, is the Rule of our Love to our *Neighbour*, the less needs here to be said, inasmuch as whatsoever we owe to the Preservation of our *own* Lives, the same we owe to *others*, in its measure and degree.

Briefly then,

[1.] IN *General.* This Command requires the Practice of these *Two Vertues* towards others in our Conversation, *viz.*

1. *MILDNESS or Meekness of Spirit*; which mainly consists in the Moderation of our Passion of Anger and Malice against them. It is an Observation of our Saviour, in His giving the true Sense of the Law, Matth 5. 21, 22. *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shall not kill: and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment——.* Not as if all Anger were here forbidden, for this is set in it's due bounds by the Apostle, Eph. 4. 26. *Be ye angry and sin not: neither let the sun go down upon your wrath.* Anger is an Affection which was put into Man, and hath its Use, for God made nothing in vain, but for some Service; not meerly to try us, but to be improved for our Benefit: By it we are to resent and repel Injuries offered us, which would otherwise hurt us. We live among Men who are filled with Sinful Natures, and too apt to vent them in abusive Carriages to us: Nevertheless our Saviour would have us to Moderate this Affection, and keep it within bounds, and if it exceeds them, it brings us within the Verge of this Precept; and we are taught by it, that we should be armed with a Spirit of Meekness, & be ready to bear & forbear;

and instead of railing and threatning Language, to be gentle, and follow that Precept laid down in Rom. 12. 21. *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.* And therefore in private Injuries done us, Christ hath prescribed to us that excellent Rule, Matth. 5. 44. *Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, & persecute you.*

2. *BENIGNITY*; or a readiness to Communicate to the Supply of his Wants. Charity indeed belongs to every Command of the Second Table, but it hath it's several manner of Operation in each of them; and that which refers to *this*, is a tender regard to the Life of our Neighbour, which moves us to *Compassionate* him in his Wants, and be willing to Supply them, according to his Necessity and our Ability: That is urged, 1 Tim. 6. 18. *That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.* And, Eccl. 11. 2. *Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.* This is not so to be understood as if we were bound to Nourish Idle Persons in their Idleness, or encourage Vagrant Persons, and sturdy Beggars in their Scandalous way of Living, or supply the Lusts of Men in Drunkenness; but that when the Providence of God hath brought any into Distress, we ought to Pity their Case, and open our Bowels to them for their necessary Succour, and not suffer them to perish; *Job* 29. 13.

[2.] MORE *Particularly*, we are to exercise these Vertues in our Carriage to them, both in regard of their *Souls* and *Bodies*.

(1.) *IN regard of their* Souls; the Life whereof should be very precious to us.

AND here more especially,

1. *WE should bear them upon our Hearts in our solemn Addresses to God in Prayer.* Some of our Neighbours are dead in Trespasses and Sins, and God only can restore them to Life; we should therefore earnestly Pray for their Conversion, that God would shew them Mercy, and apply to them His Grace, by which they may pass from Death to Life: Others are in a State of Grace, renewed in the Image of their Mind, but they need Preservation and Growth, which also must come from God; and by our frequency and importunity in this regard, we testify our regard for their Souls, that they may not Perish, but obtain Eternal Life, 1 Tim. 2. 1. *I exhort therefore that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men.*

2. *BY applying Counsels & Reproofs to them as there is occasion.* When we see Sinners going in the way of Destruction, and undoing their own Souls, we must step in, and do what we can to stop them in their Career, and save them from going to the Pit; and not to do so is a note of Hatred, *Lev.* 19. 17. And if we see any, of whom we have better Hopes, wounding themselves by their Follies, and exposing their Souls to Harm, we ought to apply to them our Counsels and Admonitions, and do all we can to recover them: Gal. 6. 1. *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thy self, lest thou also be tempted.*

3. *BY setting them a Good Example.* Without this we shall but spoil our Instructions and Reproofs. It is by Exemplary Godliness that we offer the most potent Convictions to perswade them of the Evil of their ways, and confirm to them the Truth of our Counsels and Warnings. It is by the brightness of a Godly Conversation, that we shall most likely win Men to embrace and approve of the Ways of God, and rouze up the Graces of God's Children, which are apt to grow indisposed: It is therefore the Direction given by our Saviour, Matth. 5. 16. *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven.*

(2.) *IN regard of their* Bodies, *or outward Man.* And here,

1. *BY Relieving them in their Wants.* And this not to be done by good Words and empty Wishes, but by opening our hand to Succour them; *Jam.* 2. 16. 1 *Joh.* 3. 18. We ought not to see any perish, whilst it is in the power of our hand to preserve them. God hath given us a more liberal Portion of His outward Blessings, that we may have wherewith to Relieve the Distress of the Needy; and if our Superfluity do not extend to their Necessity, yea, our Convenience to their extream Want, we Sin against this Command: Hence that in Job 31. 16, &c. *If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail:* ——

2. *BY Succouring & Helping them in a time of Sickness.* That is Recommended as one Expression of the true Religion, Jam. 1. 27. *To visit the fatherless & widows in their affliction.* And what are we to Visit them for, but to do what is needful and in our power, that they may not Perish in their Affliction, but be Succoured according as their present Condition calls for? And for this we should enquire into their Case, and do what we may for the restoring their Lives, and recovering their Health, *Luk.* 10. 30, &c.

3. *BY Defending & Rescuing their Lives from unjust Assaults.* And doubtless, If it be our Duty to save our Neighbour's *Beast* if he be in Peril, as the Jews were commanded, much more then *himself*, when his Life is in present Peril; hence that, Prov. 24. 11. *If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain.* And this also is extendible to all other eminent hazards in which Men may be in danger of Death, when without present Relief they must Die: As if they fall in the way and break their Bones, or fall into the Water and will else be Drowned, or any other Casualty; it is our Duty by this Command, to afford our hand, (as far as we may with our own Preservation,) to free them from the Mischief which they are over-taken withal. These and such like things appertain to the *Humanity* which is *required* in this Precept. QUEST.

QUESTION LXIX.

WHAT is forbidden in the Sixth Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Sixth Commandment forbiddeth the taking away of our own Life, or the Life of our Neighbour unjustly, or whatsoever tendeth thereunto.

WE observed in the *Affirmative* part of this Command, That the comprehensive *Duty* here required is *Humanity*: The *Sin* therefore forbidden is *Inhumanity*; and it comprehends under it, whatsoever tends to *Hurt* the Life.

WE have before observed the *Subject-matter* about which this Precept is concerned, *viz. Life*; under which we took notice of the Life both of *Soul* and *Body*, as included; as also the *Health* and *Comfort* of the Life are contained in it: We likewise considered the *Subjects* who are comprehended under the Command, *viz. ourselves* and *others*, which need not be here again distinctly treated of.

BUT because the Command is expressed *Negatively*, it will not be amiss to take Notice of the more notorious *Sins* here aimed at; and the rather because there are some Cases referring to this Command, which will require a more distinct Consideration. And what may here be offered, shall be ranked under *Three* Heads. AND here,

First, SELF-MURDER, *or the taking away of our* own *Lives*, is universally forbidden in this Command. And this seems to be designedly aimed at in the *Answer*; for the word *Unjustly* is limited to the Lives of *others*, and is not to be taken *distributively*; intimating, that the taking away of our *own* Lives, is *unlawful* on any account whatsoever.

THIS is a CASE which is handled by Divines, *Whether in no Case, a Person may Kill himself, without incurring the Guilt of Murder?* It is generally resolved in the *Negative* by Christian Casuists, tho' it was too much favoured by the *Donatists*: But we know, that it was mightily defended by the *Stoicks* of old, who counted it to be a folly for a Man to complain of the Miseries of this Life, when he had an easy way to rid himself of them, by putting an End to his Life; and charg'd it for base Pusillanimity for Men to be afraid of doing it. Besides, we find it is a too frequent Temptation, which some are hurried by, when under Discontents; and apt to hope that there is not so great a Sin in it.

HERE therefore it is to be asserted, That it is an horrid Sin for any to Contrive, Plot and Execute upon themselves their own Death; and of all Bodily Murders, it is the most Barbarous and Inhumane: It is Vile to Deliberate on it, for we ought to entertain the first Thoughts of it with greatest abhorrence; it is yet more aggravated Sin to Resolve and Contrive it, to Purpose it, and meditate by what Means to Accomplish it; and to pursue such a Premeditated thing to the Perpetration of it, adds to the Iniquity, and makes it most horrendous. And the Truth of this will appear if we Consider,

1. IT is *directly contrary to the* Principle *of* Self-Preservation *infused by God into Humane Nature*, Natural Inclinations put into the Creature in its Original Constitution, belong to the *Law of Nature*; & such is a love of Life, & a desire to maintain and preserve it: Yea, there is a Principle of *Self-Preservation* in every Order of second Beings, which they exert according to their Capacity; much more in reasonable Creatures, in whom there is a rational Apprehension of the Value of Life, and the Evil in Death; in which regard it is called a *King of Terrors*. It must needs therefore be very Un-natural for any to be Voluntary and Active in procuring their *own* Dissolution.

2. IT is *a rising up against the* Government *of God*. God is the Lord of our Lives, and hath our Times in His hand; Psal. 31. 15. *My times are in thy hands*. We are not our own, nor at our own dispose: we are His Servants, and He hath an absolute Power over us; He may dispose of our Lives at His Pleasure; but we take upon us His Prerogative, if we use our Liberty to do it: When we think God hath made it our Duty to *preserve* our Lives, it must needs be an Act of Rebellion against Him, for us to *cut them off*. We are His Servants, and therefore cannot be our own Lords: **Self-Murder** therefore is an Act of Treason against the Crown of Heaven, and must be Answered for as such.

3. IT is *an high Affront put upon the* Goodness *of God to Man*. Life is a Favour to such Beings as enjoy it, and a token of the Bounty of God who is the Author of it; for we are told, Acts 17. 25. *He giveth to all life & breath*. Hence, the more *Noble* sort of Life the Creature is indulged withal, the more *Royal* is the Divine Benignity appearing in it: Such is the Life of the reasonable Creature; hence that, Job 35. 10, 11. *But none saith, Where is God my maker, who giveth songs in the night? Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven*. And the greater the *Goodness* is, the greater is the *Contempt* that is cast upon it.

4. IT is *no small Injury offered to* Human Society, *of which he is a Member*. Man was made a Sociable Creature, and for the Benefit of the Community; nor doth he Live for *himself*, but for the *Publick*: And tho' by his folly he may be a Publick *Pest*, and forfeit his Life; yet God hath put the Power of Life and Death into the hands of lawful Authority: And he who takes away his *own* Life, becomes thereby Guilty of *Felony*, and the Common-wealth loseth a Member which might have been Serviceable to it: For which reason Civil Governments have appointed an *Ignoble Burial* for all such.

5. IT is *to deprive himself of the* Opportunity *of Glorifying God, and working out of his own Salvation*: And herein he irreparably Injures himself. It is said concerning them that are *gone*, Psal. 115. 17. *The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that are gone down into silence.* And it is certain that there is a Work to be done by Men in this Life, which there will be no Advantage for, or Opportunity to attend, after it is ended; for we are told, 2 Cor. 6. 2. *Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.* And, Eccl. 9. 10. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest.* And this is indeed the great Benefit of Life, which by such an Act is made irreparable. Whilst there is *Life*, there is *Hope*; but *Death* fixeth the Man for ever unchangably. What an unaccountable Madness then must it needs be, for the Man to precipitate himself into this, with his *own* Hands; especially if we consider,

6. IT is *for the Man to expose himself to the hazard of* Eternal Death. It may seem too harsh to condemn all, that in *Distraction* do hasten their own End, to endless Miseries: But surely, for Men in *Discontent*, deliberately to dispatch themselves, is too presumptive of such a thing, the Deed being a notorious Discovery of an unsubdued Heart to God; and to be sure, if such are Unregenerate, and so Dye, they put themselves beyond all hope of Salvation for ever; and do but hasten themselves to the *blackness of Darkness*, to the Pit from whence there is no Redemption: The Sin is *Deadly*, and they prevent themselves of a kindly Repentance.

7. *THE* Pleas *which Men make for this are vain.* There are many used, but they are insignificant. The *principal* are such as these,

1. *THE* Examples *that are on Scripture Record.* But Examples will not justify a direct Transgression of the Precept; nor do we find any Examples in the Word of God, of any that directly and designedly put an End to their own Lives, but such as were *Evil Men*; such was *Saul*, who fell on his own Sword; such was *Zimri*, who Burnt himself in the King's Palace; such was *Judas*, who in Despair Precipitated himself; and these are miserable *Patterns* to follow: As to that of *Sampson*, it was not with a next design to Kill himself, but to take just Revenge on the *Philistines*; besides, he was a *Type of Christ*, and the Act was *Extraordinary*, and had an unimitable Call from God.

2. *THE* Intollerableness *of the Troubles of this Life.* This the *Stoicks* were wont to pretend, *That Nature had opened a way for Man to rid himself of Troubles, when they were* too hard *to bear*; *and that it was his own fault, if he did not make use of it.* But this is contrary to the Word of God, which requires of us, *patient Continuance in well-doing*, as a Testimony of our sincere Obedience to God; which were altogether needless, if this Course were Lawful: And it must needs be an Argument of Pride and Impatience, for Men to desert the Post that God hath set them in, because they dislike it, and think it is too hard for them.

3. *THE avoiding of a* Dishonourable *or* Cruel *Death.* When Men know their Death is designed, and they expect to be put to Tortures, or at least to be made Spectacles to the World, they are apt to think it is better to prevent this, by being their own Executioners: But this also Contradicts the general Rule, *That we ought not to do* Evil, *that* Good *may come of it*: For the Act is forbidden absolutely, and therefore no pretension of *Advantage* by it, can justify it: If we have done things worthy of Death, we must submit our Lives to God's Ministers of Justice, but ought not to be our *own* Judges and Executioners; and if we suffer *Wrong* and *Cruelty*, we must leave it to God.

AND here as to that CASE, *Whether it be Lawful for a Man to Execute himself, if commanded by Authority so to do?* I only say, It is *barbarous Cruelty* for Civil Judges to appoint such a thing, and utterly *Unlawful* for them; and if they should do so, we have no Warrant to *Obey* them in it; it is enough that we yield our selves up to suffer the Penalty imposed; and tho' we may not refuse to Die, yet we must refuse to Kill our selves.

4. *THE putting an End to a* Sinful *Life*: And this Temptation some Christians have been exercised withal; either thinking, that if they Live they shall increase their Guilt, or supposing that, being in Christ, by Dying they shall come to *Sin no more*: But this also is very Prepostrous; for if the Man be *Unconverted*, he thus doth all he can to put himself beyond Repentance; and if *Converted*, he hinders himself of Serving God in his Generation; and instead of Glorifying Him, by maintaining the spiritual Warfare against Sin, he Dismisseth himself (without Warrant) from the Post in which God hath set him, which is highly Dishonourable to his Lord; and leaves a just Note of Infamy upon his own Name, when he is gone.

IN all these regards therefore, it is the Christian's Duty to Resolve with him, Job 14. 14. *All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.*

USE. LET us then *Arm our selves with greatest* Resolution *against all such Temptations.* If at any time they should start up, or be suggested to us, Reject them immediately, and entertain not the least Deliberation about them, but rise up against them with the greatest Detestation. Let us reckon the Temptation *Un-natural* & *Diabolical*, and treat it as so. Remember, God hath given us a Life to Serve Him in, and whatsoever Trials we encounter in it, they are of His Ordination, who hath made it our Duty to Serve Him in *Active* and *Passive* Obedience; And the more Patiently

ently we submit to, and wait upon Him, the more shall we Honour Him in our Lives, and the more Comfortably shall we leave the World, and our latter End shall be Peace.

[SEPTEMBER 19. 1704.]

SERMON CXCII.

Secondly, IN this Command also is forbidden *the taking away of the Life of our* Neighbour *Unjustly*. We observed, That the taking away of our *own* Life, is absolutely and unexceptionably forbidden; but in respect of *others*, it is expressed *Modally*, and under a *Limitation*, viz. It is not to be done *Unjustly*: And this tells us, that there may be a *Just*, and there may be an *Unjust* putting of Men to Death; so that the word *Kill*, by which the Prohibition in this Precept is expressed, is not to be taken in it's utmost Extent; and is therefore better rendred, *Thou shalt not Murder*. In what Case it is warrantable, and sometimes a Duty, to take away the Lives of others, was considered under the *former* Question, *viz.* Either for *Private Persons*, in Case of necessary Self-Defence; or for *Civil Rulers*, both in their punishing of Capital Crimes, and in the making and pursuing of a just War.

WE may now take a brief Account of the Respects wherein this may be done *Unjustly*, and that both in Respect of *private Persons*, and of the *Civil Power*.

I. IN respect of *private Persons*: These may Act Unjustly in taking away their Neighbour's Life, more specially in *three* Respects,

[1.] IN respect of *Self-Defence*. We observed the *Limitation* of this under the *former*; whence we may gather, that this Command is broken, when Men are not put on it by *unavoidable Necessity*, or neglect such *Means* as they might use to prevent it; either by running themselves purposely into the Danger, whereof they had a fair warning, and might have escaped it; or pursuing the Advantage to the Death of the Aggressor, when he might have saved himself on easier Terms, either by a safe *Retreat*, or by putting his Adversary to *Flight*, or *Disabling* him from accomplishing his Attempt; and the Reason is, because nothing but *Necessity*, will warrant a *Private* Slaughter, in which the Man Acts the part of Civil Authority, in his own Case: And doubtless there was Moral Equity in that Judicial Law, Exod. 22. 2, 3. *If a thief be found breaking up, and be be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him. If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him: for he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.*

[2.] IN respect of *private Revenge*. And here comes in the Case of *private Duels*; which is a thing too much practis'd in the Christian World, and defended as a thing *Noble* and *Heroical*, by the *Hectors* of the World. As to *publick Duels*, when War is Commenced by two Nations, and the Issue is put upon the *Combat* between two Champions, for preventing a more plentiful Effusion of Blood, and agreed upon between the adverse Parties, such as that between *David* and *Goliah*; I do not here undertake a Dispute: Tho' weighty Casuists defend the *Negative*; and tell us, That *David*'s Example is not ordinarily *Presidential*; and that if he had not been *Extraordinarily* called by God, had Sinned; telling us, that there is no Warrant from the Word of God, to submit the Liberty of Slavery of a People to the Ordeall of a single Person's Combating. But the thing under consideration is, *Whether it be lawful for* private *Persons to issue their* personal *Quarrels by the Sword; and accordingly to challenge each other into the Field; and that either without, or with the Permission of the Civil Magistrate?* And it is plumply Answered by all Judicious Casuists, That it is a thing utterly *Unlawful*, in an Established Government; nor can all the Pleas used in it's defence, Justify it: And the Light of Nature bears witness against it; and therefore the most of Christianized Governments, have made severe Edicts against it. And there are mainly these *Three* Reasons why it cannot be Lawful,

1. *ALL private Revenge is forbidden in the Word of God.* The very Heathen Moralists have declaimed against it in General, tho' in some Cases they have allowed it: But the Word of God universally prohibits it, and requires the contrary; particularly and fully, Rom. 12. 19, 20, 21. *Dearly beloved, avenge not your selves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.* And it is our Saviour's Precept, Matth. 5. 44. *Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.*

2. *IT is a manifest Affront put upon Civil Authority.* It subverts the Order of Government, which God hath set up in the World; who hath appointed the *Magistrate* to be His *Minister*, to do every Man Right; who is therefore to be applied to in all matters of Wrong done us by our Neighbour: Rom. 13. 4. *For he is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.* The very Town-Clerk of *Ephesus* could give such Advice to *Demetrius* and his Tumultuary Accomplices, Acts 19. 38. *If Demetrius, and the crafts-men which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies; let them implead one another.* Nor is it enough to say, I cannot get my Right at the hand of the *Magistrate*, either for want of Legal Proof, or by reason of *Prosopolepsie*. For in such Cases we are bound

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as Christians, to leave it to God, who is the Avenger of all such, and to whom Recompense belongs; and hath appointed an Appeal to him by such, *Psal.* 94. 1, 2. 10. 14.

3. *IT is no proper way to vindicate our own Innocency, and convince our Adversary of his Injuriousness.* God hath not made this to be an infallible Rule of determining the Question, on whose side the Equity of the Cause is to be determined, in this World: *Might* may prevail over *Right*; the *Innocent* may be crushed, and the *Wrong-doer* be too hard for him: The Conquest Sword is not the Arbiter of the Innocency of the one, and Guilt of the other: Nor hath God put His Providence under our Command; and for us to make it the Umpire of Right and Wrong, is daring Arrogance: We are therefore told in, Eccl. 9. 2. & 8. 14. *There is a vanity which is done upon the earth, that there be just men unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked: again, there be wicked men to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous: I said, that this also is vanity.*

[3.] IN respect of the *Execution of the Command of Superiours.* There is a lawful Authority who are to be Obeyed in their lawful Commands; but every Subject hath a Judgment of Conscience, which is immediately subject to God; and it ought not to break any of His Commands, under pretence of Obedience unto Men. It is true, There are under-Officers who are to Execute the Sentence of the Judges upon Capital Offenders; nor are they bound always to examine into the Justice of the Sentence, or are capable of Judging it critically, it being above them: Nevertheless, If they are in Conscience convinced, that the Sentence is *Unjust*, they ought to wave it, if they would not bring Guilt on themselves. Nor was I ever convinced of the force of the Distinction which some have found out, viz. *That a Man may do a thing upon a* publick *Conscience, when his* private *Conscience tells him, that it is Sin.* I am sure, that when *Saul* past an *Unjust* Sentence on the *Priests*, and commanded his *Foot-men* to Execute it, they with one Consent refused it; nor did God fault them for their so doing, 1 *Sam.* 22. 17. But besides this, There are sometimes the *private* Commands of Men in Authority, given to their Subjects, for the taking away of the Lives of such whom they would have cut off, to gratify their own Wills; nor will the Sin terminate in him who doth Unjustly Command such an Act. Doubtless as *David* was Guilty of the Murder of *Uriah*, so was *Joab* too; nor could his Lord's Injunction render him *Innocent*, any more than *Doeg*'s Murder of the *Priests* upon *Saul*'s Command, for which he is awfully Condemned, *Psal.* 52. Nor did *Jonathan* Sin against his Father's Authority, who bad him to Kill *David*, when he used all endeavours to Preserve him; but did indeed prove himself to be a most Kind Son, and a faithful Subject: And the reason of this is, because God is to be Obeyed; and where we cannot Execute the Commands of Men, without Transgressing a plain Precept of God, it is enough that we patiently Suffer, if they vent their Rage against us for it: And certainly, when such Commands are given, it's enough and a Duty to reply upon them, as the Apostles did to the Jewish Counsel, Acts 4. 19 *Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.*

II. IN respect of *Publick Persons.* And here we observed, that the Lives of Men may Justly be taken away by such in *Two* respects, *viz.* In the *Administration of Civil Justice*, and in the *Prosecution of War.* Nevertheless, In both of these regards, there may be a Violation of this Command, and an *Unjust* taking away of Life, or at least *Injustice* done in the Manner and Circumstances of the thing: And these may be considered severally.

[1.] IN the *Administration of Civil Justice.* And this may be done;

1. IN the *Execution of Unjust Laws.* That such Laws have *de facto* been Enacted, is certain: Hence that, Psal. 94. 20. *Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?* For Men then who sit on seats of Judgment, to Arraign, Try and Condemn any to Dye on such Laws, upon pretence that they are Laws, and yet are in their Consciences perswaded that the Law on which they proceed, is *Unjust*; they do *knowingly* shed Innocent Blood, which God hath forbidden them, nor can any Human Authority in the World Excuse them. *God* is not to be *Disobeyed*, under a pretext of *Obeying Men.*

2. IN the *undue Neglect of the Execution of Just Laws.* The doing of Justice on Capital Offenders, is a way to prevent the Licentiousness of bold Transgressors, which is by Connivance Encouraged. Besides, It is certain, that where such Sins are not duely born witness against, Guilt is thereby brought on a Land, which opens a Door to wasting Judgments, by which many fall, whose Blood will be required at the hands of these.

3. *WHEN Life is taken away on the Deficiency of Just Proofs.* God would have Judges tender of Life, and therefore requires that the thing be certain, and that there be Legal Proof brought to confirm it. It is not sufficient to be Morally perswaded of the thing: And tho' a Man be really Guilty before God, yet if he be not so at Man's Tribunal, though there be strong Presumptions, he ought not to Die by the hand of Civil Justice: Deut. 13. 14. *Then shalt thou enquire and make search, and ask diligently.* --- Innocent Blood may else be shed, which will cry to God for Vengeance.

4. *WHEN it is done on the Revival of an Obsolete Law, in a particular Case.* There are some Capital Cases made so by *Circumstances*, for which a Law is made, which altho' it is not Repealed, yet it hath in Course been Neglected and commonly Transgressed without any Prosecution of the Transgressors; but when some particular Person is Prosecuted to Death on the same Law, there being no other Advantage against him, and his Life is taken away on that Account, it must needs be *Partiality*,

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and argue a personal Prejudice, which is an unjust respect of Persons, and the Law it self is practically Antiquated; and yet there have been too many such Instances among Men.

5. *WHEN it is done for the gratification of a private Revenge.* It is the Duty of Civil Judges, entirely to aim at the Glory of God, and the Publick Good, in all their Administrations; and do nothing to gratify their own Lusts: And tho' Justice be done on such as legally deserve to Die; yet if it be pursued with a *revengeful* Spirit, to please their own Malice, it is *Murder* before God, who Judgeth of the Heart: Much more, if they would not otherwise have done it, in real Love to *Justice*: And tho' Men may Commend them for their *Justice*, yet God will call them to an Account for their Blood-Thirsty Revenge, which he hath forbidden, as before observed.

6. *WHEN it is Executed after a Cruel manner.* True, there are more severe Executions allowed to be done upon the more Enormous Offenders, to put a Terror upon others: But yet there is a Cruelty which may be, and too often hath been used towards Men, and many Tortures devised to put Men to an intollerable and lingring Death, which are directly contrary to *Humanity*, and must come under the Comprehension of this Command.

[2.] IN the *Prosecution of War.* We have before observed, that this Precept doth not deny the lawfulness of a War upon just Occasions; yea, the necessity of it, by reason of the Perverseness of Mankind since the Fall: But this also may become *Murder* on a *double* account;

1. *WHEN the War it self is Unjust.* And this can hardly be otherwise, at least on one part; and is so too frequently on both. We read of some, *that delight in War*, Psal 68. 30. These will be always making Broils, and incensing one another to *Contentions*, instead of avoiding the Occasions, and endeavouring to remove them, with a Condescending Spirit. *Pride*, *Ambition* after *Sovereignty*, *Covetousness* and *Envy*, do often stir up the Hearts of Men, to gratify them; by which they set Nations in a Flame, and Sacrifice a multitude of Lives to their unruly Lusts; Jam. 4. 1. *From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts, that war in your members?* And doubtless, War is ever Unjust, on the part of those who do either Oppress their Neighbours without Cause, or refuse to comply with fair Terms on which Differences might be composed, or rashly run themselves into it, without due Deliberation, contrary to that Precept, Prov. 24. 6. *By wise counsel thou shalt make war.* And the Guilt of all the Blood that is shed on both sides, will ly at the door of such.

2. *WHEN a Just War is pursued Unjustly.* There are not only the Rules of *making* War, but also of the *prosecution* of it; which, if neglected, will contradict the Laws of *Humanity*. It is an Observation, that in War Laws cease, or are not regarded; but it is certain, that the *Goodness* of War is in it's being of use for the bringing of Mankind into Order, and laying a foundation for more established Peace & Tranquillity: When therefore it is pursued with an implacable Spirit, and acted with brutish and barbarous Anger, laying aside all Pity; and when the Sword is drawn, throwing away the Scabbard, giving no Quarter, but indiscriminately sparing neither Age nor Sex, it must necessarily turn Men into *Tygers*, and worse than so: And tho' it be a righteous Judgment of God upon a sinful World, yet it will not excuse the Actors of it from the Guilt of stupendous Wickedness: It was therefore a Charge laid upon the Israelites by the Prophet in, 2Chron. 28. 9. *Behold, because the Lord God of your fathers was wroth with Judah, he hath delivered them into your hand, and ye have slain them in a rage that reacheth up unto heaven.* *Isa.* 47. 6.

Thirdly, THIS Command also forbids, *whatsoever hath a tendency to the so taking away of Life.* And this is applicable both in respect to *our selves* and *others*. And we *formerly* observed, that in every Precept, there is a regard had to the *Means* or *Occasions*, as well as to the thing *it self*. As we are not to *Murder*, so we are not to do that which hath a rational *tendency* to the accomplishing of it.

HERE then we may be Guilty;

(1.) IN respect to *our selves*.

1. BY *Exposing of our Lives to un-necessary Hazards.* When there is *Danger* in such an Attempt, and it will be a wonder if we escape it, and we have no Call in the Providence of God to run the Risque, but in vain Ostentation and fool-hardiness we undertake it, we dare God to leave us to Perish in it; we are so far Guilty of *Self Murder*: Christ himself had been so, if He had hearkened to the Temptation and thrown himself down from the Pinnacle of the Temple. Hence He saith, Matth. 4. 7. *It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.*

2. *WILFUL or Careless Neglect of Food or Physick.* Man's Life indeed depends upon God; but His *Mediate* Providence is to be served, in which He hath, (under Him,) made our Life dependent on *Second* Causes: To refuse therefore these *Means*, is to resolve to Destroy ourselves; and to neglect them, is a degree towards it, since God hath made it our Duty to take Care for our Life.

3. *EXCESS in Meats or Drinks.* As these are given us for the *Support* of our Lives, which is to be done in a moderate use of them; *Excess* or *Intemperance* is not only an Abuse of the Creature, by which we dishonour God, who is the Donor of these things; but it is destructive to the Health, brings Maladies with it, which tends to hasten Death; and how many are there which shorten their Days by such Means, which might else in the ordinary Course of Providence have been lengthned out to *Old Age*. A *little* Wine may be good for the Health, but *too much* is subversive of it, and the loss of Health is a degree of Death.

4. BY *immoderate Care and Griefs.* These both take away the Comfort of Life, which is the Life of it, and also do waste the Spirits, and so bring some consuming Distempers upon the Body,

Body, which make way for a more hasty Dissolution; the Man is next to Dead whilst he Lives, and in likelihood will Dye the sooner for it; Prov. 17. 22. *A broken spirit drieth the bones.* Besides, These Discontents, have a Temptation in them, and give *Satan* Advantage to fill the Man with Black and Murderous Thoughts, which will precipitate him to desperate Attempts, if not prevented.

(2.) IN respect to *others*, viz.

1. BY *all undue Anger.* Our Saviour makes this to be a plain Breach of the *Sixth* Command, Matth. 5. 21, 22. *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shall not kill: and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment.* There is a *lawful* Anger, it being of the Affections, which God hath put into Humane Nature, by which we are made capable of a due Resentment of Injuries, and bear a due Testimony against that which is *Evil*; but it ought to have it's Limits, else it will render us Criminal: Hence we have that Limitation, Eph. 4. 26. *Be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath.* Yea, *Actual Murder* hath its rise from this Passion, when it is acted beyond it's Bounds; and the apprehension of Wrong puts us upon taking Revenge: And it is certain, that this Passion if not well guarded, will easily grow into a *Paroxism*, and lead us to do mischief: How much more then, when it is grown into *Malice*, and fixeth it self in *Hatred*, which makes us to seek Advantage of Harming our Neighbour: A *Murderous* Heart will make us to employ our Hands, in the executing of it's Bloody Musings.

2. BY *shutting up all Bowels of Compassion from them in their Necessities.* To refuse them Succour in their Distress; but suffering them to Perish, rather than lend them an helping Hand; whether it be by not supplying their Wants, without which they must needs Famish; or not succouring them in their Dangers, (for want whereof they lose their Lives,) when this is in the power of our Hands. He that doth not do his Duty towards preserving of his Neighbour's Life, is therein an accessory to his Death, and is liable to be Arraigned for it before God's Tribunal, being under the Breach of this Precept, Prov. 3.27. *With-hold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.*

3. BY *maintaining Quarrels & Contentions with our Neighbours.* Man is made a Sociable Creature, and Necessity requires our Living together in this World, and holding Communion one with another: And it is by *Love* & *Amity*, that our Lives are rendred Comfortable in this Community. When therefore Neighbours are always in the Fire of Contention, falling out and Quarrelling upon every occasion, it is destructive of the Comfort of Life, and makes it a Burden: And the Scripture frequently expresseth the Misery of living such a Life; and she so expressed her self in, Gen. 27. 46. *I am weary of my life, because of the daughters of Heth.* Besides, *Contentions* are a dangerous preliminary of *Murders*, by exciting of those sinful Desires to be rid of such an Adversary, as have a tendency to put us upon devising their Ruin: Hence that, Gal. 5. 15. *If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.*

4. BY *rejoycing in the Calamity & Destruction which befalls their Neighbours.* This also is *Heart-Murder*, and may convince the Man what he would be at, if he were not under some Restraint: It belongs to *Humanity* to *Compassionate* another in his Misery which befalls him; contrary to this, is the *Joy* and *Triumph* which Men are too apt to express on such an occasion, which flows from a *Cruel* Spirit, which rejoyceth in Evil; and the more *Mischief*, the more matter of *Sport* is afforded to him: Herein Men testify their *Approbation* of such a thing; and that is displeasing to God, and He will some way or other Testify against it: Hence we have that in Prov. 17.5. *He that is glad at calamities, shall not go unpunished.*

5. BY *all manner of Cruelty exercised towards others.* If we fall out with others, and do not design to *Kill* them, yet if we treat them *Barbarously*, it is *Inhumanity*; and many times it becomes a leading Cause of shortning their Lives. And here give me leave peculiarly to testify against the too frequent Practice of some, towards their *Servants*, both in with-holding from them their necessary Supports of Life, cruelly pinching both *Belly* and *Back*; and in the bruitish Severity used towards them in their Chastizements, pretending they are their *Money*, and claiming a despotical Power over them; and that they are to be treated as *Beasts*: But know it, your *Servants* are of the same Order of *Reasonable* Beings with *your selves*, have Souls precious, and have a liberty of Appeal to God from your Cruelty; and I can assure you, that He will Plead their Cause to your sorrow: That made *Job* fearful, Job 31. 13, 14, 15. *If I did despise the cause of my man-servant, or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me: what then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? Did not he that made me in the womb, make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?* Nor ought a Christian to keep such a Servant, as is not to be govern'd by *Humanity*. And I am sure, such *Inhumanity* as some exercise towards their Servants, is a blemish to their Profession; and they do what in them lies to Ruin such Servants both Body & Soul; and I would not have their Account to give another Day, when they shall stand upon even ground before their Judge.

USE. BE we then Exhorted and Excited to the *Practice* of this Duty of *Humanity*, and to *avoid* the contrary. There is no *Second*-Table-Duty more urged in the Word of God, or more severe Threatnings against the contrary. It is a Duty most Necessary; without it

it Human Society must needs be Miserable; and the Neglect of this Duty is most un-natural; for even *Brutes* themselves are tender of their Kind: This Cruelty is an evidence of the want of natural Affection, and a very strong Argument to prove that those who are under the Power of it, are strangers to the Love of God; as the Apostle argues, 1 Joh. 4. 20. *If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?* And if we would preserve our selves from the greatest Murders, we must beware that we do not allow ourselves in those things which have a natural tendency thereunto, lest we provoke God to give us up to the Commission of those Sins, of which if we had before been told, we should with Indignation have said, *Is thy servant a Dog? that he should do this Thing.*

[OCTOBER 17. 1704.]

SERMON CXCIII.

QUESTION LXX.

WHICH is the Seventh Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Seventh Commandment is, *Thou shalt not commit Adultery.*

WE observed, That our Love to our Neighbour is to be considered, *firstly*, In respect of his *Person*, in *two* regards, *viz.* To his *Life*, in which the greatest Duty required is *Humanity*, which hath been examined under the *Sixth* Command: The other is in regard of his *Chastity*, which is comprized under this *Seventh* Command. And next to *Life*, there can nothing be of greater Concern, for Man to be sollicitous about than his *Chastity*; which may be a sufficient Reason for the Order of this Precept. This Command is also laid down *Negatively*; and one Reason why the most are so, is supposed to be, because of the Proctivity in the Hearts of Men, by reason of Original Sin in them, to break over the Hedge of the Precept: Tho' as we have *formerly* observed, the contrary *Affirmative* Duty is comprehended under it. We may begin with the *Affirmative.*

QUESTION LXXI.

WHAT is required in the Seventh Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Seventh Commandment requireth the Preservation of our own, and our Neighbour's Chastity, in Heart, Speech and Behaviour.

THO' the thing directly forbidden in the Precept is *Adultery*, which Word in the *Hebrew*, properly signifys the *Defiling* of another's Bed, or *Uncleanness* between Persons, one whereof at least, is in a *Married State*; yet it is used sometimes for all manner of *Pollutions* by Lasciviousness, and is so to be taken in this Command, with all the *Circumstances*; which is a general Rule concerning the Interpretation of every Precept in the Decalogue. Here then we observe *four* things in the *Answer*, to which the laying open of the *Affirmative* part of this Precept may be referred.

First, THE *Comprehensive Duty* here enjoyned, which is *Chastity*; of which there are diverse Descriptions given by Morallists; all of which will amount to thus much, viz.

CHASTITY is a Moderation, whereby we are to keep our selves in due Bounds, in whatsoever hath any respect to Natural Generation. When Persons do keep themselves pure, from the Lusts of Uncleanness, and maintain in them due Continency. Which will be more distinctly laid open in the sequel.

HERE in general, Let me offer thus much, viz. *That God in Creation saw good to make several Kinds of Beings in their Species, which were to be multiplied in their Individuals, by Propagation.* And herein is one difference between *Angels* and *Men*; the *former* were Created at *once*, in *all* their Individuals; the *latter* were made in *one* Head, which was to be the Root and Fountain, from which the whole Stock were to *derive* in their *successive* Generations. For which purpose He distinguished them in *Sex*, Creating them *Male* & *Female*; putting into them a power and inclination to *Propagate* their Kind with a *Precept* enjoyning them thereto, Gen. 1. 28. *And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply & replenish the earth, and subdue it.* Which Precept He again renewed after the Flood, for the *new* Peopling of the Desolate Earth, Gen. 9. 1. *And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth.*

NOW this *Chastity* belongs to the *Sanctification* of Man's Nature, or that Image of God which He *Concreated* on Him, whereby He was enabled and disposed to govern those Inclinations, according to the Directions of the Law, which was engraven on his Heart: But since the Apostacy, In nothing doth the raging Power of Original Sin more discover it self, than in the ungoverned Exorbitancy of *Fleshly Lusts* in this regard. Herein therefore is this *Chastity* to exert it self, in the rectifying of this Concupiscence, and subjecting of it to the Divine Precept, revealed both by the *Light of Nature*, and by the *Word of God.* It is in vain disputed by some, *Whether* Chastity *be a* Virtue?

because they would have it to refer to the *Body* only, whereas it is certain, that the Original Seat is the *Heart*, as will afterwards be considered.

BUT we may proceed to the things which remain in the *Answer*, to make way to a more distinct and particular Consideration of the things contained under this Precept.

Hence,

Secondly, THE *Way* in which this Duty is to be exercised, *viz.* The *Preservation of Chastity*. This was a Duty incumbent on Man in *Innocency*; who, tho' furnished with all Graces, and no way vitiated with any Carnal Lusts, yet was both *Mutable*, and liable to *Temptation*, by which he might be overcome, as the Event awfully proved; and was therefore under the most solemn Obligation to take heed to himself, and guard against all that might offer to draw him off from his Integrity. But since Man's *Fall*, (by vertue whereof every vile Lust hath seized him, and depraved his Nature, and innumerable snares are laid in his way, to sollicit him to gratify these exorbitant Inclinations,) great Care had need to be used for the preserving of this Virtue Active and Vigorous in him. And for this, all Means are to be used, as to get & obtain the Grace of *Chastity*, so for the nourishing, encreasing, and establishing of it; as also for the subduing of the contrary Lust, and avoidance of such things as will be incentives and provocatives of it, the principal whereof will be after considered: For if Persons will not look after, but expose themselves, they have no reason to expect the Divine Protection, but provoke God to *give them up to vile Affections*.

Thirdly, THE *Subjects* about whom we are concerned in this Duty, *our selves* and our *Neighbours*. It is our *own*, and our *Neighbour's* Chastity, which we are to endeavour the Preservation of. Our Saviour gathers up the Comprehensive Duty of the Second Table, Matth. 22. 39. *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour, as thy self*. And this is to run thro' every *particular* Precept therein contained. So that this Duty herein appears to be of *large* extent.

HERE then,

1. *OUR prime Care & Endeavour ought to be to Preserve our* Own *Chastity*. Charity begins at *Home*; and he that is prodigal of his *own*, will not be tender or sollicitous for *another's*. Hence we have that direction, 1 Thes. 4. 4. *That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour*. And good Interpreters read the Word *Holiness*, *Chastity*, which we observed consists in a keeping ones self *Pure* from such Lusts, as are contrary to it. And this Preservation supposeth a danger, (which the thing so preserved is in) of being Hurt; and it consists in the shunning of those things that will expose it, and practising of such things as will be serviceable to defend it from such Temptations as will assail it, which may hereafter be particularlized.

2. *WE must also Endeavour the Preservation of our* Neighbours *Chastity*. Our hearty Love to them requires it, and we cannot say we have any cordial Respect for them, if we do not exert it in this regard. And there are *three* things here principally to be regarded on this Account;

1. WE *must with detestation avoid the Offering of any* Attempts *upon their Chastity*. Unchast *Love*, is a most vile *Hatred* of the Person to whom it is pretended. *Amnon* in vain pretended *Love* to his Sister *Tamar*, when it aimed only at *Defiling* her. All manner of *Sollicitations* or *Offers*, which are used to draw another into such a snare, are to be Hated, and utterly abstained from; nor can we actually Defile *another*, but we shall withal Defile our *selves*.

2. WE *must with Resolution withstand the* Temptations *offered us, and shun the* Occasions *of them*. And this we ought to do, both for our *own* sakes, and *theirs* too, for *both* must be concerned in it; and by our Consent we assist them in finishing the Sin, and hurting their own Souls. It was *Joseph's* Commendation when importuned by his lacivious Mistress, Gen. 39. 9, 10. —*How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? And it came to pass as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkned not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her*. And it is the Wise Man's Advice, Prov. 5. 8. *Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house*.

3. WE *must readily offer them our* Help, *to prevent them from running themselves into this Sin*. And this should be by careful Advice and Warnings, and a suitable Watchfulness over them, and endeavour to Rescue them from such Attempts of others, which will endanger them; and keeping them as far as we may, from such Opportunities as will lay them open to Danger, and not Connive at such things, lest we be partakers of others Sins. How often therefore have we the Wise Man offering grave Advice to his Son on this Score, in the Book of *Proverbs*?

Fourthly, THE *Thing* in which this Chastity is to be exercised, *viz.* In *Heart*, *Speech* and *Behaviour*. Divines do usually distribute *Humane* Actions into three sorts, viz. *Thoughts*, *Words* and *Deeds*; the Instrument of the first is the *Heart*, of the second the *Tongue*, and of the third the other *Bodily Members*. And in all these three regards, is this great Duty to be Conversant; for by all these may the Man, if he take not heed to himself, bring himself under the Guilt of the Breach of this Command. And under one or other of these, may the several *Affirmative* Duties here concerned be ranked; and therefore we may take a brief Account of the Principal contained under each Head.

I. *WE ought to endeavour to preserve this Chastity in our* Hearts. They mistake themselves who think that *Moral* Precepts do only regard the *outward* Man; which Mistake our

Saviour

Saviour so often reprehends in the Pharisaical Glosses upon the Law, *Matth.* 5. And he assures us that all, even the vilest Abominations have their rise from hence, Matth. 15. 19. *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts; murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.* And here, besides that we seek insatiably after the Sanctifying Grace of God, whereby the Heart is *Purified*, without which we are under the power of *Concupiscence*, there is a Duty of *looking after* these Hearts of ours, to keep them *Clean*, Prov. 4. 23. *Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.* And that which is here especially to be considered, is the right ordering of our *Thoughts* unto *Chastity*, which are the inward movings of the *Heart*. There is an *Heart Adultery* which our Saviour warns us of, Matth. 5. 28. *I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.* There is a *speculative* Uncleanness, which is to be avoided by us; and this is to be done summarily by these *two* things,

1. *WE must Resist and Suppress* Lacivious *Thoughts.* We ought to withstand them at their *first starting*, and cast them out as soon as we discover them to have gotten into our Minds. We should be able to say, Psal. 119. 113. *I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love.* These are the things that are to be mortified, Col. 3. 5. *Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection*, &c. The Corrupt Part will offer to draw us into these Musings, and fill us with Contemplations which are *Unchast*: These are the Conceptions of Lust, of the tendency whereof we are warned in, Jam. 1. 15. *When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death.* We ought therefore to crush them in the *Embrio*, throw them out as fast as they are thrown in, and not suffer them to lodge in us: And if they offer to *ravish* our Hearts, we must Cry out as the siezed Virgin, and call in Help from Heaven, to rescue us from the *Rape* they offer to us.

2. *WE must entertain our Minds with* Chast *Thoughts and Meditations.* And we ought studiously to maintain such Ponderings, that with them we may exercise the Lustings of the *Spirit* against those of the *Flesh*; and for this also we must Pray hard to God for His Grace to influence us, as he in Psal. 19. ult. *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord my strength, and my redeemer.* We ought in our Musings, to Corroborate in us the Hatred of this Lust, looking upon it as Vile, Bruitish, Dishonourable; and that which will procure the Wrath of God, and shut us out of the Kingdom of Glory; 1 Cor. 6. 9. *Be not deceived, neither fornicators,--- nor adulterers, nor effeminate,--- shall enter into the kingdom of God.* And if nourished, will expose us to all manner of *Temporal* Mischiefs. And on the other hand, Meditate on the *Excellency* of this Virtue of *Chastity*; how acceptable it is to the Holy God, who delights to dwell in a *Chast* Soul: Think that if we are Consecrated Temples to the Spirit of God, we ought to keep the House Clean, that He be not provoked to withdraw from it; what quiet of Conscience it will afford us, and how it will maintain our Credit among Men, and save us from the ruinous Effects which the contrary will expose us unto.

AND thus we should fortify our love to Chastity, which will help us in our whole Carriage, and govern our Life; in which we shall find abundant Consolation: Here then let us begin, and it will greatly facilitate all that follows.

II. *WE must preserve Chastity in our* Speech. *Words* are the Credentiaries of our *Thoughts*, and by them we discover what is lodged within; for Christ hath said, Matth. 12. 34. *--Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.* It is therefore a general Direction given to Christians, Col 4. 6. *Let your speech be always with grace.* And in nothing are we more concerned to take heed to our Speech than in respect to this Command. Whilst we keep our *Thoughts* within, and suppress them from coming abroad, we only do our *selves* harm; but when we discover them in our *Words*, we do thereby hurt *others* also. Human Conversation is peculiarly maintained by *Speech*, which is a Privilege that God hath favoured Man withal, above all other parts of the visible Creation; which therefore ought to be improved by us to His Glory, and our mutual Edification: And tho', that our *Words* may be right, we must first see that our *Hearts* be so; yet there is a Guard to be strictly kept over our *Tongues*, which are exorbitant Members, and stand in need of a severe Government.

AND here,

1. WE *must avoid all manner of Language, which hath a tendency to stir up this Lust of Concupiscence.* There is an *Adulterous* Language which offends *Chast* Ears, and nourisheth the fleshly Inclinations of those who are *Unchast*. There are some things which ought not so much as to be named among Christians; and there is a *Modesty* to be used in such as *must* be spoken; and when Men love to be talking of such things, they therein discover what are the dispositions of their Minds: And hereto belongs the telling of lacivious *Stories*, set forth with Words which are unbecoming; and the singing of obscene *Songs*, which tend to nourish this Lust in us, and whatsoever of like Nature; all of which we should avoid with Abhorrence: Much more, such Words as are *Tempting*, and carry in them *Perswasion* to another to consent to Lewdness: We read of her, Prov. 7. 21. *With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him.*

2. WE *must endeavour to accustom our selves to a* Clean *Language.* And there must be Pains taken in this; for we are too apt to forget ourselves, especially when we enter on Discourses which are occasioned by some Subjects. We find the Spirit of God in the Holy Scriptures, when there is a Necessity of speak-

ing about things which refer to *Natural Generation*, with what Modesty of Expression he Cloaths His Language; and doubtless herein He sets us a President for our Imitation. It is good therefore, instead of *loose* and *jocose* Discourses, (yea, tho' *lawful*, if Civil and Moderate,) to be taking all Opportunities, to entertain one another with *spiritual* Communication; and such things as may tend to Mortify Evil Concupiscence in us, and raise up our Heart and Affections to Heaven and Heavenly things: For as it is a Truth, (1 Cor. 15. 33.) *Evil Communication corrupts good Manners*; so *Good* Communication hath a tendency to the promoving a Sober and Pious Life, and that both in our selves, and in such as we have Opportunity of Converse withal: A Clean *Tongue* will help to preserve a Clean *Life*.

III. *WE must endeavour to preserve Chastity in our* Behaviour. And this comprizeth in it the whole of our *outward* Carriage, whether it be towards *our selves* or *others*.

[1.] IN respect of *ourselves*, we must *avoid* all things which will become proper incentives of this Lust in us; and *practice* those things which may withdraw the Fuel from it.

AND here more especially,

1. *WE ought to maintain* Temperance *in Meats & Drinks*. These are *lawful* and *necessary* things, given us by God for the Support of our Life, and Strength, and Comfort; but then, there is a great *moderation* to be used in them, which belongs to that Sobriety which God requires of Christians to exercise in their Lives; and this is contained in that Prohibition of the Apostle, Rom. 13. ult. *And make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof*. And we are told in Hos 4. 11. *Whoredom, and wine, and new wine take away the heart*. If the *Body* be pampered, the *Soul* will be infected with it, and *Fleshly Lusts* nourished; this being proper Fuel to kindle & encrease the Fire thereof: Hence *Adulterers* are compared to *fed Horses*, Jer. 5. 8. And as for *Drunkenness*, it exposeth the Person to every Temptation, and makes him ready for *all* Wickedness, and to none more than this of *Incontinency*. How awfully was that good Man *Lot*, led by it into *Incest*? *Gen.* 19. 33. And this is one Argument that the Wise Man useth against it, Prov. 23. 33. *Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things*. It makes a Man or a Woman more like a *Beast*, than one of Human race, and leaves them without the guard of Reason, against the Snares that may be in their way.

2. *TO be* Diligent & Painful *in following of some lawful Calling*. They that would Live *Chastly*, must avoid *Idleness*, and use *Industry*, else they will lay themselves open to this Temptation: *Idleness* was therefore accounted among the *Heathen* to be an Occasion offered to *Lasciviousness*, as well as other Villanies; hence the Poet, *Otia si tellus*, &c God hath appointed Men and Women a Calling, not only for the Support of the present Life, but also for the keeping them out of the way of Mischief. *Idleness* is charged as one of the occasions, which made the *Sodomites* so Brutish, *Ezek.* 16. 49. Nay, *David* himself when *Idling* on the House top, was exposed and Snared, 2 *Sam.* 11. 2. Man is an *Active* Creature, and if he be not honestly *Employed*, he will be *Misemployed*, and some Mischief will follow upon it; yea, God will be provoked to leave him to the Lusts of his own Heart: Whereas lawful *Diligence* puts a Person under the Blessing of God. And *Satan* is ever watching to find us out of Employment, as being then most ready to follow his Suggestions.

3. *WE must very carefully* guard our Senses *against such things as are apt to stir up this Concupiscence in us*. We observed, that the *Heart* is the *Seat* of all Fleshly Lusts; but then the *Senses* are the *Portals* by which those things are let into the *Heart*, whereby these Lusts are excited to put themselves forth into *Act*. I shall here only touch upon those *Two*, which are peculiarly concerned in this matter, *viz.* the *Seeing* and *Hearing*.

AS to *Seeing*, we know the *Eye* is very ready to affect the *Heart*; we therefore Read of *Eyes* full of *Adultery*, 2 Pet. 2. 14. And we are sure that *David*'s *sight* trapan'd him into the *snare*; in the fore cited 2 *Sam.* 11. 2. This looks upon & is surprized with the *Object*, which puts the Man upon *unlawful Desires* after the fruition of it, which excites him to use as *unlawful Courses* for the compassing of those *Desires*: For this reason we have that good Man's Vindication of himself, Job 31. 1. *I made a covenant with mine eyes*. We are therefore to *turn away* our Eyes from such Objects, where there is danger of our being envenomed by them.

AND as to the *Ear*, or Sense of *Hearing*, that will also easily Betray us, if we do not keep a watch over it. There are secret Charms in the delicate *Airs*, and bewitching *Oratory* of some Persons, which put the luxuriant Imagination into a Surprize, and raise a Paroxism in the Carnal Appetites. We ought therefore to be very Cautious to our selves, lest by these we be Betray'd and carryed Captive by our Incontinent Affections.

[2.] IN respect of *others*, as well as *our selves*, we are to maintain a becoming *Modesty*, and avoid all such things as tend to allure *them* to become Partners with *us* in *Unchastity*. And here, among many, there are these particular Duties incumbent on us;

1. *WE must use great* Modesty *in our Apparel*. God hath appointed Man to wear *Apparel*, and that not only to hide his *shame*, (which is therefore a witness of it, which ought to keep him Humble,) and to keep him from the *Injuries* of the Seasons, to which he would else be exposed, but also for *Ornament* and *Distinction*; but there is a certain *Decorum* to be used in it, else it will be abused: And there is a Mode of Attire, which is adapted to *Lasciviousness*, or a Provocative of Lusts; hence that, Prov. 7. 10. *And behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot*. Which doth not intend that it is an Attire appointed to

distinguish

distinguish such from others; but that it was such a Dress as was becoming no other but such an one, & gave good grounds of suspicion. And there is such a Garb as answers not the honest *Ends* of Apparel, but is used as a snare to catch simple Fools in: Such in particular is that of laying out the Breasts naked and to view; which, (as one well notes,) seems to be a *Sign* hung out at a *Common Inn*, to tell Travellers where they may have welcome Entertainment for their Money. And though we have reason to believe, that the Iniquity of the Times draws some *Chast* Persons into such Fashions, yet they do herein scandalize their Profession.

2. *WE must be wary to our selves that we do not use those* amorous Carriages *towards others, which carry Allurement in them, to draw them to our Lusts.* There are *Modest* Expressions of Love, in order to lawful Marriage, which are not here prohibited, but allowed in the Word of God; though great Care is here to be used, those be not contrary to the Rules of *Modesty*: But there are those Behaviours which are to be avoided by all that would preserve their *own* and their *Neighbour's* Chastity. And tho' such Persons may pretend, they *design* not, but *abhor* the Acts of *Uncleanness*, yet hereby they horribly expose themselves, and endanger the Party towards whom they use them; and if God do not restrain them, they are in the road way to Hurt themselves. I spare to Instance these things, which would sound harsh in *Chast* Ears. I only say, whatsoever on this account exceeds the true *Bashfulness* which becomes all Persons, is here very carefully to be avoided; and if Persons once come to lose their *Shame*, they will not long maintain their *Honesty*.

3. *WE must avoid all those* Occasions *by which we may expose ourselves or others, to the Temptations of Uncleanness.* There are many of these, and if we would keep our selves Pure, we must shun them as we would a *Serpent*. We should bear a sense of our own *Infirmity*, and that should make us avoid thrusting our selves into the Company, and secret Converse of those whom we may be drawn away by: *Night-walking*, and getting *alone* into such Converse, is a dangerous Trap: It was in the black and dark *Night* that the simple Young Man was snared, *Prov.* 7. 9. They that will take all Opportunities thus to get together, will run a desperate Risque of being drawn into those things that are unseemly, and will be Tempted to say as, Prov. 9 17. *Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.* Publick *Balls*, and Comical *Plays*, in which such things are acted, which under pretence of representing *Vice* as a thing *odious*, are indeed but the *Teachers* and *Fomentors* of it, are with all Caution to be avoided by all such as would maintain their Chastity, and escape the just Reputation of being *light* Persons. In a word then, would we preserve our *own* and our *Neighbour's* Chastity inviolate, let us get and maintain in us a Principle of *Honesty*, a love to *Purity*, a hatred of whatsoever is contrary to it: Let us prize our own *Honour*, and put a due value on our Neighbour's *good Name*, and prize it as we would do our own: Let us look to the further end of such things, and consider how justly God may *deliver us up to our own heart's Lusts*, if we indulge our selves in that which hath a tendency to that Exit: And if we do not Resist the *first* Motions, we know not whither they will lead, and where they will end. Let us remember *that the Dead are there, and that this Sin leads* directly *to Hell*; and there is none which tends more to fix Men in *Impenitency*, and render their Conversion *hopeless*, as is evident from the awful Remark of the Wise Man, Prov. 2. 18, 19. *For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead. None that go unto her, return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life.*

LET us then Pray hard to God, that He will subdue these *Unclean* Lusts in us; and fill us with those Graces of His Spirit, which may make us take Delight in keeping our selves *Pure* and *Unspotted*. Let us Consecrate a Chast Love to CHRIST, and that will help to keep us Pure from the Sins of *Uncleanness*. And let us with all solemnity entertain that awful Warning given us, Prov. 5. 8, 9, 10, 11. *Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house: Lest thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel. Lest strangers be filled with thy wealth, and thy labours be in the house of a stranger. And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and body are consumed.*

[NOVEMBER 14. 1704.]

SERMON *CXCIV.*

WE have considered the *Duty* enjoyned in this Command, viz. *Chastity*, in *general*, or as it concerns *all* Mankind; but it is requisite that we take a more *distinct* and *particular* Account of it.

AND here we may observe, That though *Chastity* admits not of any Distribution into *Species*, yet Divines observe an *Accidental* Difference in respect of the *Subject* in whom it is required. It is the Duty of all Mankind to Live Chastly; nor is it restrained to this or that Condition of Life, or Function which the Person bears: But the *Manner* of exercising it is *diverse*, according to the Condition which the Person concerned is in. It is therefore usually distinguished into that which belongs to a *Single*, or to a *Married* State: For those that restrain it to the *former*, and vote a *Married* State to be a State of *Impurity*, *do Err, not knowing the Scriptures*, and cast a Reproach upon an Ordinance of God, who appointed *Marriage* from the beginning, and hath put great Honour upon it, Heb. 13. 4. *Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled.*

filed. And this Condition may well agree with the *Description* which was given of *Chastity* under the *former* Discourse. We may therefore Consider these severally:

First, *THERE is a Chastity required of* Single *Persons, which they are to exercise in that Condition.* And there are who distribute these into *Two*, viz Such as *never were Married*, and such as are reduc'd to a State of *Widow-hood*, between whom there is some *diversity* to be observed.

I. AS to those who *never entred into a State of Marriage*; it is their Duty to maintain *Modesty*, in Thoughts, Words and Actions; and with great *Sobriety* to wait the Time when God shall call them to Change their Condition; and accordingly to apply themselves to, and Religiously follow the Rules before laid down in the *opening* of this Duty; 1 Thes. 4. 3, 4. *For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour.* Only here Enquiry may be made.

1. *WHETHER a* Single Life *be* Essential *to the* Chastity *required in this Precept?* This some have defended with a great deal of vehemence, but it is altogether *Banter* and *Folly*; for this necessarily *condemns* all *Married* Persons, which is contrary to the Word of God, and the very Nature of this Grace, as we before had it *Described.* And too often, there are none more *Unchast*, than such as boast themselves in *Cœlabacy*, who in the mean while nourish in them *Unclean* Lusts: Nor would God ever have made *Marriage* an *Ordinance*, if it necessarily had involved in it this Sin.

2. *WHETHER a* Single *Life be for it self more* laudable *and* pleasing to God, *than a* Married *Life?* As touching the *Merit* of it, which some have pleaded hard for, it is purely *Antichristian*, and utterly exploded by all knowing Christians: But some of the Ancients have thrown out a great deal of Oratory, in making Hyperbolical *Encomiums* of *Virginity*, and casting Dirt and Reproach upon the *Married* Estate, making the one *Angelical*, and the other *Sensual.*: But this not only Contradicts the Apostle in the fore-cited, *Heb.* 13. 4. But it both is against the great Reason why God put such a *distinction* of Sexes among Mankind, which was for the Continuance of the Species in it's *Individuals*, and *Peopling* of the World by them; and becomes a Temptation to many, for *vain glory*, to expose themselves to the most prodigious Sins against this Command.

3. *WHETHER it be lawful for any to make a* Vow *of a* Single *Life?* This also is much pleaded for, and practiced among the *Papists*; yea, how many are there among them who are *constrained* to it? But what horrendous *Whoredoms*, and bloody *Murders* have been the Events of it, the World is not ignorant of; which gives reason to enquire into the *Warrant* for it: And there are *Two* things which may give light to it, *viz.* [1.] A *Religious Vow* must be of such things as God will be really served in our Performance of, and which are within our power of doing: For to Vow that to God, which He will not be Glorified by, is *Profane*; and to bind our selves to that which we have neither Command of, nor a Promise that God will give us Power to do it, is a *Tempting* of God: But there is no Precept in the Word of God for this, nor any *Example* approved by God of any such thing; for as to that of *Jeptha*'s Daughter, it is not certain that she was so *devoted*, and if it were so, there is no *Approbation* of it signified in Holy Writ. [2.] Nor hath God bestowed upon all a *Gift* by which they may Chastly *keep* their Vow, which they have *Rashly* made, and contrary to the Precept. It is true, that God hath given His Direction to it, as a *Prudential* for Persons in Times of peculiar Troubles upon the Church, to abide in their *Single* State, if they can do it with a good Conscience; but even then to take heed of exposing themselves to be endangered by it, to Sin against this very Command, 1 *Cor.* 7. *lat. end.*

II. THERE is a Chastity to be maintained by Persons that have *formerly been Married*, but are now in a *Widowed* State. And here also the general Rules forementioned, are to be observed by them, during their Continuance in that Condition. Nor are there any particular Rules to be prescribed to such under this Consideration. Only here is one CASE which hath been Controverted by some, & a very few Words may be sufficient for the Resolution of it, *viz. Whether it be* lawful *for such to* Marry *again, or they ought to continue in their* Widowhood? Some of the Ancients have also declaimed against this, and have confidently ranked it among the plain *Breaches* of this Command: But it is sufficient to Confute all that can be said against it, that it is so far from being *forbidden* in the Word of God, that it is there *warranted* and *approved*, *Rom.* 7. *begin.* 1 *Tim.* 5. 14 And it is certain, that *Marriage* Relation continues no longer than *Life* doth, nor will it revert again at the *Resurrection*, being ordained to serve the Occasions of *Time*, and Comfort of Man during his abode here; *Matth.* 22. 30. It is true, the Apostle seems to Discourse of a sort of Widows, which were of Service in the Churches, 1 Tim. 5. 9, &c. *Let not a widow be taken into the number, under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man.*—— About whom there are various Conjectures, and most probably they were such as were *Aged* and *Necessitous*, and were supported by the Church, and employed for the tending of the Sick, or what other Service was fit for them; and the reason why he would not have the *Younger* admitted to this Number, is lest they should be tempted to *Marry*, and so defeat the Service: But there is no mention of the *Breach* of this Command, in Case they so do.

BUT this may suffice in regard of such as are *Single* Persons.

Secondly, *THERE is a Chastity required of* Married *Persons, which they are to exercise, both in order to their Marriage, and after they are united in that solemn Covenant.* To this Command

Command therefore Divines do usually refer the whole Doctrine of *Marriage*. It is true, *Husbands* and *Wives*, as they do constitute one Order among Mankind ordained by God, and are under the Obligation of Relative Duties of Order, so they belong to the *Fifth* Command; under which we have already considered them: But then, as they are to be looked on with respect to that *Modesty* and *Chastity* which is required of them, so are they to be referred to the *Seventh*: And for the laying open of this matter, let these *Conclusions* be observed;

1. THAT Marriage *is an Ordinance of Divine Appointment*. Not as if all Persons under all Circumstances are bound to it, when come to Years of Maturity; for there are many Reasons why Persons may lawfully and prudently, and sometimes necessarily, continue in their *Cœlibacy*, as the Apostle particularly instanceth in case of Persecution, 1 *Cor.* 7. tho' with great Caution and Limitation: But as to Mankind in general, God hath appointed it from the beginning; and it is included in the general Precept laid down, Gen. 1. 27, 28. *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him: male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, be fruitful and multiply* ——. And God gives this as the Reason, why He Created the *Woman*, (Gen. 2. 18.) *It is not good that the man should be alone*. And for that Reason *Adam* declared upon it this Rule of *Marriage*, which was grounded on the Light of Nature, and was to continue in force to the End of the World, Ver. 24. *Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh*. Nor could the Ends of Human Society have been answer'd but for Marriage, without which Mankind must have lived promiscuously like *Beasts*, which would have subverted all Order, and been a Foundation of Confusion.

2. THAT *one great End of God's ordaining Marriage, was for the preservation of* Chastity *among Men*. As *Cœlibacy* it self is not *Chastity*, but *Chastity* is to be maintained in it; so neither is *Marriage Unchastity*, but an orderly and laudable preservative of *Chastity* among Men: Hence that in 1 Pet. 3. 2. *While they behold your chast conversation coupled with fear*. God appointed Mankind for Marriage; and when Persons so united, do keep true and faithful to the Rules prescribed by God to such, they do therein adorn this Virtue. God hath in His Word set Bounds to the natural Inclinations of Men, of which He Himself is the Author, who put them into innocent Nature; and this is that foundation of the *Conjugal* Relation; and there are but a few of Mankind, that in their lapsed Estate, can live Chastly without their entring into this Relation.

3. THAT *there is no Order or Degree of Men exempted from this Liberty*. Our Adversaries make it a Sin for any *Ecclesiastical* Orders to enter into a *Married* Estate; but however, they trifle in pretending to prove it by the Word of God; for there is neither Print nor Footstep for any such thing to be found there: Nay, It is one of the Characteristical Notes of the *Antichristian* Apostacy, 1 Tim. 4. 3. *Forbidding to marry*. Not as if it intends that they would forbid it altogether, but that they would prohibit some Orders of Men from it; and yet in the mean while they allow *Whoredom*, and make it but a *pecca dillo*, one of the least Venial Sins in their most holy Orders; whereas the Spirit of God assures us in Heb. 13. 4. *Matriage is honourable in* all, *and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. i. e.* in all sorts or Orders of Men: How contrary then is it for Men to decree it to be *Unclean?* And we know that the most Holy Patriarchs and Apostles, are recorded to be *Married* Persons: Yea, *Peter* himself, of whom our Antagonists make their Brags; and some have thought *Paul* too; however he asserts his Liberty so to be, 1 Cor. 9. 5. *Have we not power to lead about a sister a wife as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?*

4. *THERE are divers things requisite to a* Chast *Marriage*: And these are usually reckoned to this Precept, the principal of which may come under our present Consideration;

1. *A Chast Marriage must be between* One *Man, and* One *Woman*. That this is not so to be understood, as if it were unlawful to have a *second* or more, after the Death of the *former*, hath already been observed; but that they cannot have more than *One*, whilst they stand Related to that *One* in the Bond of *Matrimony*; and that neither of the *Man*'s side, nor the *Woman*'s: And that this was not only a Law from the beginning, but agreeable to the Light & Law of Nature, is evident from the Word of God. That it was so from the Beginning, appears from that of *Adam*, Gen. 2. 24. — *And shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh*. Which is apparently intended of *Monogamy*, or a restraint of this to *One* and *One*, as appears from the Gloss which our Saviour made on it, Matth. 19. 5. *And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore are they no more twain, but one flesh*. And that it is agreable to the Law of Nature, the Prophet seems to argue from the Creation, *Mal.* 2. 15. And the Nature of the Relation it self, and the Covenant in which it is contracted, do further confirm it: Nor can the mutual Duties required between Persons in that Relation be discharged between more at once, as will be evident in some things that follow: And it is expresly forbbiden, Lev. 18. 18. *Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, to vex her, to uncover her nakedness besides the other in her life time*.

2. *IN a Chast Marriage it is necessary that it be made between Persons that may* lawfully *come together*. God hath not given to Mankind an Universal Liberty, but hath restrained them to Bounds. And that it is not Lawful for a Man to take another Man's Wife, so neither may a Woman Marry to a Man who hath another Wife, for these are another's Property, and it would

would be horrible *Adultery*. But beſides this, There are ſeveral degrees of Relation which God hath exempted from coming within this Liberty, as is evident in the Word of God. What theſe are, and to what Degree they are ſtinted, is not to be determined by Human Arbitrement, but by the Preſcript of the Word of God. And it is certain, that ſome Duties are *Moral*, and yet the Circumſtances and Bounds of them depend on the Divine Arbitrement. There is no little Diſpute whether theſe Degrees are *Natural* or *Poſitive*, about which all Divines are not agreed. The main Objections againſt its belonging to the *Law of Nature*, are partly from the conſideration of the *Order of Nature*, which God conſtituted in the Creation, in which all Men were to proceed from one Root or Original, for which it was neceſſary for the Propagation of Mankind, that *Brothers* & *Siſters* muſt Marry together; and this would have been had Man ſtood in his Primitive Integrity, and therefore would not have been a Sin, or going againſt the Light of Nature: As alſo becauſe there was a *Poſitive* Law among the *Jews*, That if an Eldeſt Son ſhould Dye without Iſſue, his Brother ſhould take his Wife, as in *Deut.* 25. 5. Whereas they ſuppoſe that there is no Diſpenſation with a Natural Law; and hence they take it to be meerly *Juriſpoſitive*. Whereas on the other hand, it is demurred, that when God had ſet Bounds to theſe Degrees, He urgeth the Precept from the Conſideration, that theſe were the Abominations for which God cut off the Heathen Nations, Lev. 18 24,25. *Defile not you your ſelves in any of theſe things: for in all theſe the nations are defiled which I caſt out before you. And the land is defiled: therefore I do viſit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land it ſelf vomiteth out her inhabitants.* Whereas theſe are not Charged with and Puniſhed for the Tranſgreſſion of Laws meerly *Poſitive*, or ſuch as were not engraven on Man's Heart at firſt. Beſides, there was a Reſentment on the Minds of the *Pagans* of Horrour on the Account of ſome of theſe Degrees; hence ſome of their Governments had ſevere Laws againſt it, and ſome of their Poets have writ Tragical things about it; and we have ſuch an Expreſſion of *Paul*'s about it, 1 Cor. 5. 1. *It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and ſuch fornication as is not ſo much as named among the Gentiles, that one ſhould have his father's wife.* Some therefore will have only the *aſcending* and *deſcending* Line forbidden by the *Law of Nature*, and ſo *indiſpenſible*; and that it had been Unnatural for *Adam* or *Eve* to have been Married to any of their Poſterity, to the very laſt Generation; but they will have the *collateral* Lines forbidden to be ſo, by a *Poſitive Law*, and accordingly *diſpenſible*: But others do not allow this, but reduce it to the *Law of Neceſſity*, when God had made Man in *One* Head, and Commanded them to *encreaſe* and *multiply*, which they could not do, unleſs they came *within* theſe Degrees, it ſo became Lawful and a Duty; but upon the Ceſſation of that Neceſſity, Nature it ſelf dictated in Men's Conſciences that it was *Indecent* and *Unlawful*: And we find that the *Gentile* Laws extended further than the *direct* Line, in Judging and Puniſhing *Inceſtuous* Marriages or Mixtures. But then, to what *Degrees* this extends, is not agreed by all, but ſome contract it *nearer*, and others extend it *further*; but as we before obſerved, this is determinable by the *Law of God* revealed in His Word; for it is certain that all Mankind are of *one* Blood, and have a *Conſanguinity*; but of neceſſity it muſt ſtop ſomewhere; and whether or no this was engraven on Man's Mind at Firſt, it is loſt as to Fallen Man. God gave a general Precept to Iſrael about this, Lev. 18.6. *None of you ſhall approach to any that is near of kin to him, to uncover their nakedneſs: I am the Lord*: Which the Light of Nature ſubſcribes: But the Heathen Civiliz'd Nations ſeem to have extended it no further than to the *Brother* and *Siſter*; whereas many that call themſelves *Chriſtians*, from this general Rule, take the liberty to ſet the Bounds according to their own Fancies; and the *Popiſh* Canons have formed a great many things which never entred into the Mind of God, nor can with Reaſon be juſtly brought within the compaſs of *Inceſt*: But this was only a Trick to enſnare Men's Conſciences, and to make way for *Papal* Diſpenſations, thereby to fill their Coffers: For this reaſon therefore God hath in the fore-cited, *Levit.* 18. pricked the Bounds or Limits of this Precept; and it is not for Men according to their Fancies to *ſtreighten* or *enlarge* them: And it is a good Rule given by Divines, That nothing but what is there Prohibited either expreſly, or what bears a *Parallel* thereto, may be judged *Inceſtuous*, and ſo Unlawful: And theſe refer either to *Conſanguinity* or *Affinity*, and ſo comprehends *Father* and *Mother*, *Son* and *Daughter*; the *Father*'s *Wife*, and the *Mother*'s *Husband*; the *Brother* and *Siſter*; the *Brother*'s *Wife*, and the *Siſter*'s *Huſband*; the *Grand Parents*, and the *Grand Children*, and their *Husbands* and *Wives*; the *Uncle* and *Aunt*, and the *Nephew* and *Niece*, and their *Husbands* or *Wives*; the *Wive*'s or *Husband*'s *former Daughter*: So that any Relation that comes not within theſe Degrees, is not Prohibited, either by the Law *Natural* or *Poſitive*, nor are Men's Conſciences to be entangled by them.

AS touching the CASE as to *Firſt* or *Germane Couſins*, there have been many Debates among Caſuiſts, whether it be *Lawful* or no; and much Scandal hath been occaſioned by it: All I ſhall ſay to it is, that whatſoever Reaſons of *Prudence* may be raiſed againſt it, yet it cannot come under the Breach of the *Seventh* Command as *Inceſtuous*, except it had been expreſly forbidden in the Word of God, as it no where is; or had come within the Limits preſcribed in the Word of God; but it ſeems to be a Degree more *Remote* than any mentioned: And tho' it may be prudent to diſſwade from it on other Reaſons, the World being wide; yet where it is ſo, it is hard to Charge ſuch with a *Sin*, which God hath not Charged in His revealed Word.

AS

AS to a *Man's* Marrying with his *Wife's Siſter*, or a *Woman* with her *Husband's Brother*, which ſome among us have pleaded for, it is forbidden, at leaſt in a thing *Parallel*, and therefore can never be juſtified, *Lev.* 18. 6. Nor will the fore-cited Law *Poſitive*, (Deut. 25. 5.) vindicate it; this being a Law *Moral* and *Perpetual*; whereas the other was accommodated to the *Iſraelitiſh Pedagogy*, and Reſtrictions.

AND in reſpect of *Eccleſiaſtical* Relations, in which Men are forbidden to Marry with their *ſpiritual Children*, as they call them; or *Civil* Relations, in prohibiting the Marriage of an *Adopted* Child to the *Adopter*, or his *Daughter*, and whatſoever of like Nature is enjoyned under *Popery*; they are ridiculous, as having no Contiguity of Blood produced by them. Finally, It is here to be obſerved, that in *Affinity* this Prohibition terminates in the Perſon, and extends no further. Tho' one may not Marry his *Father's Wife*, yet this Command doth not forbid Marrying with her *Daughter*; and tho' a Perſon may not Marry to his *Wife's Siſter* or his *Brother's Wife*, yet his *Brother* may Marry to her *Siſter*, &c.

3. *IN a Chaſt Marriage it is requiſite that there be a Rational and Deliberate* Conſent *between the Parties ſo Contracting.* This is evident from the very *Nature* of the Marriage Covenant, in which the Parties do mutually give themſelves each to other, and take one another into this Relation, which neceſſarily requires rational *Spontaneity*. Hence we have that in Gen. 24. 57, 58. *And they ſaid, we will call the damſel and enquire at her mouth. And they called Rebeckah, and ſaid unto her, wilt thou go with this man? And ſhe ſaid, I will go.* Nor is it ordinarily to be expected that ſuch Perſons as are *Forcibly* brought together, ſhould maintain a Chaſt Love between each other. As to the *Conſent of Parents*, doubtleſs it is required by the Law of God that Children ſhould be directed by them; it being a part of the Authority which God hath veſted them withal, and the Light of Nature directs to it; and therefore Clandeſtine Marriages, ſtolen contrary to, or without their Conſent is a Breach of the *Fifth* Command directly; and muſt uſually argue an ungoverned Paſſion in the Perſons themſelves, which is againſt the *Seventh*, and therefore Civiliz'd Governments have provided ſeverely againſt it; tho' whether ſuch Marriages are altogether *Void*, is matter of Diſpute. And if Children are unreaſonably with-held by their *Parents* from Marriage, they ought to ſeek their Redreſs from the *Civil Authority*. It is hence alſo to be Inferred, that no Marriage ought to be made between Perſons till they come to Age of *Maturity* & *Diſcretion*: The Cuſtom uſed by ſome for *Secular* ends, to Marry Children together in their *Infancy*; when as they are neither capable of fixing their Affections, nor of making a Rational Choice, nor of diſcharging the Marriage Duties, is a great Sin, and contrary to the Nature of this Precept: Nor is it Rationally pleadable, that Parents may as well give their *Infant* Children in *Marriage*, as preſent them to *Baptiſm*, when they are not able to Covenant for themſelves; for the Infants of Chriſtians are taken into the Covenant by God, and are therefore to receive the *Badge* of His Covenant; whereas *Marriage* is a *free Contract*, in which each Party is at liberty to make their own Choice; and are under no tie to alienate themſelves in Marriage to this or that Perſon, any further than they do it by a *free Conſent*. And this alſo muſt needs condemn thoſe, who *Raſhly* give themſeves away to Perſons who are *Strangers*, and ſuch of whom they had no *fore-knowledge*, which is a thing too frequently practiſed by too many amongſt us, who for the moſt part have occaſion to Repent at *leiſure*, of what they did in *haſte*; and when by their ſo doing, they have involved themſelves in a Miſery irretrievable. And it muſt needs argue an *Unchaſt* and *Ungovernable* Spirit, when *others* Harms do not make ſuch to beware. A *Sober* and *Moleſt* Perſon will certainly be *deliberate* in a matter of ſuch Concern.

[DECEMBER 12. 1704.]

SERMON *CXCV.*

4. A *Chaſt Marriage is for* Perpetuity. I do not mean that it is a Bond that muſt laſt for ever; for we before obſerved, that it can be but for Life, and Death diſſolves the Bond, and leaves the Survivour at Liberty: But I intend, that in a lawful Marriage, the Perſons do give themſelves each to the other, as long as they do both Live. In *other* Contracts between Perſons, they may be made for a ſet and limited Time, and when that Time is expired, they are diſcharged from their Obligation; but it is not ſo in reſpect of *this* Contract of Marriage: But whether it be expreſt or no, it is always implied in the very Nature of the Covenant, that they will be each for the other, and for none elſe, till Death. *Rom.* 7. 2.

BUT here a weighty CASE may be ſtarted, viz. *Whether there be nothing but* Death, *that can Diſſolve this Covenant?* And here the Queſtion about *Divorces* will come under Examination, *Whether any* Divorce *be lawful?* And if ſo, *What may be judged a juſt* Warrant *for it?* Not only was it a Cuſtom among the *Pagan* Nations for Men to put away their Wives upon any Diſguſt taken at them, which is not ſo much to be wondered at, becauſe the Light of Nature was obſcured in them, and they were under the dominion of obſcene Luſts; but it was alſo practiſed among the Ancient People of God; and *Moſes* by God's Direction gave them a Law about it, *Deut.* 24. *begin.*

THIS CASE may in general be thus reſolved, *viz.* That this Relation cannot be diſſolved during Life, without the Fault of *one* of the Parties at leaſt; and that not every Fault, but only ſuch as is a Violation of the Marriage Covenant.

And here Two things may come under Consideration, *viz.* The Person may be *Active* or *Passive* in the separation; the *former* of these is properly called a *Divorce*, the *latter* comes under the Consideration of a *Desertion*. It is the first of these now to be enquired into, the latter will follow under the next Head.

HERE then, a *Divorce* is properly *a Voluntary putting away of the Correlate, and thenceforward renouncing of all Conjugal Society therewithal*. That a *Divorce* is in some Case *lawful*, is not to be doubted, our Saviour Christ doth not utterly condemn it, but only limits it. But the Question is, *For what Cause it is Lawful?* And we need seek no further than what Christ himself hath defined in this Affair, Matth. 19. 9. *And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marryeth her which is put away, doth commit adultery.* Where the Word *Fornication* is a general and comprehensive Word, including every Transgression of the *Seventh* Command, and therefore it here intends *Adultery*: The Reason why this admits of it, is because it is an utter violation of the Marriage-Covenant, and thereby gives the wronged Person sufficient ground to renounce such a Correlate. It is true, if the Law which punished *Adultery* with Death, were Executed, as weighty Divines think that it ought, that would dissolve the Covenant, and set the Innocent Party at Liberty; but there are few Places where it is in force. But tho' the Offender be suffered to Live, it cannot abridge the Injured of this Liberty; and this Separation is Total and Universal, for such is the Import of a *Divorce*, and the Relation between them is altogether cut off by it: Not but that it is lawful for them to be Reconciled, if they can stoop to it whilst they abide *Single*. And *Whether it be Lawful for the Offender to Marry with another?* is disputed, and a Case hard to Resolve; yet that the *Innocent* Party may, is beyond any just Question. It therefore looks like an Hardship to separate them only *a Mensâ et Thoro*, and restrain them Marrying again, which is a Punishment of the one as well as the other, and that without his or her Default.

BUT as to giving a *Divorce* in any *other* Case, it is not warranted but forbidden in the Word of God, as by our Saviour in the forecited Text; and we are there told, that God hateth putting away. Casuists indeed tell us, that there are some things, which when *known*, do make the Marriage Void, from the very Nature of the thing, and principal Ends of it. But *whether Parents have power to Dissolve the Clandestine Marriages of their Children, made without or against their Consent?* may be Debated: And that Rule is usually applied here, *Quod fieri non debuit, factum valet*: And many Tragedies might otherwise ensue. And the Rule of *Prudence* may direct Parents to *admit* of it, tho' they may in some other way testify their *dislike* of it. But whatsoever other Mistakes and Deceits may have been in the thing, if the Marriage be made between such as the Law of *Consanguinity* or *Affinity* doth not make *Incestuous*, and were *Single* Persons, they do in no wise admit of a Divorce. If the Party expected a *great* Portion, and finds *little* or *none*; if the Correlate prove contrary to Expectation, of *crabbed* and *perverse* Conditions, and carry it *insolently* & *unbecomingly*, this is no Warrant; for tho' this may be a Breach of the *Fifth* Command, yet not of the *Seventh*, which can only dissolve the Bond: And the Marriage was made with the *Person*, and not the *Estate*, the want therefore of that, can in no wise infringe it: Nor can any other Moral Evil, or any Reproach or Disgrace which the one Party may undergo, acquit the other from this Relation; but it must be born as a Rebuke in Providence. Nor will the *Mosaical* Law forementioned, help to justify any such thing; for we are sure, that the Law was *Judicial*, accommodated to the State of the People to whom it was given; made not to indulge such a Practice, but to put a Restraint upon that Licentiousness which through Custom they had used: Our Saviour therefore Resolves this plumply, Matth. 19. 8. *He saith unto them, Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.* Nor can that Law warrant such Divorces, any more than the Laws about *diverse* Wives to restrain them, may warrant *Polygamy*; which we have proved to be forbidden in the Moral Law, and may further Consider hereafter.

5. *A Chast Marriage requires the* Cohabitation *of the Parties so Related.* The proper Ends of *Chastity* in a Married State, cannot otherwise be answered, as is evident from the Nature of them: It is true, there are other Reasons requiring that such should dwell together, which refer to the common Relative Duties required by the *Fifth* Command: But we before observed, that one great Design for which God Ordained the *Married* State, was to preserve *Chastity* among Mankind, which is hindred by their Living asunder. This doth in no wise condemn those who in following the lawful and needful Employments of this Life, are necessitated for some time to Live at a distance of Place one from the other: Neither doth it forbid such from Marrying, or necessitate them to abandon such Callings upon their Marrying: If Men serve God in their Employments, they may trust in Him for His Grace to preserve them *Chast* in them; and I am sure, that if they cannot so Live, they will Dishonour themselves, and have reason to ask themselves *whether they are in their Way?*

AS to that CASE, *Whether Married Persons, who cannot Live together* Peaceably, *but are always in Broils & Contentions, may not by Consent Live* separately, *and be no whit concerned one with another?* I plumply reply, *That they cannot possibly do so without Sin.*

And

And as to that Vulgar Objection, *viz. That of two Evils, the least is to be chosen*; it may be replied, that it is *precariously* supposed, that this Evil is *less* than the other; but if granted, yet that holds good only in *Physical* Evils, or Evils of meer *Suffering*, but hath no Plea in *Moral* Evils, to which Head the Case under Debate hath a proper Reference; and the *Physical* Evils that accompany it, are only the *Consequents* upon the *Moral*. As long as the Marriage Bond abides, there are the Relative Duties lying on them, which cannot now be discharged, and so they must of necessity *Live in Sin*. And seldom, if ever, doth such a thing fall out, but there is Blame on either Hand; and they ought to Humble themselves before God, and seek both His Pardon & Grace to help them to resist and overcome the Temptations that bear them down. They ought to study each others, both Tempers and Distempers; and endeavour with Meekness and Christian Patience, to pity, and bear with each others Infirmities. We are always to consider that this Relation is not between *Angels*, or *Just Men made perfect*, for these *neither Marry, nor give in Marriage*, but such as are *Frail* and *Sinful*; and without Allowances one to the other as such, there is no living as we ought in this World. Such a *Consent* therefore must needs be *Unlawful*, and consequently not pleadable for Excuse of such a Practice; and those who do so Live, are an horrible Scandal to the Profession which they make.

BUT then, Here is another CASE, which calls for a farther Enquiry, *viz. What is to be done upon the wilful* Desertion *of the one Party, who without Consent forsake and abandon the other? Whether may the Deserted Party be accounted to be at Liberty from the Bond of the Marriage Covenant, and so Marry to another Person?* One principal Demur upon this matter is from the forecited Determination of Christ, *Matth* 19. 9. From whence it seems evident, that one Party cannot put away the other on any account but *Adultery*; whereas possibly the Deserter cannot be charged with any such Crime. Casuists do generally Reply with great Caution to this Question, and not without Reason, least they should open a door to great Wickedness, and indulge the Folly of Persons on every *Discontent*, to forsake one another; and so allow Breaches to be made in Families on *trivial* Occasions, which tends to the dissolution of the greatest Bonds of Humane Society. Nevertheless they do not doubt of the *Lawfulness* of the thing, but are very Curious in the *Rules* which may determine the Party to be a *Deserter*. They therefore tell us, that every Passionate Threatning and Practice thereupon, will not amount to it: That therefore there ought to be all prudent Endeavours used to obtain a Reconciliation, and a great deal of Patience used, and much Prayer to God for Success of these Endeavours; and Prudence may often oblige the Deserted Party to continue in the present Condition, rather than to take the Advantage offered. But we are assured by the Apostle, that there is no Obligation on Conscience when it is so, but a Liberty given to the injured Party, 1 Cor 7. 15. *If the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.* The Apostle indeed directly speaks of a Deserter who is a *Heathen*; if a Man or Woman Desert the Correlate who is a *Christian*, and because so. But we are to remember that he is speaking of a *Moral* Duty, required by the Law of Nature: And therefore it holds in it a *Parity* of Reason in all other Cases; for it is a *Desertion* about which he here prescribes. Nor doth *Paul* herein Contradict *Christ*, but very well Harmonizeth with Him, as will be evident upon a due Consideration: For they speak of two Cases greatly discrepant one from another; for the Case of *Divorce* and *Desertion* are different things. The Question which was offered to *Christ* was, *Whether a Man might at Pleasure give a Bill of Divorce*? to which He fully Answers, *No*, unless it be for *Fornication*. But the *Corinthians* Enquiry of the *Apostle* was, *Whether in case a Man or Woman forsook or Deserted from the Correlate, and were resolved to have nothing more to do with them, the Deserted were Bound by the Law of Matrimony*? to which he replys, *No*. And here the Party is not *Active*, as in giving a *Divorce*, but *Passive*, in being injuriously *forsaken*: And the Reason is, because such an one doth herein Violate an Essential Obligation in the Marriage Covenant.

AS to the CASE of one Parties having been *long* Absent and never heard of, *Whether it be Lawful for the other to Marry again, during the while it abides so*? All that I shall Reply is, That tho' the Civil Laws of Christianiz'd Nations hath made Provision in this regard, yet it is evermore on a strong Presumption, that the Party not heard of is really *Dead*; and the limiting of such a time, is a meer *Prudential*, built upon such a *Presumption*, which ordinarily proves so; but I believe that the Party concerned ought to be very Sober and Cautious, else they may bring Confusion on Families: And there is a difference between hearing nothing at all, and such Reports as carry in them strong grounds to think that they are indeed Dead: And *over-hastiness* in this, must needs be Scandalous, and often gives occasion of Sorrow afterwards. And I am afraid, that there hath been not a little of Sin Committed in this Place, by our Precipitancy upon this Account.

6. *IN a Chast Marriage it is requisite, that there be* Conjugal Love *between the Parties so Related.* It is true, *Love* is the Root of all Duty, and the Bond of all the Relations that God hath placed among Mankind, *Rom.* 13. 9, 10. But there is a diverse way wherein this Love is to exert it self; among these none is more Celebrated than that which is required to be between Parties bound together by the *Marriage Covenant*. There is therefore no Comparison so much used in the Scriptures, to represent the mutual Love between *Christ* and His *Church*, as that which is

between a *Man* and his *Wife*. Now a Conjugal *Love* is that which is adapted for Conjugal *Society*, and by it the Persons are fitted to a chearful Discharge of all the Duties which belong to them in that Relation: Nor can they be truly and sincerely discharged without it. Now this Love must terminate on the Person, and requires a single Esteem each for other, in which the Object is preferred before every other Person in the World, for such Society. And as this *Love* is that which only can make the Married Estate truly *Comfortable* and *Happy*, so in particular it is the best preservative of *Chastity* between such: And the want of it is that which makes so many Matches so Unhappy, as is too obvious among Men: Only Care is here to be had to distinguish between true Conjugal *Love*, and that inordinate *Lust* which some presume unworthily to put that Term upon; such was that of *Amnon* to his Sister *Tamar*. True Love is always built upon Honourable *Principles*, and attracted by Honest and Chast *Motives*.

AND there are two general Rules which are the Duty of all such as offer to engage in such a Covenant, if they would Live *Chastly* in a Married Condition, *viz.*

1. *THIS Love ought to have a principal regard in the directing of them in their mutual Choice each of the other, in order to Marriage.* This ought to be the proper *Cement* of the Bond in which they Oblige themselves one to the other: Nor can they come together in the Fear of God, except this be laid in the Foundation. It is true, the *Marriage Covenant* is that which bringeth them into this Relation, and binds them to all the Duties which are involved in it; but if the *Heart* be not rightly disposed in it, there is the principal thing wanting, which cannot be made up fully by any thing else whatsoever. Nor is this to be govern'd by *Instinct*, or unaccountable invincible *Inclinations*, as some pretend, for such Inclinations are not always *Mutual*: But Man is a reasonable Creature, and his *Affections* ought to be governed by *Judgment*, and not born down by *brutish Appetites*. Nor ought any Persons to Marry together, (if they would do it *Chastly*,) unless they can truly chuse *this* Person, and abandon every inordinate Affection to any *other*; and Cordially be for *this* Person, and for *no other*; and forsake *Father* & *Mother* for *their* sake, *Hos.* 3.3. And howsoever their Affections have *formerly* been inclined, yet they must have them weaned on this account, else they cannot Marry Chastly. And this is one Reason why *Forced* Marriages are not to be approved; for they who cannot *Command* the *Affections*, ought not to *Compel* the *Person*, except they would expose them to *Unchastity*. And for this reason, they who Marry *for* other Ends, or *from* other Motives, whether for *Wealth* or *Honour*, or some other Interest besides, whilst they have no such *Love* to the Person; or *to* such Persons, as they know have none for them, are Guilty of sinful Imprudence, and will expose themselves and their Correlates to horrid Temptations. What need then have all such to seek of God to Guide and Govern their Hearts in such an Undertaking, which is the only way to enjoy His Blessing, and Live together as becomes Christians.

2. *THIS Love is to be nourished & strengthned by all such who are entred into such a Relation.* Possibly there hath been but little of it governing in the Plighting of it, and it is too often so: Sometimes there hath been too much of *Constraint* used in it by Superiours; sometimes it hath been made for *Politick* Ends, where tho *Hands* are joyned, yet *Hearts* are not so united, as becomes such a Relation. But whatsoever Error there may have been in what went before, it is a great Truth, that without this Love they cannot discharge the Duties in this Relation which God requires of them, and for their enjoying the true Comfort of it. And among other things, there are many Temptations to *Unchastity*, which will have great Advantage over them, if this *Love* be wanting, which is a main Preservative against them: This therefore the Wise Man prescribes as a Preservative against strange Lusts, Prov. 5. 18, 19. *Rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind, and pleasant roe, let her breasts satisfy thee at all times, and be thou ravisht always with her love.* And there are a great many things that will offer themselves many times to Cool these Affections, and *Satan* will make use of them to alienate the Heart: There had need therefore be Endeavours always used to Corroborate this *Love*, and the Avoidance of all that may have a tendency to create Jealousies and Suspicions, or to create Feuds and Differences, lest *Satan* should take Advantage by these things to draw them away from their *Modesty*.

USE. TO shut up the Discourse of the *Affirmative* part of this Precept, let me offer these Rules to help us, for the Preservation of our *Chastity*:

1. *LABOUR to get the Fear of God in our Hearts.* This is the only way to mortify all the Carnal Lusts in us: It is by Grace that the Heart is Purified, and a New Principle is put into us whereby we are enabled to withstand all the Sollicitations that are offered from within or without: It was by this that *Joseph* resisted & overcame the Importunities of his amorous Lady, *Gen.* 39.9. This will help us to abhor all *Uncleanness*, and make us to delight in *Purity*.

2. *LET us be frequent in considering and affecting our selves with the Vileness of this Sin.* There is enough obvious to our View to render it truely Odious to us. It is a Sin which God is Angry for, and threatens Men with Exclusion from the Kingdom of God, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10. *Rev.* 21. 8. It is a Sin, than which nothing more Dishonours a Person among those that are Sober; and leaves a Blot upon such as are known to be addicted to it; Prov. 6. 33. *A wound and dishonour shall be get, and his reproach shall not be wiped away.* It is a Sin which is very Injurious to Mankind, it

tends

tends to the disturbing Humane Society, to the great Hurt and Injury of all concerned, to the bringing a Blot and Infamy upon Families, and leaving Disgrace upon Posterity: It is a Sin that hardens Persons in Sin; and leaves those who addict themselves to it, next to hopeless of Salvation, Prov. 2. 19. *None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the path of life.* And if God leaves any to it, it is a fearful Sign that He hates them; Prov. 22. 14. *The mouth of strange women is a deep pit: he that is abhorred of the Lord shall fall therein.*

3. *LET us carefully avoid all the Temptations which are leading to it*: Keep out of the way of them as much as we can: Let us avoid all those things that are leading or Occasions to it: Be sure to Resist the *first Motions* that we find stirring to it in us; and apply the Blood of CHRIST for the Purging of our Hearts from them: Stop our Ears at all the Charms that may be offered to Bewitch us into this Sin; and shun all familiar Society with all such as may in all likelihood ensnare us; and suppress every vain and foolish Thought that riseth in us: And in sense of our own Natural Infirmity, and the Body of Death which we bear about with us, let us be earnest in Commending our selves to God for His keeping, that so we may serve Him with a Pure Heart and Clean Hands; and this is the way to be Preserved by Him.

[JANUARY 9. 1704.]

SERMON *CXCVI.*

QUESTION LXXII.

WHAT is forbidden in the Seventh Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Seventh Commandment forbiddeth all Unchast Thoughts, Words and Actions.

WE have taken an Account, under the *former*, of the Duties to be done under this Command. We are now to view those things which are to be avoided by the Precept. And there having been so much said to the former, the less may here suffice.

WE formerly observed, That the Word used in this Command, which we read *Adultery*, strictly signifys the Act of *Uncleanness* between Persons, one whereof at least is in a *Married* State: In which sense also the *Latins* used the Word *Adultery*. But it is by a *Synecdoche* put for all sorts of *Uncleanness* whatsoever, or every thing that is repugnant to *Chastity*, as *Murder* is (in the foregoing Precept) for every thing which is against *Humanity*. And it is a general Rule formerly observed, that the Command which forbids the *Sin*, forbids also the *Means* which tend of their own Nature to the drawing of Persons into it. Our *Answer* therefore, tho' *brief*, is very *full* and *comprehensive*: and opens a large Field for the discovery of manifold Abominations. I shall here *briefly* gather up the Sum of these, which may be Collected from what was before more *largely* insisted on, under the Duties of Chastity.

I. *ALL Lewd & Unchast Behaviour of Persons Singly & Separately, which they offer to their* Own *Bodies*; which contradicts the Order of Nature, and the End of Creation. Such as that for the which we read that God Slew *Onan*, *Gen.* 38. 10. And contrary to the Rule of Remedy appointed by God, 1 Cor. 7. 9. *But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.*

II. *ALL Unlawful and Prohibited* Mixtures. And these may be ranked under two Heads.

[1.] *SUCH as are* Unnatural, *and must therefore needs be condemned by the Light of Nature, and with respect to the thing it self.* And these are of two sorts, viz. *Sodomy*, the Vileness whereof the Apostle sets forth in Words as *Modest* as the thing can bear, *Rom.* 1. 26, 27. Which contradicts the End of God's Creating Mankind in *distinct* Sexes. And *Beastiality*, which God fore-saw to be in the Corruption of Man's Nature, and therefore provided a severe Law against it, *Exod.* 22. 19. But the very mention of these things strikes Horrour into the Minds of all Modest & Chast Persons; and therefore though I durst not but Name them, I shall pass them over with the Apostle's awfull Remark in, Eph. 5. 11, 12. *And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.*

[2] *SUCH as are (in some sense) more* Natural: For tho' the Light of Nature doth also Prohibit them, yet they do come within the Compass of the *Species* and *Sexes*; and so sinful Men are not so easily frightned with the Horrour of them; and to this Head belong several things, *viz.*

1. *ADULTERY.* Which we observed is when one of the Parties at least is under a Sacred Bond of *Marriage*; tho' the Crime is aggravated when *both* are so: And tho the *Mosaical Pædagogy* alleviated the Crime on the *Man's* side, because of the hardness of their Hearts; yet from the *Beginning* it was not so: And whatsoever Reasons may plead it *worse* on the *Woman's* side, (which yet I see not thro',)

I am sure the Sin is *equal* in regard of this Command, it being equally *Adultery*, or a defiling of the Marriage-Bed, and an equal abuse offered to the Correlate: And God peculiarly Chargeth it, Mal. 2. 14. *Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee, and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.*

2. *POLYGAMY.* This also is contrary to the Nature of the Marriage-Covenant; and is not only Unlawful by a Positive Law, but by the Law of right Reason: And to this also may *Concubinacy* be referred; for though there was a difference between a *Wife* and a *Concubine*, in point of *Privilege* and *Servitude*, yet they were reputed as the Man's Property: but this also is a Violation of the Duty of *Chastity*.

3. *INCEST.* When Persons Marry together, or have Carnal Knowledge one of another, who are *too near of Kin*. What these Degrees are, whether of *Consanguinity* or *Affinity* we before took an Account: And to Marry to such is a high Crime in the sight of God; and ought to be so in the account of Men: And to *Approach* to these, tho' not to *Marry* with them is an Iniquity of a deeper Dye than meer *Fornication*, in that there is a *double* Violation of *Modesty* in it; because in the *other* there was a Liberty for a *lawful* Marriage, whereas in *this*, it is utterly *unlawful*.

4. *FORNICATION.* Which is Committed between Persons who are *Single*, and *without* the prohibited Limits of Kindred: This also is a Sin prohibited in the Word of God; and Christians are warned against it, 1 *Cor.* 6. 10, 18 and elsewhere. This was a Sin which the *Gentiles* had lost the sense of, and reckoned it among *Adiaphorous* things, and used it without all Shame or Remorse: But the Word of God condemns it; and it is a Sign of a very great Apostacy when a Professing People reckon it a thing of no Reproach, and Persons chuse rather to Live in it, than to bring themselves under the honourable Tie of *Marriage*, counting it a Yoke intollerable: And we have the Apostle's Reflection upon it, Heb. 13. 4. *Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.*

AND here the great Sin of such Governments which allow or tollerate *common Stews*, calls for a Censure: And whatsoever Excuses are pretended for it, it is certain that it procures a Publick Guilt for such Places, and calls for National Judgments.

III. *ALL Unchast* Thoughts. There is a *Speculative* Uncleanness, which, though it breaks not out into *Action*, is yet obvious to God's *All-seeing* Eye, who knows our Thoughts afar off, and leave a Guilt behind them. There is a *Contemplative* Impurity, when Persons Nourish in them *Thoughts* of Uncleanness, with Delight and Pleasure: This *Job* clears himself of, Job 31. 1 *I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid? Look*, Hebrew, *Consider* or *think of*; so that he hath special regard to the Eyes of his *Mind*: And indeed, such Thoughts attended with inward Motions, are the first stirrings of *Original Sin*, and consequently *Sinful*; and the Conviction of them should keep us Humble, tho' we should have Grace to Resist them. And hitherto belong the Reading of obscene Books or Pamphlets, and the looking upon such Pictures as are accommodated to draw our Thoughts, and set our Minds going that way; for the *Eye* affects the *Heart*, and nourisheth Speculation.

IV. *ALL Lustful* Desires, *and longings entertained for the Fruition of unlawful Pleasures.* This also belongs to the *Conception* of Sin, and hath a natural tendency to the *Accomplishment* of it; as we are told, Jam. 1. 15. *When lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin.* And this is usually the Product of *Unchast Thoughts*; these if nourished, will Influence the *Affections*, and stir up the *Desire* of after Fruition: And it is certain, that *Desire* cometh under the Regulation and Censure of the Holy Law of God: And for this we have our Saviour's definite Conclusion in the present Case, Matth. 5. 28. *I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.* Not that this forbids the *lawful Desire* of enjoying such a Person in an *Honest* way, having our Affections regularly set upon the Object; for we formerly observed, that this is a thing requisite in order to a *Chast* Marriage: But when these *Desires* are to gratify a raging Lust, without regard to *Honesty* or *Modesty* then are they *Unlawful*. We are therefore Commanded to *Mortify* all such *inordinate Affections*, Col. 3. 5:

V. *ALL Obscence* Words. There is a lustful *Tongue*, and such is an *Index* of the *Heart*; for we are told, Matth. 12. 34. *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.* There are some *whose Tongues are set on Fire of Hell*; and in nothing doth it more discover it self, than in the *Lacivious* Language, which some Defile their Mouths withal: They entertain the Company they frequent, with a Language that makes Modest Ears to tingle, and puts every Chast Person to the Blush. And hitherto belong the telling wanton Stories, and singing of lacivious Songs, and amorous Ballads: And as by these they foment Lust in *themselves*, and add Fuel to the Fire that is within, so they tend to Corrupt the Minds of *others*, by offering them the proper Incentives of it: Hence the Apostle Cautions against this, as a Provocative to Lust, *Eph.* 5. 4, 5. And this belongs to the *Filthy* Communication against which we are Warned, Col. 3. 8. *But now you also put — all filthy communication out of your mouth.*

VI. *ALL manner of* Temptations *offered to others, to allure them to Consent to us in the Acts of Uncleanness.* And this comprehends under it both *Words* and *Gestures* which are *Immodest*. Doubtless there is a Civil Conversation between Persons of *Both* Sexes, which is allowable, and a Testimony of Social Friendship, and is *Irreprehensible*; for God made Mankind for *Civil* as well as *Religious* Society: And there is an innocent

innocent Pleasantness in it allowable. But there is also a *Lewd* Conversation that too many allow themselves in, which is a notorious Breach of this Command: There are those alluring and enticing *Words*, which are offered on purpose to draw the *Mind*, and win the *Consent* of the Person, to Acts of Uncleanness. Such were those we read of the strange Woman, of whom it is said, Prov. 7. 21. *With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him.* There are those amorous *Looks*, which fascinate, or like the *Basilick*'s Eye, cast Poison and become Infectious. Hence we read of some, 2 Pet. 2. 14. *Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling, unstable souls.* And there are the *Immodest* and *Indecent Carriages*, which too many indulge themselves in; and those *Offers* which are unbecoming: All which are *Whoredom* in God's Account; and tho' the Persons should proceed no further, yet this Sin will for these things be Charged upon them one Day, by God and their own Consciences, as proper Transgressions against the Rules of *Chastity*.

VII. *ALL Excess or Intemperance in Meats and Drinks.* This indeed is but an *Occasion* or *Incentive*, and may in divers Respects be applied to divers Precepts: As they are the Occasions of imparing the Health, and shortning of the Life, so they refer to the *Sixth*; and as they are the Prodigal Wasting of Men's Estates, and tend to bring them to Poverty, so they belong to the *Eighth*: But as Men do hereby make Provision for the Flesh, and nourish their Incontinency, so they do belong to *this*; and therefore all Divines do on this Head refer them hither: And the Spirit of God in the Prophet seems to put them together, Hos. 4. 11. *Whoredom, and wine, and new wine, take away the heart.* And on this Account we have that Caution, Rom. 13. ult. *And make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.* And we have such a Remark as that of the Prophet, Jer. 5. 8. *They were as fed horses in the morning: every one neighed after his neighbour's wife.* And they that pamper their Bodies, do thereby nourish their Lusts, which they ought to Mortify: And in particular by *Drunkenness*, or Excess in strong Drink, Men enflame themselves, and lose the Government of their Reason, and thereby are fearfully exposed, as *Lot* was.

VIII. *ALL Undecent & Immodest Attire.* Apparel was at first allowed to Man for *Modesty*, to hide his Shame which he had procured by his Apostacy; and then to shield him from the Inconvenience of the Season, to the Injuries whereof he was also exposed, which would not have been, had he not sinned. It was also given him for a distinction of Sexes, to prevent Filthiness; and to distinguish the Orders of Men, who were to be known by their Garb: They were also allowed for Ornament, tho' they ought still to carry with them the Memorial of their Shame. But then there is an Abuse of Apparel; and that is when it is improved to nourish Pride and Luxury; and the latter of these is under our Consideration. We are assured by the Wise Man, (*Prov.* 7. 10.) that there is such an Attire, for he was an eye witness of it: And that this was to be only judged of by the *Heart* and *Design* of the Wearer, as some pretend, is fond and foolish; and *Solomon* as Wise as he was, could not so judge; but he judged of the *Heart* by the *Attire*: Now meerly the *Matter* of which it was made, could not be the Rule of judging, (tho' if the *Cost* out-bids the *Estate* of the Persons, it shews their Pride and Vanity;) but it was the *Mode*, either the Fashion, or manner of putting it on; and that is, when it is such as contradicts the main Ends of Apparel, or so exposeth the Body as to be a Lure to entice Persons to *Uncleanness*. And when Persons Dress themselves *Antickly*, so as to allure Spectators, it is doubtless a Breach of this Precept. And to this Head belong those *Paintings* which some use to *Adulterate* their *Faces*, which are an Index of an *Adulterous Heart*.

IX. *IDLENESS.* This indeed hath a special respect to the *Eighth* Command, (as may be afterwards considered,) inasmuch as it is a neglect of the proper Course which God hath appointed Men to wait upon Him for their Support and Supply; the Promise being made to *Diligence*: But it also contributes not a little to the nourishing & inciting of the Lusts of the Flesh. It is usually in Conjunction with the former; and therefore we find that the prodigious Leudness of *Sodom* was fomented by these, according to that in Ezek. 16. 49. *Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, Pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her, and in her daughters.* Man is an *Active* Being, and cannot ly still, but will be Employed in something: If therefore he be not busied in some *Lawful* and *Honest* Employment, he will take to something which is *Vile* and *Dishonest*; and there is nothing to which he is more naturally addicted, than the Sins which militate against *this* Command. And this the very *Heathen* had a Resentment of, and therefore gave it as a Moral Precept for the Remedying of the Exorbitancy of this Lust, *Oria si tellus*, &c. And indeed *Idleness* hath been by Wise Men accounted to be the Devil's Pillow, on which if he can gain Men to ly down, he hath them his own, to do what he pleaseth with them.

X. *FREQUENTING of Lewd Company*, We have the Wise Man's Observation, Prov. 13. 20. *He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.* And doubtless Familiarity with Persons will assimulate us to their Manners. It is therefore a Warning given by the Spirit of God in respect of every sort of Sin, that we avoid Friendship with such as are addicted to it, lest we Learn, &c. and particularly with regard to *this* Sin, Prov. 5. 8. *Remove thy way far from her, & come not nigh the door of her house.* And it was that which was the undoing

of

of the ſimple Young Man, *Chap.* 7. 7, &c. We muſt not touch *Pitch*, except we have a mind to be Defiled; we ſhould not Walk upon *Coals* if we would not be Burnt. And here, not only the ſeeking of ſecret Opportunities of Dalliance with *Light* Perſons is condemned; but alſo the frequenting of ſuch Companies and Exerciſes where *Lacivioufneſs* is taught, militates againſt this Command. For which Reaſon Divines do refer the frequenting of *Balls* and *Stage-Plays*, to the Sins againſt this Command, becauſe they are too frequently Abuſed to repreſent *Lacivioufneſs* with too bare a Face. As to the *Lawfulneſs* of theſe, under which the Patrons of them do ſhroud themſelves, I ſhall not here Diſpute; but will only ſay, that ſuppoſing the things *Indifferent* in themſelves, yet there is not *leſs*, but *more* Danger of them, becauſe *thought* to be ſo; *in Licitis perimus omnes*: Chriſtians are moſt of all *Expoſed* by ſuch things. It is therefore a good Caution given, Gal. 5.13. ---*Uſe not Liberty for an occaſion to the Fleſh.*--- And that ſuch things have been and are ſo Abuſed is Notorious; and ſuch an Abuſe is Caution ſufficient to Sober Perſons to *avoid* the things themſelves. If the *Brazen Serpent* once comes to be *Idolized*, it is high time to turn it into a *Pebuſhtan*: And when ſuch things become ſcandalous to the People of God, all that ſeek His Glory ought to avoid them, leſt they provoke God to ſay as, Hoſ. 4. 15. *Though thou Iſrael play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend.*

XI. THERE are alſo *divers things* wherein this Command may be broken with reſpect to *Marriages*. We obſerved, that theſe have a peculiar reſpect to this Precept; one great End of the appointing them, being for the Preſervation of *Chaſtity*. And I ſhall here point at ſome of the Principal:

1. *THE Prohibition of ſome* Orders *of Men from Marrying*. We know that in the *Papacy*, there is a total forbidding of all in *Religious Orders*; and making *Fornication*, yea *Adultery* a *leſs* Sin in ſuch, than to *Marry*: This is one of the Iniquities of the *laſt Times*, and one Note of their Apoſtacy, 1 Tim. 4. 3. *Forbidding to Marry*. Now this is directly contrary to the Light of Nature, and the expreſs Warrant of the Word of God; and the Apoſtle hath at once Confuted it, Heb. 13. 4. *Marriage is honourable in* All.—— And how wofully this hath filled the World with *Whoredoms*, *Sodomy*, and *Murders*, he is a ſtranger to *Hiſtory* who knows not: And what ſcandal have riſen therefrom to the *Chriſtian Religion*, is awful to tell.

2 DISPENSATIONS *granted by Authority to* Unlawful *Marriages*. What are ſuch, we may gather from what before were obſerved to be *Lawful*. True, the *Papacy* have made ſuch Degrees and Relations *Unlawful*, which the *Word of God* hath not: Nor is it a Sin againſt this Command to Tranſgreſs them, which were only made to bring Griſt to the *Pope*'s Mill. But for any to diſpenſe with that which God hath forbidden, is to encourage and uphold *Inceſtuous Marriages*, which is a great Sin againſt *Chaſtity*.

3. POLITICK Preventions *of Perſons from Marrying in due Seaſon*. And this may be the Fault either of *Parents*, or the Perſons *themſelves*; and it often becomes a great ſnare, and expoſeth them to Temptations. Sometimes out of *Covetouſneſs*, to prevent the neceſſity of ſparing a Portion: Sometimes *Poverty*, leſt they ſhould not be able to Support themſelves: Sometimes *Diſguſt* at the Perſons offering. No doubt *Prudence* may be uſed by *Advice* and *Counſel* in theſe things; but Care is to be had, not to expoſe them to *Sin*, which is not to be choſen before *outward* Inconveniencies; and the Rule is plump, 1 Cor. 7. 9. *If they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.*

4. RASH Vows *of leading a* Single *Life*. To which Head we may refer the *Monaſtical Vows* of the *Papiſts*. That it is ſometimes a Duty to Bind our ſelves to God by *Vows*, to the performance of *Duties*, and avoiding of *Sins*; and that it is ſometimes lawful and prudent to make *Vows* about things in themſelves Lawful, and which we have in our Power, is not to be denied; but to do ſo in things which are not in our Power, is a Tempting of God, and expoſing our ſelves to Temptation, & to be juſtly left of God to Violate them; and thus it is in the Caſe before us. Hence our Saviour ſo replied upon His Diſciples, *Matth.* 19. 9, 10. But how well ſuch do *Perform*, or how profligately they *Break* them, the World is well acquainted: And all the Merit they can rationally hope for by ſuch *Vows*, is to gain themſelves the greater Condemnation.

5. *ALL* Contentions *between Married Perſons, which alienate their Conjugal Love from each other*: Whether it be by living in continual Brawls, or if it amounts to a Separation. This alſo gives *Satan* great Advantage to offer inſinuations to this Intemperance; and their own *Corrupt Luſts* in them, to fix upon *Unlawful* Objects, and uſe *Means* to gratify them, in the Fruition of them. And how doth doleful Experience make it to appear, that ſuch as cannot Live at *Home* with *Quiet* and *Content*, do ſeek their Satisfaction *Abroad*.

THESE, and whatſoever things of like Nature, are Sins againſt the *Seventh* Command; and therefore ought with greateſt heedfulneſs to be avoided by ſuch who would preſerve their *Chaſtity*, and keep both their Souls and Bodies pure from *Uncleanneſs*.

GIVE me leave then, to offer ſomething more, by way of *Motive*, to urge the neceſſity of Heedfulneſs and great Endeavour to Suppreſs and Mortify this Sin in us; and the exerciſe of holy Fear, leſt you ſhould run your ſelves into the ſnares of it.

Conſider then,

1. THE *Proclivity of fallen Men to it*. There is nothing wherein the Luſts of the Fleſh are more apt to vent themſelves. And if we conſult the *Annals* of the Scriptures, we ſhall find that evermore in the Apoſtacy of God's profeſſing People, *this* Sin hath made one Article in the *Indictment* of them: And ſurely where

Concupiſcence

Concupiſcence is moſt forcible, it concerns us to keep the ſtricteſt guard upon it, if we would not be trapan'd by it.

2. THE *too great Prevalency and Commonneſs of the Sin.* This added to the other, makes it the more dangerous: When Sins are decried by Men, and are a Reproach to them who addict themſelves to the perpetration of them, it uſually puts a Check on Men, and gives them Reſtraint; but when they become faſhionable, and frequent, and little witneſs born againſt it, it makes *Luſt* daring, and it will appear bare-faced: It many ways expoſeth Perſons, and they had need look well to themſelves, if they would not be drawn into a Compliance with it; and without good Reſolution they will be overcome.

3. *IF you nouriſh this Luſt in your hearts, it will eaſily get the Victory over you.* The *Heart* is the Womb in which Sin is conceived, and if it obtain a *Conception* there, it will want nothing but an Opportunity to bring it forth into *Act*: You have an Account of the Deſcent of it, Jam. 1. 15. *When luſt hath conceived, it bringeth forth ſin: and ſin when it is finiſhed, bringeth forth death.* You muſt kill *Concupiſcence*, if you would prevent actual *Enormities*; for the moſt flagitious Crimes that were ever perpetrated, had their riſe from a *Thought* darted in and nouriſhed, and not ſtifled and rejected: You may think to ſtop at *ſpeculative Wantonneſs*, but you will deceive your ſelves.

4. *IT is a Sin in it ſelf truly Abominable.* It is therefore called *Abomination*, Lev. 18. 26. It is called *Filthineſs it ſelf*, Eph. 5. 4. And let Men make never ſo *light* a matter of it, yet in it ſelf, it is a *ſhameful* thing: It is therefore the Caution the Wiſe Man gives to his Son on this Account, Prov. 6. 33. *A wound and diſhonour ſhall be get, and his reproach ſhall not be wiped away.* God will loath us for it, and good Men will deſpiſe us; and it will leave a Note of Infamy upon us, which will ſtick, and hardly in this Life be obliterated.

5. *IT is a Sin of a moſt miſchievous tendency.* It makes a very grievous diſturbance in Humane Society; creates great Confuſions in Families, it produceth Brawls and Contentions, Jealouſies and Rage; occaſions Murders; and ſometimes brings Ruin on the Places where it grows prevalent: It procures awful Judgments from God; and it grievouſly hurts the Souls of them that are given up to it, as well as brings Poverty and Miſery upon the outward Man. It is a Sin with which God puniſheth other Sins; and it is therefore a fearful Judgment to be left up to it; it fights againſt the Soul, 1 Pet. 2. 11. *Fleſhly Luſts which war againſt the Soul.* And it awfully hazards Men's Eternal Ruin; for we are told, Prov. 5. 22, 23. *His own iniquities ſhall take the wicked himſelf, and he ſhall be holden with the cords of his ſins. He ſhall die without inſtruction, and in the greatneſs of his folly he ſhall go aſtray.*

LET us then bring this Luſt to the Croſs of CHRIST, and Mortify it every Day; and Pray hard to God, that we may be delivered from the Guilt and Dominion of this Sin.

[FEBRUARY 6. 1704.]

SERMON CXCVII.

QUESTION LXXIII.

WHICH is the Eighth Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Eighth Commandment is, *Thou ſhalt not Steal.*

WE have taken a brief View of thoſe Duties which require Love to our Neighbour, in reſpect of his *Perſon*, under which his *Life* and *Chaſtity* are conſidered.

IT follows that we proceed to thoſe which refer to his *outward Concerns*; and theſe alſo are reduced under *Two* Heads, the one pointing to his *Eſtate*, and is directed in the *Eighth*; the other to his *Good Name*, purſued in the *Ninth*. We are now to paſs over to the *former* of theſe: Concerning the *Order* of which, I ſhall only Remark, That altho' a Man's *Good Name* be of very great Concern, and highly to be valued, according to, Eccl. 7. 1. *A good name is better than precious ointment.* Yet his *Livelihood* is of more abſolute Neceſſity; and therefore *this* is put before the *other*.

NOW *this* Command is, as the *former*, expreſſed *Negatively*; yet it hath an *Affirmative* part properly belonging to it, the right Conſideration whereof will give light to the other: It is therefore moſt proper and Methodical that we begin with that. Hence

QUESTION LXXIV.

WHAT is required in the Eighth Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Eighth Commandment requireth the lawful procuring and furthering of our own, and our Neighbour's Wealth, or outward Eſtate.

THE Word uſed in the Command for *Stealing*, firſtly and properly ſignifys, *a Cloſe or private taking a thing from another, without his Privity*: But it is here uſed *Synecdochically*

dochically for all manner of wrong done to *another* in his Estate; which may be done many ways, as will be hereafter considered.

IN general, *Theft* is reckoned to comprehend all *Unlawful Usurpation* of *another*'s Property.

THE several Duties enjoyned under this Command, are generally referred to the Head of *Commutative* Justice.

JUSTICE is generally distributed into *Distributive* and *Commutative*: But whether this be a distribution of a *Genus* into *Species*, or of a *whole* into it's *parts*, or wherein the true difference between them consists, is matter of Dispute.

I shall not here Commorate, only observe, that *Justice* is sometimes used for that *Universal Obedience* which we pay to the whole revealed Will of God, and hath respect to the Commands of *both* Tables; it being righteous that we render both to God & Man that which is due to them, by vertue of the Law of Special Government; Matth. 22. 21. *Render unto Cesar, the things which are Cesar's: and unto God, the things that are God's.* Sometimes it is put *distributively* with *Holiness*, *Luk.* 1. 75. And then, as *Holiness* refers to the Duties of the *First* Table, and *Righteousness* to those which belong to the *Second*; so it is wont to be Described, *A Vertue by which we are disposed to discharge those Offices to our Neighbour, which we owe to him, by Vertue of the Precept*: And so it graspeth all the Duties of Love to our Neighbour, comprized in each Precept of the *Second* Table: And this seems to be the most genuine Notion of *Distributive Justice*, and so it cannot stand distributively with *Commutative Justice*, as an opposite *Species*, but rather as a *Genus* to it, which refers properly to the *Eighth* Command: But I shall not insist further here. *Commutative Justice*, if we speak of it as a Vertue, is, *A Principle obliging & disposing of us to give every one his own, in the outward Good things of this Life*: And the Object which is comprehended in it, is both *our selves* and *others*; for there is a *Justice* which a Man owes to *himself* in this regard, as well as to his *Neighbour*: And this hath not only a respect to the Civil Laws of Governments, which can hardly be so Constituted, but that sometimes, *Summum jus, est summa injuria*: But it hath a main respect to the Rule of *Equity*; which tho' *Civilians* may distinguish from *Justice*, and accordingly have their several Courts for one and the other, and these Necessary, because of our *Imperfection*; yet in *Divinity* and *Conscience*, *Just* & *Equal* are *Synonimical.*

IN order to a more clear and distinct laying open of the several Duties comprized under this Precept, I shall in the first place offer some general Rules or Conclusions.

I. THAT *God made this lower World, and the things of it, for the use of Man, and the Benefit of his present Life.* It is true, His *last End* in all His Works is His own Glory, Prov. 16. 4. *The Lord hath made all things for himself.* Rom. 11. ult. *For of him, and thro' him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.* But there is also a *subordinate* End or Use for which God made, and to which He appointed them; and that is it which is under Consideration.

NOW there is a double Life of Man considered in the Scriptures, viz. *Natural* & *Spiritual*; and it is the former of these, for which these things were purposely made. On this Account Man was made the *Last* of the Visible Creation, having an House Built, and every way furnished for his suitable Entertainment: And he had a Right to, and Dominion over them bestow'd upon him by God the Creator and great Landlord; and he was to be God's Tenant, and hold under Him, and for that reason he was to do Homage for them: We have therefore his Charter that was granted to him, recorded, Gen. 1. 28. *And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every thing that moveth upon the earth.* And hence that Observation, Psal. 115. 16. ——*The earth hath he given to the children of men.* Only it was under a Restraint, which is clearly intimated in that Sovereign Exception and Prohibition, mentioned in, *Gen. 9. beg.* Hence every thing in this lower World, was so disposed, and fitted with such a Nature and Operation, as should be serviceable to the Comfort and Support of his Natural Life: The Cœlestial Bodies for their Light and Influence to Succour him; and the Air for his Respiration; the Meteors to cause the Earth to Fructify for him; the Fruits of the Earth, and the Animals in the Land and in the Water to Support his Life, and render it Comfortable: Hence that in, Psal. 8. 6, 7, 8. *Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea and the beasts of the field: The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.* Which tho' it hath a Typical Reference to Christ, yet in the Type, it points to the first Charter given to Man in his Creation; tho' the Forfeiture made in the Apostacy was again recovered by Christ, and is restored thro' Him to His Redeemed: And hence God hath promised that as a New-Covenant Privilege to His People *Hos.* 2. 22.

II. THAT *Man's Nature requires the Use of these things for his Support and Comfort, and hath a dependance on them, under God, for his Bodily Supply.* There go in a *Body* and a *Soul* to the Constitution of Humane Nature; and for the present Support of the Union between these, it is requisite that the Body be upheld in Life, for by the Death of that, a Separation is made: Now the next End and Use of these things is for the preserving of this Union, and the affording to the Body the necessary and convenient Relief. Now God doth not usually do this by *Miracles*, but by the

the ordinary Supplies of His Mediate Providence; nor are we to measure our Expectation by what God can do, but by the Course which He hath put Nature into: And tho' these as *Means* have an absolute Dependance on God's Influence and Blessing to make them reach the *End*; for which reason we are told, Matth. 4. 4. *Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* And accordingly we have that Threatning, Isa. 3. 1. *For behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts: doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah, the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water.* Which seems rather to aim at the Vertue of them, than the things themselves; Yet these are things ordinately Necessary for the Continuance of our Lives, the preserving or restoring of our Health, and making our Lives comfortable. Hence that, Job 22. 12. —*My necessary Food.* And God hath for this End, put such a Vertue into these things, whereby they may answer this End; As, Psal. 104. 14, 15. *He causeth the grass to grow for the cattel, & herb for the service of man; that he may bring forth food out of the earth: And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oyl to make his face to shine, and bread which strengthneth man's heart.* And they are accommodated for all the Uses which are for the outward Man: Some things for *Food*, in both *Meat* and *Drink*, others for *Raiment* and *Ornament*, others for *Traffick* and mutual *Commerce*, others to *Warm* them, others to serve for *Utensils* to supply their many Occasions, others for *Medicine*: And there are none of these, but in their Creation, were some way or other serviceable for the Benefit of the outward Man; Tho' since the Fall, many of them are become *Noxious* to Man, by the Curse which Sin hath brought upon the lower part of the Creation; yet in their Primitive Creation they were all *Beneficial*, Gen. 1 ult.

III. THAT *God hath not given these things to Men to be held in Common; but hath appointed that every Man should have his Share in them, wherein he holds a proper Right in them, and they are his own and not another's.* I am not here Discoursing what Men may do in a way of *Partnership*, by mutual Consent, tho' that doth not in a true sense Contradict our Assertion; nor yet what may and ought to be laid up in a common Stock for the publick Use of a Community, who are in that regard one Body Politick: But the meaning is, that God hath Ordained that Men should have a Property in such a Portion of these things, which no other particular Person can lawfully Dispose of at his Pleasure, without the free Consent of the Proprietor, so long as it abides his; but he hath a Dominion over it, as his own proper State: Hence that in Deut. 32. 8 *When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.* And we have that of *David* in 1 *Chron.* 21. 3. And were it not for this Appointment of God, there could be no such thing as *Stealing* in the sense of this Command, and so it had been *superfluous*.

AS to the Enquiry, *Whether this Appointment were from the Creation, or was introduced upon the Apostacy?* [there being some who give this as one difference between the Condition of Man in *Integrity*, and now since the *Fall*; and thereupon some have pretended to be *Levellers*, on presumption that it is proper to a State of *Perfection*.] I shall only Reply, That tho', if Man had kept his *Uprightness*, there would have been no *Wrong* and *Injury* practised by one upon another: Nevertheless, this doth not infer that they would have held all in *Common*; nor doth it make this Command to be brought in upon the Necessity occasioned by the Sin of Man, any more than the other Commands of the *Second* Table, for there is the same reason for them all upon this account. If therefore this was a *Moral* Precept, and so perpetual, and founded in the Law of Nature, it must needs be from the *Beginning*; and by a just and necessary Consequence there must be a distinguishing between *Meum & Tuum*, because on this, the very Reason of the Command is grounded.

AS to the Plea which some make, from the Opinion of the Wisest of Heathen, who pleaded for a *Community* of Estates, as *Plato* did in his *Eutopian Common wealth*; it is a poor Pretence to oppose to the express Command of God: And we know that he urged it, to have *Wives* also in *common*, which is certainly Contradictory to right Reason, and the Resentment of all Sober Men. Besides, other of the Gentile Philosophers oppugned him in it, and gave solid Arguments to Confute him. And as to the matter in hand, tho' their Arguments have a respect to the State of *Fallen* Man, (for they were not acquainted with his *Primitive* State,) yet they shew the *Inconsistency* of it with the Peaceable and Well-ordered Society of Mankind, one with another.

AS to the Plea brot from the Practice of the Primitive Church in the Apostle's Times, mentioned, Acts 2. 44, 45. *All that believed were together, & had all things common; And so'd their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.* And the Precept given by our Saviour to the Young Man, in Matth. 19. 21, *If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.* It is replyed, that this Precept was *Personal* and *Probationary*; and we know that the Disciples of Christ upon His Call left their Callings, and their all, to follow Him, as *Ver.* 27. But this was *Extraordinary*, and was not *Common*, nor was it *Perpetual* to them; for we find what He said to them, Luke 22. 35, 36. *And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.* And as to the *former*, it is evident, first, That it was only at *Jerusalem*, and not elsewhere, and that

in a Time of great Distress on the Church; and then, that it was but Voluntary, and according to what they determined in their own Purpose, according to *Acts* 5. 4. But this no way Contradicts the Right which the Law of God did from the beginning confer on Men to be Proprietors in that Estate which they came by in an Honest way.

AND whereas some of the Ancients pretended for a *Community of Goods*, they only intended, that no Man ought to count any thing so his own; but that he ought when need required, to bestow it liberally, as a Debt which he owed to God.

IV. THAT *Ungodly Men have a true Civil Right to the share of Good things, which God bestows upon them in this Life.* We must distinguish between a *Civil* and *Spiritual* Right, which Men may have claim to, in the outward Benefits of Time. We before observed, that God at the first put Man in Possession of these things as His Tenant, and indented with him upon Terms; and this abode Firm so long as he stood to these Terms; but when once he brake them, he made a Forfeiture into God's Hands; for when he forfeited his Life, every thing else went with it, and God might have immediately Prosecuted him, and at once turned him out of all. And though this Right is recovered again by Christ, in the Purchase which He made and conferred upon His Redeemed in the New Covenant, upon their Believing on Him, (*Rom.*8.16,17. 1 *Cor.* 3. 22, 23.) yet so long as any abide under the First Covenant, the Curse abides upon them; and whatsoever they enjoy *Providentially* or by Divine Permission, yet they ly open to a Writ of *Ejectment*, whensoever God shall serve it on them; and they do but Delude themselves, when they allot on a long Possession: Hence that, Luke 12. 19,20. *I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?* And we are told, Prov 3. 33. *The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked.* Nevertheless, God hath seen meet to magnify His Clemency and Mercy towards Men, in this Day of His Forbearance, in which He bestows his common Favours upon them, as well Wicked as Godly, Matth. 5. 45. *For he maketh his Sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.* *Acts* 14. 16, 17. And as His Bounty bestows these things upon them, and favours their lawful Endeavours for them, so He hath confirmed a Right upon them, by His Word: And so long as they keep within the bounds of Civil Righteousness, their Claim, *ad Hominem*, is as good as that of the *Godly*: And tho' God may, yet Men may not, lawfully make a Seizure of their Estates, on the score of their being Pagans, Idolaters, or Strangers to the Gospel Covenant. God indeed gave a special Order to Israel to dispossess the Seven Nations of *Canaan*, and take Possession for themselves, and He is Lord Proprietor; but if they had done it of their own Heads, because they were Heathen Nations, they had been unjustifiable: We therefore find that God forbad them from medling with others, though they were likewise Idolaters; and gives that Reason, because He had given it them, *i. e.* by His over-ruling Providence, *Deut.* 2. 5, 19. And this discovers the Error and Vanity of those, who pretend *that Dominion is founded in Grace*; and that on this account, all *Ungodly* Men are liable to be seized by the *Godly* and put out of their Possession; from the abusing of such Passages in the Word of God, as speak of the *Saints inheriting the Earth*, as, *Psal.* 37. 29, *Dan.* 7. 32. *Matth.* 5. 5. and the like. Hereupon they think, that every Godly Man may Usurp the Possession of his Ungodly Neighbour, and that *Christians* may make War upon *Infidels*, and Disinherit them because they are so; but this wholly contradicts the Tenour of the Scriptures, and tends to subvert all Civil Order in the World.

5. HENCE *God hath given Rules in His Word, to determine what is a right Title to, and in what Way Man may get a Right in this or that Portion of these things.* It is certain, that though God hath given to Mankind in general the Dominion over these things, yet there is necessarily a Partition to be made, and every one is to have his own Share, and not all to hold in Common. But now the Question is, *By what Law or Right Men are to account this or that to be their own?* Or, *What Rule is prescribed by God for the determining of each ones Property?* Some refer it to *Jus Naturale*, others to *Jus Gentium*, or the common Law and Reasons which all Civilized Nations agree in; others to the *Civil Laws* of the Places where Men Live: To this I shall only say, that there are necessarily Civil Laws in the Governments which God hath set up in the World, for the determining of Men's Rights, else there would be endless Quarrels among Men. And for this end, that Men may know what is their own, there must be established Laws by which all Disputes on this account are to be determined. Nevertheless, there is a Rule of *Equity*, according to which these things are to be Regulated, and by which all such Laws ought to be Calculated: And this *Equity* doth not depend upon Men's Pleasure, but is founded in the Law of Nature and right Reason. And whatsoever a Man obtain by a pretence of *Civil Law*, yet it cannot suffice his *Conscience*, unless he can reduce his Right to the Law of God. And tho' there is no particular Direction in the Law of Nature, or the Word of God, about this or that way of dividing to every Man his share, but it is left to Prudence; yet all is to be reduced to the general Rules given by God, and either written upon Men's Consciences, or in His holy Word: And the reason of this is manifest, because there is a Rule of Justice which is the Standard, and is unalterable,

terable, and must needs flow from God, who is the Supream Law-giver: And this necessarily Infers that there must be some way, in which a Man comes to have an orderly Right to what he calls his own, and by which he possesseth it; And so, if he comes to have it in any other way he becomes guilty of the Breach of this Command; For, for God to prohibit such a Sin, and not set the Bounds to Duty, so as that he may know when he keeps within, and when he Transgresseth them, agreeth not to the Wisdom of the great Law giver. What these particular Rules are, will be considered afterwards, when we come to lay open the Parts of this Duty. Here only observe, That as Mankind hath a Right in all Originally, so by this he can only challenge his share in particular; because his Neighbour hath a Right too. But this doth not Infer, that every one is to have an *Equal* Proportion, for there are many grounds in right Reason, and in the Word of God, why a *Difference* is to be made; and there are many ways in which a Man may alienate his Right, and it may righteously pass over from him to another; and he may sometimes in way of Violence or Injustice be deprived, and the Providence of God afford him no present Advantage to Recover it, as Experience makes it to appear: But still it remains a Truth, That whether by *Force* or *Fraud*, and *perverting of Judgment*, a Man be put out of Possession; yet his Title in the *Court of Conscience* abides, and no Laws or Customs of Men can alter it. Now Men may come to have a Title to the things of this World, either by a just Division of Inheritances, according to the best Rules of Prudence practised by Men, adjusted by a due Proportioning, by Agreement, or by an indifferent Lot, which is Cast without Fraud by them; or by a Right of Inheritance, derived from Ancestors; or by a Gift of Conveyance from one that is in lawful Possession, and had a Power to Dispose of it; or by Exchange, or a lawful Purchase made, giving in Exchange for it that which is Valuable betwen Man and Man; or by taking Possession of a *Vacuum Domicilium*, which was no Man's Possession before, or was Deserted; or by his lawful Industry, and God's Blessing of his Labours added to it, whereby he enjoys it without any Wrong offered to another: And all these things may come afterwards to be Considered. Only here observe, that God hath given Rules of Righteousness in all these regards, which *Honesty* requires us to observe.

VI. HENCE the *Affirmative* part of this Command, or the *Duties* required in it, are, *their closing with, and practising of, these Rules of Righteousness*. That there are such Rules, hath already been observed; and the principal of them may be afterwards considered in the several Parts of this *Righteousness*, which appertains to this Precept: For tho' it is not to be denied, that Men may gain an Estate in this World in a way of *Unrighteousness*, and by Unjust Practices; yet, this is not because God approves of it, that He suffers it to be so, under His Government; but it is in His awful Judgment, and many times suffers them by it, to ripen themselves for Ruin, Psal. 92. 7. *When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish: it is that they shall be destroyed for ever.* And for this reason, it is no Rule for Men to judge of the *Love* and *Hatred* of God, by their *Success* or *Disappointments* in regard of the things of this Life; for we are told in Eccl. 9. 2. *All things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath.* But if we would have these things and enjoy a real Blessing with them, we must see that we obtain them, and use them in a way of *Righteousness*: We are therefore assured, that tho' an Ungodly Man may have more of these Temporary Good things; yet, that which the Godly Man hath, though but a little in comparison of the others, is incomparably better, and far to be preferred in a true Judgment, Psal. 37. 16. *A little that a righteous man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked.* Prov. 16. 8. *Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right.* And there is no little part of the Love which is required by God, to be exercised towards our Neighbour, in a great Care to carry it Honestly towards them in all our Concerns with them about these things; and we are told, 1 Joh. 4. 20. *If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen.* And the more ought we to observe it, because God hath made Mankind to have a great Dependance one upon another in the way of Commerce or Exchange of one thing for another. So that the Violation of this *Righteousness* tends to the Ruin of the Tranquillity of Humane Society. We ought therefore to Study much to be acquainted with these Rules, for our Regulation in this; because we are every way concerned in it, and cannot please God in our Dealings, except our Demeanure be Right, And if Christians would more Study the *Rules of Conscience*, and less apply themselves to find Advantages of *Civil Laws*, to over-reach one another, God would be more Honoured, and the Civil Happiness more promoved.

[MARCH 6. 1704-5.]

SERMON CXCVIII.

WE have Considered some General Rules for our right understanding of the *Affirmative* part of this Precept, It follows, that we proceed to a more particular laying open of the Principal and Comprehensive Duties that we are enjoyned in by it,

IN

IN the *Answer* before us, we may observe, 1. The *Object* about which this Precept is concerned, viz. *Wealth* or *outward Estate*: Which comprehends under it, whatsoever may be serviceable for the Necessity, Convenience or Comfort of the Body, or any way serve the Advantage of the Temporal Life of the Man. 2. The *Subject* concerned in this Precept, *Our selves and others*, i. e. other Men; for it refers to the Love that we owe to our *Neighbour*; and we formerly observed, that every Man oweth this Love to *Himself* in the first place, and is by it to regulate his Love to his *Neighbour*. 3. The *Duty* it self, comprehensively laid down in two things, *viz.* The *Lawful Procuring*, and *Furthering* of it: Intimating, that there is an *Unlawful* doing this, which Men are in danger of, if they do not take the greater heed to themselves; and giving us to understand, that God hath in the Moral Law, circumscribed this matter, and given Rules about it, which we ought, with greatest Circumspection to heed, in all our Management of these outward Concerns.

FOR the better laying open the Duties here required, we may reduce the whole, to Two Comprehensive Heads. 1. The righteous *Obtaining* and *Possessing* of our share in these things. 2. The righteous *Improvement* that we are to make of them; for this also comes within the Comprehension of this Precept. Here then,

First, THERE is a Righteousness to be observed in the *Obtaining* and *Possessing* of our share in these things. We formerly took notice, that Mankind in general are entituled to these things, by an Act of Divine Beneficence, from Him who is the first Proprietor, and Lord Paramount over all things, viz. *GOD* Himself: But then, there is a Way in which Men come to have their particular share in these things, prescribed by God Himself; and this is that which we are now concerned to enquire after; it being our Directory in our Prosecution of these things.

AND here in *general*, We have then a lawful Claim to these things, when we Gain them so as that we neither violate our own Consciences, nor offer any Wrong to others, either by Violence or Fraud.

BUT this may be more *particularly* & *distinctly* laid open. And here, a Man may come to have Right of Property in an Estate, either more *Immediately* by *himself*, or more *Mediately* by *others*; which may be considered severally.

I. A Man may obtain this Right more *Immediately* by *himself*. And here, there are Three ways, in which he may lawfully get an Estate. And here I shall not speak distinctly about the difference between a *Real* and *Personal* Estate; for whatsoever difference Civil Laws and Customs have made between these, upon grounds of Prudence or Policy; yet the Righteousness in coming by a Property in it, and a Power of Disposing of it, is the same; and that is the proper *Theological* Consideration of it.

And,

1. BY *an orderly Siezure of that which before was no Man's particular Property, but lay in Common*. When I say *no Man's*, I intend, that it neither belonged to any *particular* Person, nor to any *Community* of Men associated in a Civil *Oneness*. And the Reason of this is in the Law of Nature, and is confirmed by God's first Constitution, *Gen.* 1. 28. And renewed after the Flood, *Gen.* 9. 1. God at first gave to *Adam*, as the common Head of Mankind, and so in him to his Posterity, a common Claim to these things: And when afterwards the World was laid wast by the Flood, and *Noah* was the Head of the Renovation of Men, for the new Peopling of the desolate World, He Confirmed it: We are therefore told, Psal. 115. 16. —*The earth hath he given to the children of men.* And it is observable, that the Word *Subdue*, in *Gen.* 1. 28. properly signifies, *To bring a thing under one's Power*, i. e. *To sieze it for Use*: So that it is evident, that such a Portion of the Earth, as is not Possessed by any other, is without any particular Lord, and is a *Vacuum Domicilium*, and lies ready for any Man's Service, who shall fix upon it, and make Use of it as his own: And the same Claim lies open for any Place, which, tho' formerly Possessed, is utterly Deserted: (Hence that in, 1 *Chron.* 4. 39,40.) And they who thus sieze and Occupy it, have a good Title of Possession, Ratified to them by the Charter of Heaven. Hither also belongs the finding of Treasures, in or on the Earth, which have no Proprietor; but, God Providentially leads these to them, or makes a discovery of them Casually: These also may lawfully be siezed, and taken Possession of by the Finder; for they were before *Common*, and came within the Privilege of the *former*: Only this may not be extended to *Lost Goods*, which have another Owner; and Justice requires, that Endeavours be used, that they may be restored; but if no such can be found, who shall shew a better Claim than the Finder?

2. BY *Spoils lawfully taken in a just War*. Touching the *Lawfulness* of War, we considered under the *Sixth* Command; where also we took Notice, when a War may be accounted *Just*. Now it is certain, that when God delivers up an Enemy into the hands of those who fought against them, in a lawful and necessary Quarrel, not only their Persons, but their Estates do fall into the lawful Possession of the Conqueror; for they have by this made a Forfeiture: And as it is *Clemency* to spare them, so it is *Justice* that they suffer, for their injurious treating their Neighbours. Hence the Word of God Warrants this, *Numb.* 31, 12. 1 *Sam.* 30. 23. *Deut.* 20. 14. Only observe, that because War is to be made by *lawful Authority*, it therefore follows, that there is a Division to be made according to *Equity*; but the Prey is *Lawful*, and every one hath a share in it: And it is allowable that the Souldiers should have a Liberty to take some-

ſomething for themſelves, beſides what is to come to a juſt Dividend: Hence that, *Numb.* 31. 53. Though in this Caſe, *Humanity* is to be uſed, and all unneceſſary *Cruelty* to be avoided, as was formerly obſerved.

3. BY *Labour or Induſtry in a lawful Cal'ing.* I call this *Immediate*, not in reſpect of the Providence of God, for it is a *Medium* appointed by Him, to be uſed by us, in order to our obtaining the Conveniencies and Comforts of this Life; but with reſpect to Men, becauſe herein his Immediate Dependance is upon God for His Bleſſing upon his own Diligence in his Employments.

AND here I ſhall take the liberty to Commorate; becauſe all, both Men, Women and Children are concerned in it; and neither Rich nor Poor, Noble nor Ignoble are diſcharged from it.

HERE then we may Enquire, 1. Wherein it appears that every one ought to be Occupied in ſome lawful outward Calling? 2. What may be accounted a lawful Calling? 3. What is required to the honeſt Exerciſe of a lawful Calling; or the following it Lawfully.

Queſt. I. WHEREIN it appears that *Every one ought to be Occupied in ſome Lawful outward Calling*?

Anſw. THE word *Calling* is variouſly uſed: And we know that ſometimes it is put for the State into which a Perſon is put by Converſion, which is *Spiritual*; but that is not here intended: I therefore ſay an *outward* Calling, and by it I underſtand ſome honeſt Employment, wherein Perſons do Occupy themſelves for the convenient Support of the Affairs of this Life, in the Poſt that God's Providence ſets them in: And by the Affairs of this Life, I intend, not only his *Private* and *Perſonal* Concerns, but alſo the *Common* Benefit of Mankind among whom he lives, and the Body Politick or Eccleſiaſtical whereof he is a Member: For every Man is bound to do his ſhare for the Support of theſe, as well as of himſelf and his Family.

NOW there is a twofold Calling which all Men are concerned in, *General* and *Particular*.

THE former is called *General*, becauſe All Men are equally bound to it, and it is one and the ſame to all; and that is, the Devoting of themſelves to the Service of God, and the working out of their own Salvation: The Buſineſs of it is, to ſerve to the great End they were made for, and in it to obtain Eternal Life: Hence that Advice, Phil. 2. 12. *Work out your own ſalvation with fear and trembling.* This is never to be neglected; for every one hath a Soul to ſave, and hath a Rule given him, how he may attain it.

THE *Particular* Calling is that which nextly concerns this Life, and the Affairs of that immediately; tho' it is to be ſubſervient to the other, becauſe Man is to be ultimately bound for the Glory of God: But becauſe it is that wherein the Man is to uphold his preſent Subſiſtence, and be Beneficial in his Generation to Mankind, it ſo hath a reference to this Life. Now becauſe Mankind are made for Society, and they have a mutual Dependance one upon another, and there are a great many Employments requiſite for this End; hence particular Callings are Diverſe, and no one Man can purſue them all: But that every Man ought to be Employed in ſome one or other, is the thing under Conſideration; and this both the Light of Nature and the Word of God give their evidence unto. My meaning is, that Man is made for Labour, and not for Idleneſs; and that he is to uſe Diligence in this Labour; and that nothing elſe can Excuſe him from it, but when the Providence of God diſableth him for it, by ſome Infirmity of Body or Mind, which makes him incapable of it; as Sickneſs, broken Bones, or Diſtraction. And many Evidences may be given for this, which I ſhall only mention.

1. THAT *God required this of Man in his State of Integrity.* When God made Man at firſt, and had given him the Lordſhip over the Earth and Sea; yet we read, Gen. 2. 15. *The Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dreſs it, and to keep it.* Which ſaith that He found Buſineſs for him, to take Care of his Bodily Concerns; and this was agreeable to the Nature and Conſtitution of Man, and the Active Powers which were put into him at firſt; ſo that this was not a fruit of the Curſe, but a Moral Duty laid upon him as he was a Creature put into ſuch an Order of Being. It is true we read in, Gen. 3. 19. *In the ſweat of thy face ſhalt thou eat bread.* But this doth not intimate that Labour and Diligence was of the Curſe, but only the Toil, and Travail, and Weariſomeneſs attending it, which had he not Fallen, would have been Pleaſant and Delightful, and no way Irkſome.

2. THE Word of God every where requires it of Man, as the *way to Proſperity*; and forbids the neglect of it with Threatning. We have the Apoſtle's Precept, 1 Theſ. 4. 11, 12. *And ſtudy to be quiet, and to do your own buſineſs, and to work with your own hands, (as we commanded you) That ye may walk honeſtly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.* And his Caution in, 2 Theſ. 3. 10. *If any would not work, neither ſhould he eat.* And it is given as one part of the Character of a Virtuous Woman, *Prov.* 31 16, &c. and *Ver.* 24. It is therefore recommended as the way to Proſper, *Prov.* 10. 4. 13. 4. 22. 29.

3. THUS *only can a Man be Profitable*, in all the Civil Relations that he bears. This is the only way for him to live Honeſtly in the Place that God hath ſet him in: And this is the way for him to Support himſelf, and not be a Peſt to the Community he lives among: This is neceſſary that he may Provide for his Family, and Support them honourably and comfortably; and prevent his uſing diſhoneſt and unlawful Courſes for it: Thus only can he ſerve the Publick, and contribute to the upholding of Church and State; and prevent his being a Drone in the Hive: And he owes

not

not only his Wealth in proportion, but himself also to the Publick, and we are told, 1 Tim. 5. 8. *If any man provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.*

4. THE *Practice of all Civilized and well Regulated Governments do establish this.* Among the *Grecians*, not only did *Draco*'s Laws that were written in Blood, punish *Idleness* with Death; but the more mild Laws of *Lycurgus* and *Solon*, provide that no Man should Live out of Business; that Children, as soon as capable, should be carefully Educated in some Employment; and that every Man should once in a Year, give a true Account in what way he had Maintained himself, and his Charges; and put a Note of Disgrace on all that could not make it appear that it was in a Lawful Calling.

5. *THE* Irrational *Creatures preach this Lecture.* All of which in their Kind, by an Instinct of Nature are diligent for their own Supply: And the Spirit of God sends Slothful Persons to School, to Learn of them, *Prov.* 6. 6, 7, 8. And Experience tells us, that in the Common-wealth of *Bees*, no *Drone* is suffered, but is driven out of the Hive, as a thing unprofitable: Hence that of the Poet, *Ignavum formas*, &c.

6. WITHOUT *some Employment*, *Mankind is exposed to all manner of sinful Temptations.* We formerly took Notice, what influence *Idleness* hath into the Breach of the *Seventh* Command; and it may be applied to all the rest of the Precepts of the Second Table: So that for Men not to Live in an honest Employment, is the way to all Mischief. Well then did one say, ', Doubtless, the wilfully useless Man, had " better to be *in* the Earth, than *upon* the Earth. But I shall not here further insist.

Quest. 2. WHAT *may be counted a Lawful Calling?*

Answ. IT is necessary, that we a little Commorate here; for tho' in strictness, nothing can be justly denominated a *Calling*, but that which is *Lawful*; for, by a Calling, Men properly understand, such an Employment as God approves of, and calls Men in His Providence to apply themselves to; yet there are those Employments, which too many addict themselves to, which have no Divine Warrant; and therefore we had need to be well informed in this Affair.

AND here let us observe, that a Calling or Employment, with respect to it's *Lawfulness*, may come under a double Consideration, either as it is considered in *it self*, or with respect to this or that *Person*.

(1) WHEN may a Calling be Lawful in *It self?*

A. A Calling is then Lawful in *Itself*, when it Answers the Ends of it, according to the Rules prescribed in the Word of God. God hath not only commanded Employment to Men, but He hath limited what is Right, and what is Wrong; and he cannot Transgress the Limits set, without Sin.

AND here observe these Rules,

1. IT must be a Calling, in which a Man may *Expect and Pray for God's Blessing upon it.* Prosperity in any Employment depends on God's Blessing, (*Psal.* 127. *begin.*) and we are to Pray over our Affairs, that God will Succeed us in them; and we must Pray in Faith, if we would Speed with Him. Nothing therefore can be Lawful, but what God hath given a Promise to us about, in our faithful serving Him in: If therefore, we cannot serve Him in our following of it, we may be sure it is *Unlawful* for us, and to be avoided.

2. IT must be such a Calling as is *consistent with our observing the other Precepts of God's Law.* None of the Commands of God do Clash one with another, nor lay a necessity on us to break one, for the observation of another: We are by *this* Command, bound to Work for our Livelihood, and support of all outward Concerns; but it is not enough that in this way we see a rational Probability of advancing an Estate in this World, but if by so doing we must violate any other Precept, that tells us, it is not Lawful: If we cannot Worship God, and Serve Him in it, and shew all that Love to our Neighbour which is required in the Second Table, it is not Lawful for us to follow it, *Jam.* 2. 10.

3. IT must be such a Calling, as is of *Benefit to others.* It is not sufficient that we have a prospect of Gain to *Our selves*, by it, but we must have a respect to the Common Good of Mankind. Such Vocations only are Lawful, wherein we may Advantage our selves without real Harm to others, or necessary Damage to the Publick. For we are not to Live for *our selves* only, but for *others* too; and that general Precept is ever to be attended by us, Matth. 22. 39. *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self.* And that Golden Rule given by our Saviour, Matth. 7. 12. *All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.*

4. IT must be a Calling of *Good Report.* It is true, there are some Callings more *Honourable*, others more *Despicable*; but this is not the thing I here intend; but there is a *Moral* Respect here to be had, and all Christians ought to have a regard to it, for the Honour of God, and their own Good Name. Some Callings have an Ill Report among sober Men, not for the *meaness* of them, but for the *scandalousness* cleaving to them; and such a Calling no one that stands upon the Credit of Religion, or his own Repute, will willingly follow: Hence that, Phil 4. 8. *Whatsoever things are of good Report*——. But these things may be more particularly Exemplifyed, when we come to the *Negative* part of this Command.

(2.) WE may now Enquire, When a Calling may be Lawful for *this or that Person?*

Answ. IT is here to be taken for granted, that a Calling in it's *own* Nature, may be Lawful and Laudable; and yet it may be a Sin for *this* or *that* Person to undertake it, as will appear in the sequel. Here then we may take a short Account of lawful Vocations. Observe then, some are *Publick*, others are *Private.*

1. *PUBLICK*

1. *PUBLICK Callings* are such, wherein Men do serve in a Publick Station, and for the common Benefit immediately. And these are either Civil or Religious: and they comprehend all such as are, by vertue of their Office, obliged to lay out their Time & Care, in serving the Publick; and for that end, there is a sufficient & honourable Support due to them, from the Publick whom they so serve. And this is the next and immediate End of these Callings, so far as they refer to this Command, inasmuch as God hath appointed Labour to be the *Medium*, by which we are to maintain our selves & ours; and it is Wages due to us from you, for whom we lay out our Time & Strength. To the former of these belong all Civil & Military Officers, who are kept in actual Service; as also, all such as are employed for the Education of Children in good Literature: To the latter, all such as are called to serve at the Altar; and so lay out themselves for the good of the Souls of Men; and to these also there is a Maintenance suitable due, as the Apostle proves, both from the law of Nature, and the law of God, 1 *Cor.* 9.

2. *PRIVATE Callings*, or such, wherein Men do nextly serve the Providence of God, for their particular support, & supply of the things of this life. Tho' these also are to serve ultimately to the Glory of God, and the common Benefit of Mankind, of whom they are Members; and these comprehend under them, all the other Employments, which come within the Rules of Lawful, before given us, which would be endless here to enumerate. And here we may in general observe, that it would be neither for a Man's own advantage, nor for the common benefit of Men, for all to follow, one & the same Calling; and for all to aspire after it, because they think it more honourable, more profitable, or more easy; is a false measure, and tends to the ruine of humane Society. Hence it follows, that every Man ought to observe a Call in God's Providence, to direct him in his seeking & engaging in a particular Calling if he expects God's approbation and blessing in it. And for this he ought to be well satisfied, that he hath a Call of God according to Scripture Rules; and therefore to bring it to, and try it by them. Now God calls Men to this or that Occupation, either Extraordinarily or Ordinarily.

1. *THERE is an* Extraordinary *Call, which God gives some Men to some Employment; and these more peculiarly respect the Publick Employments of Men.* Thus in former times God called more *Immediately*: Thus were *Moses* and *Aaron* called & impowred: Thus was *Saul* called to the Kingdom; and thus were the Prophets of old to that function. Thus the Prophets, Apostles & Evangelists in the Primitive Times of the Gospel Church, *Gal.* 1. 1. And it is to be observed, that as God made His mind known to them by *Immediate Revelation*, so there was not required *Antecedent Fitness* for it, but with the Call, God bestowed it on them. Hence we read, 1 *Sam.* 10. 9. *Jer.* 1. 9. *Luke* 24. 45. But these are for the present in most part, if not wholly ceased.

2. *ORDINARY*: And this is to be known by us *Mediately*; not by inspiration, but by searching the mind of God about it; and is governed by His Mediate Providence. And here I shall only offer,

(1.) *IN regard of Publick Employments, there must be a Call* by Men. I dispute not here the particular Way or Mode of this Introduction, which is a Prudential, and is very different among Men; and the consideration of that belongs to the Fifth Command. But, tho' God hath given to Men Directions, for the Qualifications of Men; yet the Determination of it, upon this or that Person, is nextly Humane: Nor can any Fitness in the Person introduce him, unless he be so Called, nor can he impose himself. This therefore was one Maxime acknowledged, 2 *Sam.* 16. 18. *Whom the Lord and this people & all the men of Israel chose, his will I be, and with him will I abide.*

2. *IN both Publick & Private Callings, every Man is to have regard, to his own Fitness to Discharge such an Employment.* There are Gifts to be regarded, which if a Man have not, neither a desire of, nor an Invitation by Men to such a Service, ought to satisfy him; and the reason of this is very plain, because they have no Promise that God will give them Gifts Immediately, upon their daring to undertake in it; and without these Gifts, they can never serve God, nor profit Men, nor keep a good Conscience, in pursuing such an Employment. And this is true, not only in regard of *Publick* Callings, the Misery of bringing Persons unqualified into which, whether through their Ambitious Winding themselves in, or the Prejudices of Men concerned in the affair; is too notoriously experienced among Men, to need any other Proof given of it. But also in *Private* Occupations, when Persons have neither a Faculty for it, nor were ever Educated to it, meddle with a Business in which they are unskilled; and must therefore unavoidably, either hurt themselves, or others, or both; and so cannot comply with the Rules of Commutative Justice. Thus therefore it is necessary, that either the Calling be such, as the Man may by a Natural Genius take unto, (as some there are), or hath been instructed in, by a laudable serving to such a Trade, and is acquainted with the Rules of it. Hence that, Prov. 14. 8. *The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: but the folly of fools is deceit.* And if a Man hath a Will to be honest, yet if he hath not a Skill in his Calling, he must needs err, in the occupying himself in it. And this will serve to reprove the folly of those that neglect their Children in their Youth; and do not take care to bring them up to such things, as may Qualify them for the serving of their Generation, in such a Post as the Providence of God shall see meet to set them in.

[APRIL 3. 1705.]

SERMON CXCIX.

Queſt. 3. *WHAT is requiſite, to the honeſt Exerciſe of a lawful Calling?*

Anſw. WE are here to obſerve, That if the Calling it ſelf be not Lawful, it is impoſſible for us to follow it Honeſtly, but it muſt be avoided: But on the other hand, the Calling it ſelf may be both Lawful in it ſelf, and Lawful for us; and yet, if we have not a Care to our ſelves, we follow it *Unlawfully*, and ſo Sin, and procure a Blaſt of Heaven upon it. For the Word of God hath not only directed us about the Callings themſelves, but alſo the *manner* of our Employing our ſelves in them; for theſe alſo come under the Regulation of the Moral Law, and we are to ſerve God in them.

I ſhall not here point at all the Rules which are given by Divines on this Account, but only ſuch as properly refer to the Man himſelf, conſidered as he is more immediately concerned to procure an honeſt Livelihood; for, as to the Honeſty to be uſed in his Tranſaction with others, it will come under an after Conſideration. And there are Four Duties here mainly to be obſerved:

1. GOD requires of every Man *Diligence in his Calling.* He is to make it his Buſineſs, and lay himſelf out in the purſuit of it. The Word of God every where commends this *Diligence*, as that which God both expects and approves: Hence thoſe Paſſages, Prov. 27. 23. *Be thou diligent to know the ſtate of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds.* And, 12. 24. *The hand of the diligent ſhall bear rule: but the ſlothful ſhall be under tribute.* 27. *The ſlothful man roaſteth not that which he took in hunting: but the ſubſtance of a diligent man is precious.* And that is one thing intended in, Gen. 3. 19. *In the ſweat of thy face ſhalt thou eat bread.* Now this Diligence is his making of his Calling his Buſineſs, and his Improving of his Time about it; and it contains in it, both his Contriving of his Work for the beſt Advantage, and his purſuing of it with Sedulity; ſo that both the Labour of the *Head* and the *Hands* is included in it. This is not ſo to be underſtood, as if it were Unlawful for a Man to Divert from his Work, and ſolace himſelf with neceſſary Refreſhment under it. God hath allowed to Man a Time to Eat and Drink, elſe his Spirits would be Tired, and he incapacitated for his Buſineſs. And He hath allowed him a Time for his natural Reſt with Sleep, without which he cannot Subſiſt, (*Pſal.* 104. 23.) And one next end of Man's Labour is, to Support his Body, and that implys that he muſt have a ſuitable Time for his ordinary Repoſe: Hence that, Eccl. 5. 18. *Behold that which I have ſeen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the ſun, all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion.* There is alſo a Relaxation which God allows Men, for the moderate uſe of Recreation, for the Recruiting of his tired Spirits, that with freſh Vigour he may attend his Employment; which is a Moderation of the Curſe. But it intends a careful Attendance on the Work which God calls the Man to, in all the proper Seaſons of it; and this, as it refers to the Man's ſerving to the deſigns of the preſent Life, properly belong to this Command.

2. IT requires a *prudent Obſervation & Improvement of the proper Seaſons & Advantages for his doing the Work of his Calling.* We read of the good Man, Pſal. 112. 5. *He will guide his Affairs with Diſcretion.* And we are aſſured, that God hath appointed to every Work under the Sun, it's Seaſon, *Eccl.* 3. *beg.* The Providence of God over-rules and orders the Affairs of Men; and there are ſome ſtated Seaſons laid out by this Providence, which when ſlipt by, are irrecoverable. Hence that, Prov. 20. 4. *The ſluggard will not plow by reaſon of the cold; therefore ſhall he beg in harveſt, and have nothing.* And there are other Seaſons not ſtated, but are emergent Opportunities, which are to be obſerved from the Circumſtances of things, wherein great Advantage is offered, which if neglected, may not come any more: Hence that, Eccl. 8. 6. *To every purpoſe there is time, and judgment.* Now the taking Notice of, and carefully Improving ſuch Seaſons, belongs to that Prudence which God hath made our Duty to exerciſe in our outward Affairs; and it is a Sin as well as a Puniſhment to be void of it, and not to practice it: Hence that, Iſa. 28. 26. *For his God doth inſtruct him to diſcretion, and doth teach him.*

3. IT muſt be followed with a *due Deference on the Governing Providence of God, as to the Succeſs.* We are indeed to *Labour* that we may *Live* in the World; but this is a ſubordinate End, and muſt be Regulated by one that is beyond it, which is the Glory of God; 1 Cor. 10. 31. *Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatſoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.* The great End of all Callings is, that we may ſerve God in them, and therein teſtify our Obedience to Him, who calls us to it. And tho' it is Lawful to hope to ſpeed, and a Duty to Pray to God, that we may do ſo; yet it muſt be with a ſubmitting of our Labours, to His alwiſe Diſpoſal: Hence that in, Eccl. 11. 6. *In the morning ſow thy ſeed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knoweſt not whether ſhall proſper, either this or that, or whether they both ſhall be alike good.* The Scripture every where condemns *Covetouſneſs*, and that not only intends all Sins which proceed from original Concupiſcence, (as, *Iſa.* 57. 17.) but as it is an Inordinate Craving after the good things of this Life; as, Luke 12. 15. *And he ſaid unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetouſneſs: for a man's life conſiſteth*

eth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And we have the Nature of it well Characterized, together with the Danger of it in, 1 Tim. 6. 10. *The love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.* Now that which is contrary to this, and a due Comportment with this Precept, is a Cheerful following of our Business, and a ready submitting of the Success of it to the all-governing Will of God. And hence we have such a Direction given us in this regard, Jam. 4. 13, 15. *Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy, and sell, and get gain. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.*

4. A *due allowance of a suitable proportion of Time, for the Duties of our* General *Calling*, is here also required. That every Calling is to be followed, flows from the very Nature of a Calling, as it is laid upon the Man. That every Man hath a *General*, as well as a *Particular* Calling, hath before been observed, and is irrefragably argued from Man's Frame or Constitution, which consists of *Soul* and *Body*. As there is Work to be done for the supplying of the *Body*, so there is a Work incumbent on us for the Salvation of our *Souls*; hence that, Phil. 2. 12. *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.* Now all humane Actions or Works require Time for the doing of them; and a sequestration of some Time, for a Work of such Infinite Importance, as this is: But tho' there is no *Contradiction* between these two Callings, yet there is a *Difference* and a *Subordination.* A Man may serve to his great End, in following his *outward* Employment, whilst he doth it for God, and according to His Precept; and every gracious Person doth so: Yet there are the distinct Duties of this *general* Calling which must be attended, else we cannot truly serve God in following of the other. There is a stated Sabbath in which God hath made it our Duty, to sequester the Time and our selves in it, to attend Religious Worship, and intermit our own Work, or servile Labour; as hath been observed under the *Fourth* Command. And there are the Calls in Providence, which invite us to set apart Days for Fasting and Prayer; and these ought not to be neglected: And there are times for our daily Reading the Scriptures; and Prayer, in our Closets, and our Families, which the Word of God abundantly informs us of. And it is the Duty of all to pay to God this tribute of Time, if they expect to have His Blessing upon their Worldly Concerns.

II. IT now follows that we proceed to the other way in which an Estate is gotten more *mediately* by *Others*. Not that the *former* was absolutely *immediate*, but purely *mediate*, as to the Providence of God; but that it was so with respect unto Men, more than the *other*. And there are here also diverse ways in which this may be compassed.

As,

1. *A Man may obtain an Estate by* Patrimony, *or Inheritance.* That there is an equitable Descent of Estates from the *Predecessors* to their *Successors*, is indisputable; the Light of Nature Dictates it, and the Laws of Civilized Nations have confirmed it, and the Word of God assures us of it: But how or after what manner they are to Derive, is matter of Dispute. In the Judicial Laws of *Moses* about this, there was something *Ceremonial* or *Typical*, and something *Moral*, which too many, for want of distinguishing have confounded. There was a Law for preserving Inheritances in their Tribes, and that the *First Born* should have the *double* Portion; and that all Real Estates should revert to the First Owners, or their proper Heirs, in the Year of *Jubilee*; but these things were *Positive*, and had a *Mystical* meaning in them, and were tied to that Nation; but the *Morality* of them, is hard to make evident. The Laws of Nations have also provided for the *Disposure* of the Estates of Men Deceased, who have not provided for it during their Lives, but left them *Undisposed* at their Death. And there is a Necessity for this, to prevent endless Controversies which would otherwise arise from pretenders to a Title: But the *Righteousness* or *Equity* of these, depends upon their agreeableness to the *Moral Law*, which is the Rule of Justice. That every Man hath a power of Disposing whatsoever Estate he holds in his own Right, according to the Rules of Discretion, is agreeable to that known Maxim, *A Man may do with his own, according to his Prudence.* Hence the Disposure of Men's Estates, by their last Will and Testament, hath been acknowledged by all Men; and such Testaments have been accounted *Sacred*, and if they did it in their right Minds *Inviolable*, according to *Gal.* 3. 15. Only it is here to be observed, that the Light of Nature teacheth us, that *Children* have a Right in a convenient part of the Estates of their *Parents*; and it would be Unnatural for them to give what they have, away to *Strangers* or to *Publick Uses*; for that is a Scripture Truth, 1 Tim. 5. 8. *If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.* 2 Cor. 12. 14. *Children ought not to lay up for the Parents, but the Parents for the Children.* So that such an Estate so descending, is lawfully Possessed; and cannot with Justice be detained from those to whom it is so Conveyed: Only, Reason and Equity requires, that it be freed from Incumbrances; for no doubt, whatsoever a Man Possesseth in his own Right, ought to be liable to defray his honest Debts.

2. *A Person may come by a true Right to an Estate, by* Gift *or Donation.* We are wont to say, *What is freer than Gift?* A Man either in his Life time, or by his last Testament, may introduce a *Stranger* into a lawful Title to a Portion of these things, which he could otherwise have laid no Claim unto: Hence there is a Right by *Adoption* usual among Men, who having no near Kindred to Bequeath their Substance unto, do make Choice of a Person, whom

they are pleased to introduce either by a Deed of Gift, or by their last Will. Thus we find that the Queen of *Sheba* made a rich Present to *Solomon*, 1 *Kings* 10. 10. And the Wise Man tells us, Prov. 19. 6. *Every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts.* Only this Rule is here to be observed, that he who gives, must give of that which is his *Own*, and what he hath come by *Honestly*; else he cannot make a just Conveyance of it over to *another*: And if the Person to whom the Donation is made, be convinced in his own Conscience, that it was *Unjustly* gained, he cannot with safety to himself receive it, but may expect a Blast of Heaven upon it; for doubtless, the Curse of God is out against all that is *Ill* gotten.

3. *A Man may come by a just Title to, and Possession of an Estate, in the way of* Commerce. And under this Title of *Commerce*, I understand all such lawful ways in which Men Transact one with another, in way of *Exchange*; which comes under the general name of *Traffick*; and the design of it is, that by this Course Men get honest Gain, and advance their Estates by it. And here the Rules of *Commutative* Justice are more peculiarly to be considered, because in the way of Commerce, there is a Contract made between Persons, in which one thing is *Exchanged* for another, which comes under the Regulation of the Rules of Righteousness.

NOW there are several ways, in which this Commerce between Men may be considered, and we may take a distinct Account of them; in all of which there is a respect had to the *Gain* of the Persons concerned, so far as it hath a respect to this Precept; and is therefore here to be no further Considered.

AND here in general, let these two things be observed;

1. THAT *mutual Commerce, in some way or other, between Mankind, is Lawful & Necessary.* And it is therefore *Lawful*, because it is *Necessary*, & there is no other upholding of human Society: No Man is in himself sufficient for his own Comfortable Support, with such things as are requisite for his convenient Living in the World; which it would be *superfluous* to prove, since daily Experience gives us the Proof of it. There are so many things requisite for *Food* and *Raiment*, and the other Conveniencies of Life, that one Man cannot provide them all for himself, but must have supply from others; and because God hath given every Man a Property in his *own*, it must become *another*'s either by *Gift* or *Exchange*: Nor is a Man bound to give away his own to another, unless there be special Reasons for it, which will be considered hereafter: We therefore read, that *Abraham purchased a Field*; and *Jacob a piece of Land to pitch his Tents*; and *sent down into Egypt to buy Corn*; so that the thing it self is indisputable: Tho what sorts of Commerce are so, must be looked into in the sequel.

2. THAT *there is a Lawful* Gain *to be aimed at, and made, in the way of Commerce.* That there may be Unlawful Gain, if Men do not follow the Rule, is undeniable: We therefore read of the *Gain of Oppressions*, Isa. 33. 15. and *Dishoneſt Gain*, Ezek. 22. 13. which implys, that there is an *Honest Gain*; and also, that unless Men do regulate themselves by the Rules of Honesty, they may easily transcend the Bounds, and render themselves guilty in this regard. And that there are such Rules, is hence necessarily inferred, else there would be no difference between *Honest* and *Dishoneſt*.

BUT we may proceed to the Consideration, of the several ways, in which there may be a Lawful Commerce between Man and Man.

AND here,

(I.) THERE *is a Righteousness required in the Commerce between Persons* Hiring *& Hired; or the Labourer, and him who Employs him.* There is nothing more common or necessary, than for one Man to Employ another in Business upon Hire; and sometimes Men are Hired by the Day, Week, Month, Year; and sometimes they agree to do such a piece of Work by the Lump: And there is a Rule of Justice to be observed by these on either hand, in Obedience to this Command, to which Conscience is obliged.

(1.) IN respect of the *Labourer*, or him who is *Hired*. There are three things which peculiarly concern him.

1. *NO Man ought to undertake any Work, but such as he is* Skilful *in.* The Reason of this is manifest, because he must needs *Wrong* the Person for whom he doth it, by spoiling the thing which he undertakes, for want of insight in to it; and by this way, the Man is disappointed of his just Expectation: Besides that, we formerly observed, that it properly belongs to a Person's engaging in any Calling, that he be *Skilled* in it: And it is certain, that no Man ought to seek his *own* Gain, to *another*'s necessary Damage, as this Man doth.

2. *HE ought to use Conscience in his* Demands *of Hire, for his Labour.* There is doubtless a proportion between *Work* and *Wages*; and it is not left at every Man's Liberty to take all Advantages to make his Gain upon another, or to make a Prey of his Neighbour's Necessity; which is a thing too much practised. Every Man ought to endeavour after an Honest Livelihood by his Labour; but the *Poor* are not to turn *Oppressors*, to make themselves *Rich*; or to seek Gain to nourish their Lusts, by *wronging* others whom they have to deal withal, by asking *Unconscionable Wages*: It is true, *The Labourer is worthy of his Hire*, (Luk. 10. 7.) But then his *Hire* must bear proportion to his *Labour*, else it will not bear: And when *Tradesmen*, and Day *Labourers* serve up their Wages to the heighth, it is not only a *Wrong* done to those that make use of them, but in reality a Publick *Nusance*, and usually serves only to nourish Pride and Luxury.

3. *THEY are to exercise* Faithfulness *in their Labour.* They are in a sense *Servants* to them that Employ them; and *Fidelity* is a necessary Qualification in such as do Service to others. And there are divers respects in which this *Faithfulness* is to be used on this Account.

THEY

THEY ought to be Faithful in Husbanding of their Time, for the Use and Benefit of such as Hire them; the Time is not their own, but his who Employs them, and they should improve it to the best Advantage: They should come seasonably to it, and follow it diligently whilst they are at it; and keep to it till it is seasonable to break off. He that receives Wages for a Day's Labour, ought to give a Day's Labour for it; and not spend any part of it by *Idleness*, or Diversions to other matters.

THEY ought also to be Faithful in a frugal improvement of the Substance of him who Employs them, to the best Advantge, and not prodigally Waste it; for want of which Care, too often doth the Owner suffer more than the Wages of the Person comes to: He ought therefore in this, to *do as he would be done by*, and be as Frugal for his *Employer*, as he would be for *himself* in the same Case.

THEY ought also to use Fidelity in the Work it self they do; they must do it *Well*, and so as may answer the end and design of it, and not fraudulently: And though this ought to be observed in all their Labour, yet especially in Work taken by the *Great*, as they call it; when they Bargain to do such a piece of Work, at such a Price; they ought not to sluber it over, and do it Deceitfully, that so they may make the greater Gain by it, whilst he for whom they do it, is a great Sufferer by it: They must not only *Do* the Work, but they must do it *Well*, that it may answer the end of it, else it is a meer *Cheat*.

Finally, THEY must be Faithful in their Time, and stand to their Word on that account: If they know that they cannot do their Work in the Time agreed upon, they ought not to *Promise*; and if they *Promise*, when they are assured they cannot *Perform*, they Transgress the *Ninth* Command; and if thus they fail, and so disappoint the just Expectation of the Person, they break *this* Command, doing him *Wrong* in his Estate.

(2.) THERE is also Righteousness to be observed by such as *Hire* and *Employ others in Labour* for them. As the *former* ought to deal justly by *them*, so ought *they* to be Just to *these*: And there is no less danger of Injury on *this* hand, than there is on the *other*.

AND here, there are these Rules to be observed;

1. THEY *ought to agree with them upon fair and honest Stipends.* Men's Labour is for their *Livelihood*; and tho' there is no reason to Comply with them for their Maintenance in *Riot* and *Drunkenness*, and living in as good a *Garb* and *Port* as the Rich; yet, that they may have *Food* and *Raiment*, suitable to the Order which God's Providence hath put them in. Tho' the *levelling* Spirit, which the World prompts Men to, is not to be indulged; yet certainly it ought to be such as that they may with *Frugality*, be able to Support themselves withal. Not as tho', because one hath a greater Charge to maintain, he may ask, and the other is bound to indent, for greater Wages than another should have, for the *same* Labour; for common *Equity* saith, that the *same Labour* deserves the *same Hire*; and if the Person cannot Support his Charge with it, he is the Object of a Publick *Charity*: And if the Employer give him *more*, it should not be for his *Work*, but for his *Poverty*; not as *Wages*, but as an *Alms* of Liberality; that he may be able to say as Matth. 20. 15. *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? is thine eye evil, because I am good?* Nevertheless, there is an Equity to be observed, and he who Employs another, ought not to take Advantage of him, and beat him down so as to enjoy his Labour *underfoot*, and for that which is next to *nothing*: And when he Indents for Work by the *Whole*, he ought to consider what is Convenient, and so as that he may not be a real Loser by it, but may be Encouraged to do his Work cheerfully, in expectation of his Wages; and if thro' Mistake he hath brought his Neighbour under Obligations, which he is convinced that he hath done his Work honestly, and is an unavoidable Loser by it; tho' he cannot right himself in a Course of *Civil Law*, yet *Conscience* obligeth him to Consider him, and make him a *Compensation*; and this comes under that general Rule, Deut. 24. 14. *Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land within thy gates.*

2. THEY *ought to deal Honestly with them in the payment of their Wages.* And here great Care is to be used; Hence that Precept, Lev. 19. 13. *Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him.* And for this end, he is not only to Pay him, but according to honest Agreement; and that in *Specie*, if the Bargain be so made, unless he can satisfy him in that which is as good. He is not to put him off with that, which is no way answerable to his Necessity, nor will Succour him in his needful Occasions, for so is he frustrated of the End of his Labour: Nor is he so to put him off with that which is Corrupt and will do him no good; but give him that which is Current, and Passable between Man and Man: Nor yet is he to Screw upon him in the Price of what he Pays him for his Wages; but he ought to have it as Good, Cheap, as he would part with it to another; for, as we shall afterwards more partiularly Consider, there ought to be one fixed Price of all things which pass between Man and Man; and if the Man is to Pay more for what he receives for Wages, than he might have for ready Money, he is Defrauded. Nor can there be any Excuse brought that will justify it, as may in it's proper Place be weighed.

3. THEY *ought to defray the Wages of the Labourer in it's due and proper Season.* Not that there may not be Agreements for Time, as is usually, and may lawfully be practised; and if the *Labourer* be so fore-handed, as to be able to stay for his Wages till such a piece of

of Work be done, and chuseth and agreeth so to do, there is no wrong done him in it; but it is too frequent that the Labourer hath daily dependance for his Hire; and to be delayed in it, is an Injury done to him, and his Family: Now it is not sufficient, to Pay him in any time, but it must be in the proper time: Hence we have that joyned to the former, Lev. 19. 13. —— *The wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.* As therefore there is a Wo against them that deny Wages for Work, (*Jer.* 22. 13.) so to such as keep it back by Fraud, (*Jam.* 5. 4.) So that these things are not a matter of indifferency, but belong to that Love which God requires of us one to another; and of what moment it is, we are told, 1 *Joh.* 4 20.

(II.) THERE *is a Righteousness between Persons, on the account of* Borrowing & Lending. That this belongs to *Commerce* in the general Notion of it, is not to be questioned; for in it, that which is one Man's *Right*, passeth to be for another Man's *Use*; and that cannot Lawfully be, without the Consent of the proper Owner, either Actual or Implicite. That there is *Necessity* of *Borrowing* and *Lending*, for the maintaining of Civil Commerce between Men, no Man who Converseth among Men, can deny, unless he will contradict his own Experience: And tho' some Men are so fore-handed in the World, that they rarely have occasion for it, being furnished with that in hand, by which they may Purchase whatsoever their Occasions call for; yet there are but a few, who are always in such a Condition, but that they do frequently need thus to be supplied by their Neighbours; and that when their Poverty is not such as calls for an Alms; but their Affairs are so involved, that without it they may suffer greatly, and by this means they may be advantaged in their Affairs. Now, tho' there may be, and is, such a *Borrowing* and *Lending*, as is meerly Neighbourly, and common Civility and Courtesy requires it, and without which Men cannot Live together, as becomes *Humanity*, much less *Christianity*; one being supplied with that which another hath not; and there being many things, which our Poor Neighbour cannot furnish himself withal, and it would be Unkind to deny him, and it would be Cruelty to Exact upon him for the Loan: Only here it is to be observed, that as it is a Duty of *Charity* to Lend freely in many Cases, so it is *Justice* that the *Borrower* be Honest, and *Restore* the thing *Borrowed* in the Season of it; and the want of Care in doing, becomes a Loss to the *Lender*, and is many times a discouragement to him.

NOW under this Head are to be considered whatsoever things are Lent to another, not only for his *present* and *transcient* Use to be presently Returned again; but also such things as are Lent to another, for his more *continued* Use and Improvement: And he hath a power, by vertue of this Loan, to make use of it, as his *Own*, for his Occasions; only under the Obligation of returning it again in the set time either in *Specie*, or to the Satisfaction of the Lender. Now the great Question here is, *Whether the Lender may Lawfully Contract with the Borrower, for* Gain *by the thing so Lent*? But that must be adjourned for a more deliberate Consideration.

[MAY 1. 1705.]

SERMON CC.

WE are Considering of the Righteousness which is to be observed in *Commutative Justice*, between the *Borrower* and the *Lender*. That this manner of Commerce between Men, is necessary for the upholding of humane Society, is beyond all Dispute, to him that hath any thing to do in this World. That there must be a *Divine* Rule to adjust this Affair, is alike evident, because in nothing more doth Corrupt Nature take advantage of Oppression; and Men would soon devour one another, if God did not set Limits to their Exorbitancies, and unlimited Cravings. And here it may not be amiss briefly to Enquire:

Quest. *WHETHER it be Lawful for the Lender to Contract with the Borrower, for a competent* Gain, *to accrue to him from the Loan?* And, *Whether it be Lawful for a Man to* Borrow *upon such a Contract?*

Answ. I take both these Questions to be *Coincident*; for if *one* of these be *Unlawful*; the *other* cannot be *Lawful*; for, as I ought not to Sin, so neither may I have Fellowship with another in his Sin, or joyn with him in it. This Case the rather needs to be pondered, because, as it is of constant Practice, so there are many Judicious and Conscientious Christians, who are perplexed in their Minds about it. This matter hath been canvased among the greatest Divines *Pro* and *Con*; and that not without great Heats, and over much bitterness of Spirit, and opprobious Language, especially by those who defend the *Negative*, as is evident by their Writings; which seem to savour of an over-heated Zeal, in their cutting Invectives against their Antagonists.

I shall not here enter into the Lists of *Disputation*; but Essay, in a few Words, to lay down the Rules of the Word of God, and the Dictates of right Reason in this Affair: For which let these Conclusions be observed;

1. *IT is sometimes a Duty to lend, without expecting to receive so much as the* Principal *again.* This is aimed at, in that of our Saviour, Luk. 6. 34, 35. *And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again: and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children*

children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful, and to the evil. We are not to suppose that this Precept is a Rule for *All* Lending Universally, (as the opposite Party pretend, tho' it Contradicts other plain Scriptures, and the common Sentiments of all Mankind; and they themselves acknowledge that the *Principal* may lawfully be demanded:) Nor yet doth it intend plain *Giving*, for that comes under another after Consideration, as will be considered: But the true meaning of it is, that when a Man is in *Necessity*, and asks to *Borrow* of us; and neither doth he know how he shall be able to Pay us, nor do we see any probability of it; we run this Risque, and adventure it upon Providence; expecting, that if God shall make him *Able*, he will be *Honest*; and yet resolving, that if he *never* be Able, we will not *Trouble* him for it. And sometimes the Providence of God may make it to be our Duty thus to do, when we can *spare* it, and our Neighbour's Necessity *requires* it.

2. THAT *it is sometimes a Duty for us to Lend, without any regard to* Gaining *by it; but only to secure the Principal.* And this is, when tho' our Neighbour hath a sufficiency to Pay us again, yet hath a present occasion to *Borrow* for a while, and will in a *little while* return it again; and we are like to receive a *like Kindness* from him; and the Obligation of *Friendship* binds us to such mutual *Beneficence* to one another. Of the *Lawfulness* of this, none can doubt; and of the Duty, common *Courtesy* bespeaks it; it being to *do as we would be done by* in reason: Prov. 18.24. *A man that hath friends, must shew himself friendly.* This also is requisite with respect to such as are *Needy*; and it is for their present Support and Livelihood, when our Circumstances will not allow us to *Give* it them out right: And this is the *Lending* commended, *Psal.* 37. 26.

3. THAT *God hath given to Men their Estates, for their outward Benefits.* We have before observed, that these things are for the Support and Maintenance of the *Bodily* Life; when therefore God in His Providence bestows these things upon Men, they are to use their *Discretion*, in the Ordering of them, so as they may afford them with His Blessing, a Revenue for the maintaining of their Comfort: Hence it belongs to the Character of one that Fears God; Psal. 112. 5. *A good man sheweth favour and lendeth; he will guide his affairs with discretion.* And this our Saviour manifestly intimates, in the Parable of the *Talents*, that an Estate ought to be occupied for *Advantage*, else there were no force in the *Comparison* which He useth; and we find how He Censures him, that hid his in a Napkin, *Matth.* 25. 27. Nor indeed, would Men be capable of *long* Improving part of their Substance for *Charitable* Uses, if they did not thus do, but always spend on the *Stock*, which in time would be expended.

4. *THERE is therefore an Honest Gain to be moderately sought in the Improvement of such Estates.* It is true, it must be *Honest*, else this Command is broken, and this also is granted by our Opponents. It is true, our Prosperity depends upon God's Favour; but we are to seek it in the Use of *Means*, and that is by *Improvement*; for these are perishable things, and will, without such Care and Endeavour go to decay, as common Experience will daily teach us. That therefore which I shall only here assert in general is, that meerly to advance our Estate by the *turning* of it, is not in it self a *Sin*, but a *Duty* to endeavour it; and that there is an Honest way so to do, and this may be in a Lawful Calling which Men are Employed in; provided Men do follow those Rules, in following of them, which we have before taken an account of; for they do all serve to this general Purpose of Supporting the outward Affairs of the present time.

5. THAT *there are divers ways in which Men have Advantage to improve their Estates by Commerce.* Man is not bound only to *Earn* what he hath by his *Bodily Labour*, and let his *Gains* ly by *Unoccupied*; but this may and ought to be done, in a way of mutual *Commerce* and *Exchange*, where Men have wherewith so to do; and this is for the common Benefit and Good of Mankind, and the advancement of the Publick Weal, as all Experience assures us. This may be done by Farming out of *Lands* and *Stock*, to such as are capable of *Improving* them to their Own and Owners Benefit: By Letting out of *Houses* in Populous Places, for the Commodity of those who are in need of them, for the Convenience of their Employments, by which they may be Benefited: By *Trading* or *Merchandize*, in exchanging one thing for another, and thereby supplying of the Wants of such as have a dependance hereupon: And by *Lending* of *Money* to others, either to redeem Pawned or Mortgaged Estates, or to set up their Callings, for want of which they are not capable to Emerge; or for the purchasing of Lands, or a good Bargain which offers. Now we have no Dispute with our Antagonists about the Lawfulness of a *moderate Gain*, in any of the *former* ways of Commerce, but they readily *concede* it; but in regard of this *last* way of Lending, there remains the *Controversy*: We may therefore proceed,

6. THAT *the Improvement of an Estate for Gain by* Loan, *is every whit as Lawful & Laudable, as any of the other ways of Commerce.* The Adversaries of *Lending Money* upon *Interest*, have sought to stigmatize it with all manner of *odious* Reflections, as if they would cry it down with a Noise and Banter; but it is but a *Noise* and *Railery*, without solid Reason, or Cogency of Arguing; and is only applicable to the *Abuse*, and not to the right *Use* of it; and is equally applicable to the *other* ways of Commerce, when *Abused*, of which they are alike capable. And this way is found on Experience, to be as necessary and profitable for the common Benefit of Mankind, as any of the other. For the more clear Demonstration of this, we may in General observe, that the main Difference between *This* and the *Other* sorts of Commerce lies in that the Advance

vance of the *Interest* upon the *Principal*, is upon the Consideration of *Time*; as to other things which belong to it, they are common with the other, and are in them acknowledged to be Lawful. Here therefore for the full evidencing of this matter, let us observe the following Conclusions:

(1.) THAT *to lend an Estate upon the Security of the Principal is not denied but acknowledged by these Men.* In this Loan, the *Stock* is alienated, and becomes entirely in the Possession and at the dispose of the *Borrower*; nevertheless by it he Contracts an honest Debt to the *Lender*; and no Law forbids him to Challenge it, in the time and manner Indented for; and therefore the taking a Pledge and Security for it, is Just and Equal. Tho' there are Cases wherein we are to Lend, not expecting any thing again, as was before observed; which doth not take off the Justice of the thing it self, where no such Necessity requires it: It is therefore put to the Character of the Wicked Man, Psal. 37. 21. *The wicked Borroweth, and payeth not again.*

(2.) THAT *it is no way repugnant to, but agreeable with, the Law of Nature, or right Reason, that a Man should make a competent Gain, by his Money so Lent.* It contradicts neither the Law of *Justice* nor of *Charity*, but is every way agreeable to both. As to the Rule of *Justice*, we have already made it evident, that Men ought to improve their Estates, so as to make *Gain* by them, provided it be not to the Wrong or Injury of their Neighbours: And that there is no such Wrong necessarily arising from this, will be evident, because there are many ways in which he may be really Advantaged by it; and if it be otherwise, it is either the *Borrower*'s Fault, or the unavoidable Event of the Governing Providence of God, which is equally concerned, in all other ways of Lawful Commerce. And as to the Rule of *Charity*, a Man's Kindness may as really appear in this way of *Lending*, as in *Giving*: How many Men had never Emerged in the World, but for this; as is matter of daily Observation: Besides, a Man owes Charity to *Himself*, as well as to his *Neighbour*, and might with greater Safety keep his Estate by him, than thus expose it, without rational expectation of some *Profit* by it: And our *Opponents* do freely grant, that if *another* Gains by my Estate, *I* should have a Benefit by it: That something should go to the *Stock*, as well as to the *Improvement*, which justifies the Case it self in general. A Man purchaseth an Estate of Inheritance, with my Estate, which brings him in an Annual Revenue, which I might have done for my self, and many like things: Surely here is no shadow of the Violation of the Rule of *Charity* in all this. These also do acknowledge, that it is Lawful in a way of *Trade*, to Advance for so many *Months* Credit, more than a Man would ask for *Present* Payment: And that on Default of keeping Day, a Man may lawfully *Sue*, and recover Damages for such Delay: In which they manifestly give up the Cause, which they do with so much eagerness defend; for what is this, but *Interest for Time*? Besides, how many *Orphans*, who have fair Estates left them, which they cannot *Improve* themselves; and can be no otherwise *Improved* by their *Guardians*, but by such a *Loan*; which if not Lawful, they must themselves Starve, or be *Impoverished*, by being Educated on the *Stock*, and their Estates reserved *Unprofitable*, either to themselves or the Common-wealth. So that the Light of Nature condemns not the moderate *Improvement*, but only the *Oppression* of it.

(3.) THAT *this way of Gain, is no where absolutely forbidden in the Word of God, by any Law obliging Mankind.* This is the great Clamour, and urged to Confute all other Pleas by, whatsoever of Reason & Equity there may seem to be in them; and I confess, if it be so indeed all Mouths must be stopt; and it is altogether in vain to set our Reason against the declared Will of God in His Word; for doubtless He is Lord Paramount, and may give Order concerning His own, according to His Pleasure; and needs to give us no other Reason, but *I am the Lord.* We do indeed find such a Law as is expressed, given to Israel in the Wilderness, recorded in, Exod. 22. 25. *If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.* Further enlarged in, Lev. 25. 35, &c. *And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: ye tho' he be a stranger or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase. I am the Lord your God,* &c. Repeated and limited in, Deut. 23. 19, 20. *Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury. Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury, but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to, in the land whither thou goest to possess it.* And to this Law are other Expressions used afterwards to be reduced, *Prov.* 28. 8. *Ezek.* 18. 8. and else where; concerning which there are diverse things to be observed, which I shall briefly Epitomize, and leave to rational Consideration.

THIS Law was either purely *Moral*, or *Positive*, and accommodated to the *Israelitish* Polity, between which a great *Difference* must be acknowledged. That there was a Moral *Equity* on which it was to be grounded, needs not to be denied, *viz.* That all *Oppression* was to be avoided; and that we should not exact on our Neighbour to his necessary Damage: But that it was *Universally* Moral, is disproved by the Explication of the Law it self, *Deut.* 23. 20. It was therefore restrained to their Brethren of their *own* Nation: Whereas it is certain, that if the thing it self had been *Moral*, it had been *Universally Unlawful*, and might no more have been practised to a *Stranger* than an *Israelite*.

And

And it is in vain alledged, that they had a Power of the *Lives* of Strangers, and therefore this was a Kindness to them, from whom they might have taken all; for as this was only, (if at all,) with respect to the Seven Nations, which were *Anathematiz'd*; so neither did it extend to them after they had received them into Covenant; (Hence that, 2 *Sam.* 21. 1.) And if they let them Live, and would Traffick with them, they ought to practice *Justice* towards them. *Again*, If this Law was purely *Moral*, this would not have been restrained to only *one* sort of Men among themselves, as it was. *Modal* Propositions are not *universal*, but *limited*; now it was for the *Poor* of their *own* Nations, as is evident in the express Terms of the Law. And this is further manifest by the Exception which God hath made on this Account; Deut. 15. 4. *Save when there shall be no poor among you.* Which intimates, that it was not made to them *unlawful* in it self, but only according to their *Circumstances*. Nor is it prohibited in the *Gospel* absolutely; the great Text alledged for it, (*Luke* 6. 35.) only intimates, that there are Cases, in which it may be Duty, (which none will deny:) And all that can in reason be argued from it, is only that when a Neighbour, (whether Friend or Enemy,) is distressed with *Want*, and asks to *Borrow* of us; our despair of having either *Interest* or *Principal*, ought not to ty our hands: And it rather signifies, that the thing it self would in Justice be due, were not the Person an Object of *Charity*.

7. THAT *there is no Exemption of Money from this general Rule.* There is a mighty Clamour on this account, as if *Money* were in it self Barren, and therefore ought not to be forced to an unnatural Act of Generation, as they pretend. But this Argument is insipid; and a Man of Reason and Thought, would be ashamed so much as to take it into his Mouth; much more to leave it on Record. The Law it self prohibiting *Usury* or *Encrease*, is not limited to *Money*; but extends to whatsoever Estate may be so improved, *Deut.* 23. 19. And where *Money* is only expressed, it is by a *Synecdoche*, it being, *instar omnium*; it contains vertually in it every thing, which is useful for the accommodation of Men's outward Concerns; for which reason we are told in, Eccl. 10. 19. *Money answereth all things.* And in the *Metaphorical* sense in which it must needs be used, it is become the most Fertile thing in the World; and most serves to promote Civil Commerce among a People, as Experience abundantly confirms. Certainly then, this is as really an *Improveable* Estate as any other; and it is contrary to sense, that this was only given to Men to *ly By*, whilst they ought to make the *Best* of every thing else which they have; (nor is our *Charity* to others restrained to *this Species*, but is to be express'd in *any thing*, by which we are best accommodated to Benefit them;) and if *another* can be better profited by *this*, than by any *other* thing which *I* can lend him, why he must have it *Gratis*, no Man can tell.

8. IT *is therefore not Unlawful, but a point of Prudence, to make Contracts about This.* There are those that allow a moderate Allowance in some Cases, but think it utterly Unlawful to agree upon a certain Proportion, because of the Uncertainty of the Advance which the *Borrower* will make by the *Improvement*; so that by this sometimes the *Lender* must wrong himself, and sometimes him that *Borrows* of him; and that therefore it must be left to the Conscience of the *Borrower*: But this is also a *Nicety*, and hath not force in it, as will appear on due Consideration of the thing. The *Apostacy* hath made it necessary that in lawful *Bargains* and *Conveyances*, things be made *Firm*, because of *Falshood* in Men's Hearts, and *Forgetfulness*: None therefore can doubt of Securing the *Principal*; if therefore the *Interest* be as well a due Debt as the *other*, it comes under the same Prudential. And as to the Objection about the *Uncertainty* of the due *Proportion* to be demanded, because it depends on Providence, it hath no more foundation *here*, than in *other* Contracts; for in all these things, there is *Contingency*, which God governs; and it is with Him, whether the Man shall *Prosper*, or suffer *Loss*; or in whose hands it shall be. There is therefore a rational Consideration to be had in such things to be judged according to the Ordinary Course of God's Providence; so as there may be no usual Damage to either Party: And by the same Reason that it is pretended Unlawful to do so in *this*, all *other* Contracts must be Unlawful: And for *me* to put that out of my *own* hand, which God's Providence hath made *mine*, and put it into the Disposal of *another*, and ly at *his* Mercy; is against right Reason, and to make *my self* a Servant to *him*, who in this is my Servant: *Prov.* 22. 7. And because the *Abatement*, on account of unforeseen Providences, belongs properly to the head of *Charity*, it is Reason that it be at the judgment and discretion of the *Lender*, and not of the *Borrower*.

9. *THERE are* Rules *by which this is to be Limited, which ought to be observed and attended, the transgression whereof will make it a Sin.* And herein it differs from all *other Contracts* which are made between Men. And that we may be directed in this Affair, we are in *General* to consider, that all the Duties required in the *Second* Table, come under that *Love* which we ought to pay to our *Neighbour*; and therefore are to be Regulated according to it, of which, Matth. 22. 39. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour, as thy self.* And from this our Saviour hath laid down that General Rule, Matth. 7. 12. *Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.* Which is not to be calculated by Carnal *Self-Interest*, but by *right Reason*: And from the Consideration of *this*, we may gather these necessary Rules for our direction in this Affair.

1. WE *must consider the* Condition *of the Persons to whom we Lend.* There are the *Poor* who are Necessitated to *Borrow*, that they may not Perish and Starve, and it is meerly for the

Support of their Bodies: Now, not only the Law of *Moſes*, but the Light of Nature forbids all manner of *Exaction* of *Intereſt* upon thoſe on this account: Such was the State of many *Jews*, after their return from Captivity: Hence *Nehemiah* treated ſo ſevere with the *Uſurers* of that Time, *Neh.* 5. Such Perſons are Objects of our *Charity*, and we ought according to our Ability, to *Give* to them for their Succour; and much more to *Lend* to them without expectation of *Gain*; yea, ſometimes, as was before obſerved, tho' we ſee no fair probability of receiving our *Principal* again: We ought not therefore to refuſe to do a free *Kindneſs* for ſuch, becauſe we reſerve what we have for the making of *Gain* by it; which is an Effect of ſordid *Covetouſneſs*, and a cruel hardning of our hearts againſt our *Poor* Brethren; whereas our Eſtates were given us to do *Good* withal, and to *Communicate*, when God preſents us with ſuch as are the proper Objects of it.

2. CASUISTS do univerſally make it *Unlawful for any to make* Uſury *a Calling*: Or, That when God hath put an Eſtate into Men's hands, and Ability to employ themſelves about the *Improvement* of it, they lay aſide all *other* Buſineſs, and devote themſelves to *this*: But if they are either called to ſuch Employments, as take up their Time about them, and that for the Publick Benefit, and they have Eſtates that may be Improved for the Benefit of Mankind, it is very proper; and for *Infants*, *Impotent* Perſons, *Widows*, who cannot manage ſuch an Eſtate, or ſuch as have *more* than they can themſelves Improve;—— becauſe it is better that ſuch Eſtates be *Employed*, than ly by *Unoccupied*. And this I am ſatisfied in, that for Perſons to ly in wait to catch Perſons, and by degrees to ſcrew into their Eſtates, not regarding their *Neighbour*'s *Benefit*, but only their *Own Gain*, comes under the Character of thoſe againſt whom that Wo is denounced, Hab. 2. 9. *Wo to him that coveteth an evil covetouſneſs to his houſe, that he may ſet his neſt on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil.*

3. THAT in ſuch Contracts *we ought always to have a regard to our Neighbour's Gain, as well as our Own.* And this requires that we uſe Moderation in the *Quantity* of the *Intereſt*, in which we are to take meaſures by the ordinary Advantage which another may make: Men uſually meaſure this by *Cuſtom*; and I think it will be hard to exact *More*, by reaſon of Men's Neceſſity; and it will ſometimes be a Duty to ask *Leſs*, when Reaſon tells us, that *Cuſtom* labours of *Oppreſſion*. And becauſe the graſping Minds of ſinful Men, too often carries them *beyond Bounds* in Self-ſeeking, it is One thing which all well ordered Governments have taken particular Care about, to ſet *Limits* to this matter, with ſevere Penalties ordained for the Tranſgreſſor. In this kind therefore, we may not demand the ſame Quantity, nor near it, that we would do for Rents of *Houſes* or *Lands*, becauſe *this* is only for *Time*, whilſt we take good Security for the *Principal*; whereas the *other* is not only for Time, but alſo we our ſelves do run the *Riſque* of the Principal: And doubtleſs we ought to ſeek the *Proſperity* of our *Neighbour* as well as our *Own*; and that if he run the hazard, he may ſhare ſufficiently in the *Profit*, that ſo Men may Live one by another.

4. *WE ought alſo to take great Care, that we be not* over Exact *in our Demands, when the ſupream Providence of God, blaſts our Neighbour's Prudent & Diligent Improvement, and he comes off with notable Loſs.* It is true, a Man may in the firſt Adventure *Gain* beyond ordinary Expectation, and at another fall behind and ſuffer *Loſs*, but not ſo, but that in the whole he is Benefited; now this comes under the preſent Conſideration, and as we are not Hurt by his *Gains*, ſo neither are we to be Hindred by ſuch a *Loſs*: But when by *Storm*, *Fire*, *Enemies*, or any unforeſeen and unavoidable Caſualty, he is brought to *Poverty*, and defeated of his rational and probable Expectations, the Rule of *Humanity* obligeth us to conſider him; and not to thruſt him down, but to Support him, & endeavour in our Sphere, that he may Emerge; and for that Reaſon, to be ſo far from demanding our *Intereſt*, as to Contribute to his Support, according to our meaſure, either by Forbearance, or by putting our hand, to put him again in a way to Recover his Loſſes, and to be able to Live in the World: And not to do ſo in this Caſe, is, not to *do as we would be done by*, but grievous *Oppreſſion*.

AND if theſe Rules be Carefully & Conſcientiouſly attended, we ſhall be ſo far from being Guilty of Sin by our thus *Lending* to our Neighbour, that we ſhall in Truth not only do him Juſtice, but alſo extend a due and Neighbourly *Charity* to him.

[MAY 29. 1705.]

SERMON CCI.

(III.) THERE *is a Righteouſneſs to be followed, in the* Farming of Houſes and Lands. That ſuch a Contract as this is *Lawful*, is abundantly proveable from the Word of God; and the Neceſſity of it for the Good of Mankind, is a potent Confirmation of it: For, tho' every Man ought to Employ himſelf in ſome Calling, yet that is not the only way in which he may Rightfully advance his Eſtate. Some Men are able to Labour, but they have nothing to beſtow their Labour upon; others have an Eſtate of *Poſſeſſion* which either their Calling allows them not to Occupy by themſelves, or they have more than they can ſo Occupy: Some Men have an Eſtate in *Houſing*, which they have no occaſion for their own Uſe to Improve; others have *None*, and want one for the Convenience of their Occupation; ſo that by ſuch a Contract, *Both* the Parties may be Accommodated and Benefited, and

and humane Society comfortably maintained. But here also *Justice* is to be observed, and *Charity* to be maintained; and there are Duties here on either hand that ought to be observed.

AND here in *General* observe, that there is a great Difference between *This*, and that of *Loan*; for in *This* the *Principal* remains in the hand of the *Proprietor*, and he runs the Risque of all Casualties, as of *Fire*, *Innundations*, &c. whereas in the *Other*, the *Principal* becomes his who *Borrows* it, and he is Responsible for it to his *Creditor*. And right Reason tells us, that on this account, a greater Profit ought to redound to the Owner by *Farming*, than by *Interest* for Time, in ordinary Cases. But the *Moral Law* hath here also set Limits, which every one that would follow Righteousness ought to confine himself unto.

(1.) IN respect of him who *Lets out his Estate to Farm*, there are these Rules to be attended;

1. HE *ought to consider his Neighbour's probable* Benefit *as well as his Own, in the Rate which he sets upon his Houses and Lands.* It is a general Rule in all Contracts, that we are to seek our *Neighbour's* Good, as well as our *Own* in it. Hence there can be no stated Value set in this Case; there may be the same Cost laid out by the *Proprietor*, on one and another Tenement or Farm; but there may be a great difference in the Commodiousness of the one and the other: We ought therefore to Consult, whether he that Occupies or Improves it, may be a *Gainer*, and not a necessary *Loser* by the Improvement, if it be not his own Fault; so that the Owner may in this regard Righteously enhaunce the Rent: But any thing that exceeds this, comes under the Sin of *Oppression*; nor ought the Necessity of the Person that Hires, be improved to Exact of him, beyond this general Rule: For this doth not vary the thing it self, nor is it to follow the Golden Rule, to *do to another, as we would rationally have him to do by Us.*

2. THAT *he ought to be* Merciful to his Tenant, *when meer Casualty cutts off from him the Fruits of his Labour.* If the Man by *Idleness*, or foolish *Negligence* loseth his Benefit, it is his Fault, and a like Pity is not Commanded to be used when it is so; but if an *unforeseen Fire* takes away all the Man's Substance, and Impoverisheth him to an Inability to defray his Arrears; or *Drought*, *Rain*, *Caterpillars* sweep away the Fruit of his Labours, and he Loseth all his honest Industry, the utmost Rigour of the Contract ought not to be Prosecuted, but some fair proportionable Abatement ought to be made; especially if the Person be *Poor*, and brought into Distress by it: And this belongs to the *Charity*, which the Word of God calls *Righteousness*; and equally is required in this Command, as will afterwards be Considered.

(2.) IN respect of him who *Tales such an Estate to Farm*: And here also two Rules are principally to be regarded;

1. HE *ought to take Care of his Landlord's Estate, that it suffers not, as much as if it were his own.* And this belongs to the Rule of *Honesty*; for as the *Landlord* ought not to Oppress his *Tenant*, so is the *other* obliged to see that the *Landlord* be not Diminished by his Default; For the design of such Contracts, is that *Each* may be Benefited hereby; and without such Care, he may *Lose* more by such Waste, than his *Gains* are by the Rents, which is contrary to *Justice* or *Equity*. A Man may better *Give* the Hire of his House to *one*, than make a considerable *Rent* for it of *another*, who makes the Reparation which he hath occasioned, but more Chargable than the Rent is worth. A Man may by Strip and Waste, and Neglect, so spoil a Living, as the Owner had better to have let it ly still *Unimproved*: But this is not according to a *good Conscience*.

2. HE *ought to be Faithful in discharging his honest Obligation to his Landlord.* And herein he is to be True to the Quantity, Quality and Time agreed upon; in every whereof his Righteousness is concerned. It must be done without all *Fraud* or *Deceit*; or putting his *Landlord* upon the necessity of *Loss*, or being at Charges for the Recovery of his *Own*: And doubtless all *Law-suits* commenced on *this* account, are occasioned by the Unrighteousness of One of the Parties at least. Not but that if God's Providence puts the Man *Behind-hand* unavoidably, he may honestly *Ask*, and his *Creditor* ought in Charity to *Use* Patience till he may be able; but to use Pretences on this account which are *Fallacious*, as too many do, will not excuse them from Sin; as if a Man pretends that he cannot Pay his Rent, when he falls behind by his *Idleness*, *Prodigality*, *Drinking*, *fine Apparel*, &c.

(IV.) THERE *is a Righteousness to be observed in the Contracts of* Buying & Selling, *or in* Merchandize. *Merchandize*, in the comprehensive Notion of it, includes all manner of Contracts between Man and Man, in which *one* thing is given in *Exchange* for *another*; whereby the Right and Possession passeth from the *former Possessor*, to the *Purchaser*; and so it includes in it the Purchasing of Lands & Houses, and all the Sales that are made between Man and Man: Of the *Lawfulness* and *Necessity* of which, there needs no distinct Discourse. All which is considerable under it, will fall in with what is to be said in that which follows; only one CASE may be briefly considered, viz.

Quest. *WHETHER it be Lawful for a Person to sell an Inheritance which befalls him by Right of Heirship?*

THE ground of this Enquiry is that *Mosaical* Law, which forbad the doing it Out-right; and provided that all such Inheritances, as had fallen into the Possession of others, should revert to the Person, or his Heirs, in the Year of *Jubilee*.

Ans. THIS Law was not *Moral*, but *Judicial*, and accommodated to the Constitution of the *Israelitish Polity*; & doubtless, had something *Typical* in it, & referred to the Spiritual Kingdom of *Christ*; and was of the same order with the Preservation

of Genealogies, and the keeping Inheritances to the Tribe; and probably had a respect to the more clear Proving of the Descent of CHRIST Himself, according to the Predictions of Him: As also to intimate that the Heavenly Inheritance is reserved safe for every true *Israelite*, notwithstanding his Follies and Frailties in this Life. And we find that a Living in a *walled City*, might be sold *for ever*, and not go forth in the *Jubilee*, *Lev.* 25. 29, 31. It is true, a Man hath a Privilege to dispose of his free Estate by *Testament*, and that is among Men accounted Sacred & Inviolable: And by this sometimes Men do *Entail* Inheritances upon *Posterity*, whereby they deprive their Heirs of a Liberty of Alienating the *Property*; which, tho' it seems to be a great hardship, yet ties their hands, and cuts them off from a Power of Disposing them. But when Men are Possest of such Inheritances, either by a Purchase made by themselves, or by a Free Alienation of it to them by *Progenitors*, without any such Embarassment; they are at as much Liberty of Conscience to Alienate these, as any other part of their Estate: And we are assured, the *Jews* themselves were allowed to do so by any *Lands*, without the Confines of *Canaan*, *Acts* 4. 36, 37. And it is certain, that the Distinction between *Real* and *Personal*, is meerly *Civil*, and hath no Foundation in *Divinity*, so as in it self to oblige the Conscience.

BUT I proceed to the Consideration of that which is more restrictively called *Merchandize*; which is, when Persons do *Sell* and *Exchange* one thing for another, with a design to get *Gain* by it, and make an *Estate* in the World out of it; and accordingly do make it a *Trade* or *Calling*, in which they do Employ themselves. And here I distinguish not between such as Sell things by *Whole sale*, or such as *Retail* any Goods to others; for in *Divinity* they come under a like Consideration, as to the general Rules given about it in the Word of God.

AND here before I proceed to a particular Discourse of the *Righteousness* required in it, there is a general CASE calls for some Consideration, *viz.*

Quest. *WHETHER such a Calling as* this *be Lawful?* Not, *Whether Men may* Buy & Sell? for *Necessity* calls for *that*; But, *Whether Men may make it a Calling to Buy & Sell for* Gain, *and advancing a Living in the World by it?*

Answ. SOME of the *Ancients* have altogether *Denied* the *Lawfulness* of This, except the Person hath been at the *Cost* of *Time* and *Charge* of obtaining the *Property* of the thing; as altering *Iron* into *Pots*, or other Uses, by Working of it; or turning *Cloth* into *Garment*, &c. But the main *Argument* for this, is Christ's Whipping of the *Buyers* and *Exchangers* out of the Temple; the weakness of which is very obvious: For tho' it might be *Profaness* to do it *there*, yet it might be *Lawful elsewhere*. The Scriptures no where Condemn it, and the Convenience of Mankind requires it; and the Apostle seems tacitly to approve it, *Jam.* 4. 13, 14. And not only doth one *Neighbour* depend on *another*, but one *Countrey* is beholden to another for things needful and convenient; and Man's *Commodity* requires, that there be such of whom they may Purchase the things which they have occasion for: There must therefore be such who make it their Business; which is the proper Notion of *Merchandize*. And we have already observed, that every Calling is to get an *Honest Living* by; and for *that* some *Gain* is necessary; nor ought Men to lose their *Time*, and *Travail*, and *Hazards* for *nought*, but may justly expect to have a moderate *Profit* by it. If then it be Lawful to *Buy* and *Sell*, it must be so to make a convenient *Profit* by it.

BUT the great Difficulty here is, for such to know how to *Regulate* themselves in this, according to the mind of God, and so as to exercise exact *Righteousness* in it; which is therefore now to be considered: And there are some general Heads, to which the Consideration of this may be reduced;

(1.) THERE is *a Righteousness to be used in the setting a* due Value *upon Commodities to be Sold and Bought*. And this seems to be the most *intricate Case* in the whole mystery of *Merchandize*; and in which there are great Lucres before Men of Trade and Dealing. There is indeed a general Rule which if Conscientiously followed, would be a good Directory in this Affair, viz. *That we should seek our* Own *Gain, so as withal to consult our* Neighbour's *Benefit*. That there may be a *Dishonest Gain*, we are well assured by the Word of God; and that as well in the *High Prizes* of things, as any *other* way; and Men may do themselves Wrong by it; for we are told, 1 Tim. 6. 10. *The love of money is the root of all evil: which while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

BUT the Enquiry is,

Quest. *WHETHER there be any stated* Rule *for this, by attending whereto Men may keep a good Conscience in their Dealings?*

Answ. TO which I reply, there doubtless is; else the Scripture would in vain find fault with, and threaten Men for their *Extortion*, Ezek. 22 12. *Thou hast greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion.* 1 Cor. 5. 11. —— *Or an extortioner, with such an one, no not to eat.* But it is easier to tell what is *Not* the Rule, than what it *Is*; but yet by this *Negative*, we may be helped in our right understanding of the *Affirmative*. Here then we may for our help in this Affair take a few general Rules, which will carry sure Direction in these:

1. THAT *it is no Rule of Righteousness, to Buy as* Cheap, *and Sell as* Dear *as we can*. This indeed is that which Men do too generally follow, and stand to justify; but contrary to Scripture and right Reason. If it were so, the Word of God in vain condemns *Oppression*, it being a thing Impracticable; and

and to talk of *Dishonest Gain* in the Prizes of things, would be *non-sense*, and a meer *Banter*. Nor would there be any room for the using of *Conscience* in this Affair; for where there is no other Rule but this, Conscience must needs be unbounded; and the common Good of Mankind altogether disregarded: And this is manifestly condemned, *Jer.* 22. 17. And it would be ridiculous for Men to say, It is so much Worth; when their meaning is, it is worth as much as they can *Get* for it: Doubtless there was another Intention in that, Gen. 23. 15. *My Lord, hearken unto me, the Land is worth four hundred shekels of silver.*

2. *IT is not the meer* Intrinsical Value *of the thing which is here to determine the Case.* Many talk of this, but there is a great *Fallacy* in it, for indeed there is no such thing as a *Positive* fixed *Intrinsick* Worth in Trading; for tho' it is certain, there is a real *different* Worth in things Comparitively; as some things are more *Necessary* for Man's Livelihood; and *these* things are really *Better* than such as are meerly *Superfluities*: And things of the same kind may differ in *Quality*, one being *good* and *sound*, the other *bad* and *decayed*, and not so *serviceable*; (but that will be considered afterwards;) but every thing hath its *Changes*; it is Worth so much at such a Time, or in such a Place; at another Time, and in another Place, it is Worth *More* or *Less*: And there are Circumstances in Providence that vary this, as will be observed: Hence that, Gen. 23. 16. *And Abraham hearkned unto Ephron, and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant.*

3. *THO' the* common Market-price *be a general Governing Rule, yet it is not without it's Exceptions.* In things necessary for the Life of Man, it is Customary among well-govern'd People, for the Magistrates to State the Prizes, according to their best Discretion, and in a due Proportion; and Men ought not to exceed this: But it is too often a Practice between Men of the same Employment, to meet together, and by Agreement set what Price they please upon their Wares; which oftentimes becomes *Oppressive*, and tends to the Publick Damage; when they do this meerly to make an Excessive *Gain* by things, which they have no Reason for, but their own *Covetousness*; and this is a *Self* seeking Spirit, without any regard to the Good of our *Neighbour*, which is contrary to *Love*.

4. *THERE are just & warrantable Grounds on which the Prizes of things may vary.* That which is worth but so much at *one* Time, may be of greater Value at *another*; and that for good and just Reasons. The *Scarcity* of things necessary, brought by the over-ruling Providence of God, doth and will enhaunce the Worth; as when God sends *War*, *Blastings*, *Murrain*, and the like, which make Necessaries hard to procure; whereas when there is *Plenty*, it makes them *Cheap*; and there is Reason for it, because these things do stand the Owner in more *Cost* to procure, in a Time of *Scarcity*: Only here also there is danger of *Injustice*, viz. when particular Persons do by Agreement make a *Scarcity*, by Hording up their Goods, and not exposing them to Sale, on purpose for private Gain: Hence that, Prov. 11. 26. *He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.*

5. *IT is Lawful to take a moderate Advance upon Forbearance.* There is a rational Difference between *ready Exchange*, and *Credit*: And there is not only *Time*, which we formerly observed, may be considered, but also *Hazard*; and the *Creditor* is so long out of his Stock, which he might else have probably turned to his Advantage; and the *Debtor* hath his Advantage also by it; and otherwise, Men are like to lose their lawful *Gains*, for which there is no Reason to be given: Only this is not *Unlimited*, but must keep within the bounds of *Moderation*, and Rules of *Equity*.

6. THAT *there ought to be the same Price in the same Circumstances.* My meaning is, that Persons ought not to ask *More* of *one* than *another*, from any Advantages which are before them. Not but that if they have a mind to pleasure a Friend, they may lawfully make *Abatements*, because they may *Give* it, if they see meet, and it will be no Wrong to *others* if they so do: But they ought not to ask *more* of an *Ignorant* Person, than a *Skilful* one; or Advance upon any, beyond what they ordinarily Sell for, by reason of *Necessity*, or their *Ignorance* of the Market; and to Sell according as they find *Fools*, as some boast; for this is contrary to the Rule, bidding us be *Eyes to the Blind*, and to *consider the Poor* in their Straits.

7. *THE greater* Risk *that Men run in procuring their Wares, the greater* Gain *they may lawfully seek.* There is indeed some Risk which all run, of *unforeseen* Casualties; which is one Reason why they may lawfully *Gain* by their Trading: But some run a *greater* than others, *viz.* the Hazards of the Sea, the danger of Pirates, the uncertainty of the Market; and more peculiarly in Times of War, where also the Charges are encreased: Not as if Men were for this Reason to resolve to make up their Losses which they sustain by *Shipwreck*, *&c.* out of their *Returns*; but that such things allow a *greater* Gain, than is to be sought by such as only *Buy* & *Sell* without such Hazards and Charge: Tho' still the *common* Market Price will over-rule in this Affair, unless the Wares are such as are not else-where to be Purchased.

8. *THERE is a Difference between things of real* Use, *and things that are meerly of* Fancy. There are some things that Men cannot be without, such as are for *Food* and *Raiment*; and for these things to Screw Men up to the height, is real *Oppression*; because they must have them, whatever it Cost them, else they must be great Sufferers: Whereas *other* things are only to please Men's *Humours*; & they will shew themselves *Fools*, if to gratify their *Pride*

and

and *Curiosity* they will be at Unreasonable Expence for them. And tho' Men may be *Unconscionable*, in setting such things at excessive Rates; yet the *Buyer* also is guilty, if he will Purchase the gratification of his *Humour* to his own Damage.

9. THAT *in such Contracts Men are to consider their* Neighbours, *as well as* themselves. The Word of God indeed hath not fixed the stated Value of things, because these things are to vary according to Circumstances: But this general Rule hath sufficient Direction to tender Consciences; and if Men do keep within these Bounds, they will maintain *Righteousness* on this account.

(2.) THERE is *a Righteousness to be observed in Men's using of* plain Dealing *one with another, with respect to the things Bought and Sold.* And this also is necessary for the right Regulating of the Value which they set upon the *Commodities*, which they offer to Sale to their Neighbours; or else they cannot keep close to the Rules of Righteousness.

NOW this *Honesty* is to be used,

1. IN regard of *Agreement* for the *Price* of things to be *Bought* and *Sold.*

[1.] *THE* Seller *should be Modest & Conscientious in his Demands.* There is indeed a *Latitude*, and a Person may without Sin, ask so much for a Commodity, as he may take for it, within the compass of lawful *Gain*, tho' he had rather *Abate* something of it, than forego his *Customer*; because if he give him so much, there is no *Extortion* in the thing: But to Demand that which is *Extravagant*, supposeth that he would take so much, if the *Buyer* will give it him: Or he surely lays himself open to *Temptation*, in case he makes no Scruple, but thinks it is the Worth, when it is not.

[2.] *THE* Buyer *should be Moderate in his Beating down the* Seller *in his Commodity.* It is every Man's Duty to be willing that his Neighbour should *Live* by his Calling, and have those reasonable *Gains*, which all Men allow; and therefore to *beat him down*, and when he asks that which is *Honest* between Man and Man, not to be satisfied with that, but Hackle in it, is *Dishonesty*: And this more especially, when one Commodity is offered in Exchange for another, and the Man hath *Need*, and no other Exchange to offer; to *beat him down* to his manifest *Loss*, not only in the thing it self, but in the Value it commonly passeth at, is far from *Fair Dealing*; whilst *He* still holds up *His* Wares at the *full* Price without *Abatement.*

2. THERE is *Honesty* also to be practised with regard to the *Things themselves* which are *Sold.* And here,

1. THE *Seller* ought not to *over-commend his Ware*; to set it forth with *Fallacious Encomiums* put upon it, and thereby seek to *Impose* upon him, and draw the Person in. And there are several *Impostures* here to be avoided, if Men would deal fairly on this account. To Commend a thing for the *Best*, when he either knows not that it is so, or knows that it is not so, but that there is far *Better* to be procured, and at the *same* Rate; to say, it stood me in so much at the *First* Cost; and pretend that he makes but such a *moderate* Gain by it, when it is not so; to assure him, that he will not get better Cheap any where else, when he knows that he speaks *False*; and all this to draw in a *Customer*; is not only a Breach of the *Ninth* Command, but also of the *Eighth*, in that it is to impose upon his *Ignorance* and *Credulity.*

2. THE *Buyer* ought not to *Depreciate* and *unduely Undervalue* the *commodity* which he offers to Buy. To detect notorious and apparent *Defects* in the thing, is not only Lawful, but Prudent; and belongs to humane *Discretion*; for it is fitting that every Man should *know* and *satisfy* himself in the thing that he Purchaseth, so far as he can discern: But to *Depreciate*, find *Fault* without Reasons; to *beat the thing down*, when in his Conscience he knows that it is not so; is not *fair Dealing*, but the *contrary*; and is that which the Wise Man observes to be a common Fraud among Men, Prov. 20. 14. *It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer: but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth.*

3. A Man ought not to *Sell one thing, for another.* i.e. under the *Title* of *another.* There are many *Counterfeit* Wares in the World, which pass under *another* Name, and are of a far *lower* Value; which are therefore made and vended for a *Cheat*; and a *Customer* may ask for *one* thing, but because he knows it not, he may be imposed on by *another*: But this will no *Honest* Man do, unless he also have been *Deceived*, and remains *Ignorant*; for if he know it, he ought not to *Deceive*, because he hath been *Deceived*; but must suffer the *Loss* himself, unless he can Right himself of the Person that Injured him.

4. A Man ought not to *Sell a known* Bad *thing, for a* Good *thing*: And he doth so, when he asks the *same* Price for it, which he would if it were *Good* and *Merchantable.* It was one thing Censured by the Prophet, *Amos* 8. 6. The *selling the Refuse of the Wheat.* When there is a Difference in the known *Goodness* of a thing, there ought to be a proportionable Difference in the *Price*; for in this regard, there is an *Intrinsical* Value, as we before observed.

AND here that CASE comes in, *viz.*

Quest. *WHETHER it be not Lawful for a Person to Conceal the known Defects of his Wares?*

Ans. TO which it may be replied, that if the Defect be such, as doth really *Depreciate* the thing, and render it *Unserviceable* to the Use and End of it; and the Person Buying it, will certainly suffer *Injury* thereby; and the Defect be such, as he cannot well discover, either by reason that it is not obvious to common View, or it be such as he hath no Skill in; *Honesty* requires that he be told of it, and if he will count it *None*, he is dealt fairly withal. And there are many such Cases: A Commodity may look *fair*, and seem as Good as any; and yet be *rotten* and *unserviceable*, and I know it to be so; there may be a *Counterfeit* Coin, which is of a *baser* Metal;

Metal; and tho' others know it, the Person doth not; but I *took* it, and therefore will *pass* it; at least it may look fair, but have that *imperfection* that makes it unserviceable, and the like: In this Case I am to *Discover* it; and tho' I must be a *Loser* in so doing, yet it is fit that I do not by Fraud and Deceit *Impose* on an Innocent Person, to save my self.

AND if we follow these Rules in this Affair, it is the way to keep a good Conscience, which is better than Gain by Deceit.

[JUNE 26. 1705.]

SERMON CCII.

(3.) THERE *ought to be* one Standard *to regulate the Prizes of things by, if Men would observe Righteousness in a way of Commerce.* This is but little thought of, or practised among Men, which occasions a great deal of *Injustice* in their Dealings one with another.

WE before observed, That there is a Righteousness to be observed, in the setting of a *due Value* upon things: Now tho' this Value may alter, according to the Circumstances of God's Governing Providence; yea, tho' the Prizes of things may *rise* and *fall*, still the Price ought to be *One* in all Contracts, and every thing be valued by *one Standard*, otherwise it is impossible that *Honesty* should be maintained in Traffick. It is true, a thing may be worth so much at *one* Time, and *more* or *less* at *another* Time; and it is Lawful for Men to ask moderate Gain for *Credit*, and giving a Day for Payment: But how shall these things be *adjusted*, so as to bear a due *Proportion*, except the Value it self be Stated? Now, because *Money* hath gotten the Command in *Merchandize*, as being best accommodated to advance Traffick among Men, it is therefore become the *Standard*, and all other Wares are to be reduced to, and Regulated by it; and every thing in *Exchange* is to be reckoned just so much Worth, as it may pass for *Money*, and neither *more* or *less*. Not that *Money* is naturally so, more than any *other* thing; but because there is no other thing, (according to the State of humane Affairs,) which is better fitted to over-rule this Affair. It is a frequent talk, which is of *Two Prizes*, according to which Men do order their Bargains, one for *Money*, another for *Pay*, as it is usually termed; but it is certain that this Distinction lays a foundation for *Cheating* and *Oppression*, as woful Experience will confirm. It is true, Men may lawfully Contract for Payment to be made for such a *Species*; but if it be not to be had, but they must indent for *other* things, they ought to take it at the Price Current, as it will pass for *Money*; or at least Proportion their Gains by it to *this Standard*, else they cannot be said to give the Worth for it. The Wise Man tells us, Eccl. 10. 19. *Money answereth all things.* By which we are not only to understand, that it is of such *Credit*, that he who hath it may procure any *other* things with it; but also it is a *Standard* for the Settlement of the Value of every thing else, as to it's *Currency* among Men: And tho' the Iniquity of the World, hath made no little *Disorder* in the way of Trading by reason of this Difference; yet he that will keep a good Conscience in his Dealings ought to have a strict regard to *This*, that so he may not over-reach his Brother in any matter.

(4.) JUSTICE *is also to be observed in* Weights & Measures; *for which the Word of God is very full and frequent; and that not only in the* Law of Moses, *but* elsewhere *in the Holy Scriptures.* Exactness therein is Commended, Prov. 16. 11. *A just weight & balance are the Lord's: all the weights of the bag are his work.* And Falshood in it Condemned, Chap. 11. 1. *A false balance is abomination to the Lord: but a just weight is his delight.* And this Law was not *Judicial*, but purely *Moral* & *Natural*; and *Equity* between Man and Man, cannot in all points be preserved without it. It is true, all things that belong to Commerce, is not to be calculated by these; and the fore-going Rules are sufficiently Directive about them. But the main part of the things which belongs to stated *Merchandize*, comes under *this* Rule. And by the same Rules, we are to *take* our Wares, at so much, in such Weight or Measure; tho' there is a lawful Difference to be made between the Value of a *small* Parcel, and of a *greater*, for good Reasons; yet it is *Honest* that the Person should have the full Quantity of what he agrees for; and to diminish him of it, is a *Cheat* put on him: for the Person agrees for so much, which he is Defrauded in, which must needs be a violation of *Righteousness*. There must therefore be *one* Rule for these, and all are to be brought to that; which therefore well-Ordered Governments take a special Care of. And as Men ought to *Buy* and *Sell* by the same, (and therefore we are told, Prov. 20. 10, 23. *Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the Lord. Divers weights are an abomination unto the Lord: and a false balance is not good.* For sometimes there may be the same *Weights*, but a Cheat in the *Ballance*;) so they ought to be careful that they be *Just* and *alike*, else there may be Wrong done both to *ourselves* and *others*: For every thing that is *Bought* and *Sold*, is not of the same Value; and I may *Buy* of one, and *Sell* to another. And this Rule is to be observed in *Money*, as well as in *other* Commodities; for as there is a different Consideration between *Bullion* & *Coins*, the one whereof always passeth by *Weight*, whereas the other passeth upon the *Credit* of the Publick Authority, whose *superscription* it bears; yet there is a Rule given by such Authority, that all such *Coin* shall be made of such a *Weight*; and if by long use and wearing, it comes to fall short considerable of that, they righteously take Order for the new *Minting* of it: So, for Men to *Clip* and *diminish* such

such *Coin*, and still to pass it away as *Coin*, and upon the Credit of the Stamp, is notorious *Theft*, and introduceth unknown Mischief to the Common wealth; and it is a Righteous thing, that severe Penalties be Enacted against it, and Rigorously Prosecuted. Such *Moneys* may be lawfully past away as *Bullion* by Weight, but not on the Publick Credit.

AND let such as are Guilty in this, know, that however they may hide their Villany from Civil Cognizance, it will one Day prove a sting to their own Consciences.

THUS we have Considered the more Necessary Duties to be observed for the Righteous *Obtaining* and *Possessing* our share in the good things of this Life.

IT follows that we proceed to Consider,

Secondly, THE Rules given for the Righteous *Improvement* of these things, which we have gained by Right. It is certain, that the good things of this Life are given to Men by God for *Improvement*, and that with a *Next* respect to the Concerns of this Life, because they are *Temporary* things. Tho' it is ever to be remembred, that this must be with an *Ultimate* Design for the *Glory of God*, which is that which brings them under the Regulation of *Divinity*, with regard to which they have a proper Reference to *this* Command.

HERE let us observe, That tho' every Man hath a proper Right to such an Estate as he comes to Possess in a Lawful and Honest way; yet he is not the *absolute Lord* of it, to do with it what he sees meet; but is put into it as a *Steward* under God, and to follow His Direction in the *Improvement* that he makes of it. GOD is the supream Lord of all; we Ourselves are His, and then surely what we have must be so: And it is He who hath deposited this *Portion* into our hands, be it *more* or *less*; so that by whatever *Media* we come by it, He Governed it, and ordered the Success of it; and we must run it up thro' all *Second* Causes to Him, else we derogate from His Glory: Hence that, 1 *Chron.* 29. 11, 13, 16. *Psal.* 127. 3. He hath to this End given us those Rules in His Word, in which He expresseth His Pleasure, what Use He would have us to make of them; and we cannot Transgress them without manifest *Disobedience*. And it concerns us to Study and Practice these Rules with Care, because all that we have is in His *Disposure*, and He can either continue them to us, or take them from us, according to His holy Pleasure; 1 Sam. 2. 7. *The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up.* And it is certain that He will ere long call every one of us to give an Account of our *Stewardship*, as is intimated in, *Luke* 16. *beg.* And these things belong to the *Talents*, which our Lord hath betrusted us withal; and He will come, and strictly enquire of us, how we have *Occupied* them. This *Improvement* therefore properly belongs to *Commutative* Justice, according to the received Notion of it, and so belongs to *this* Precept.

NOW before I proceed to the distinct Consideration of this Head, give me leave to observe, That Divines do generally bring the Consideration of *Poverty* and *Riches* under *this* Command; and so they may be here taken a brief Account of; tho' it might also have been observed under the *former* Head, as bearing a respect to *both*. The Providence of God bestows on some Men a *great Estate* in this World, which they are either *Born* to, or they are smiled upon in their *Endeavours*; others are either *Born* to *Poverty*, or their *Prudence* and *Pains* is frowned on, and they are brought very *low*. Now there is an *Improvement* of these to be made accordingly; and there are the Duties incumbent on the *One*, which are not expected from the *Other* in their present Condition: But the most of these things will fall in, in the sequel. I shall therefore here only Remark:

1. THAT *it is the Duty of those that are* Rich, *to acknowledge God in their Riches, and seek to Use them to His Honour.* They ought not therefore to be lifted up with them, to trust and rely on them, to nourish and gratify their Lusts with them, to despise their *Poor* Neighbours because they have not a like *Portion* of them; but to be Humble and Kind, and endeavour to lay up a better *Portion* for themselves: Hence that Advice, Prov. 3. 9. *Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase.* 1 Tim. 6. 17, 18. *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy: That they do good, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate.*

2. IT *is the Duty of the* Poor *to adore God's Providence in it, and study how they may submit to Him Patiently under it.* They ought not to Murmur at God's Providence, as if He Injured them, nor seek by any Indirect Means to ease themselves of it; but to Trust in God who cares for such; and be the more sollicitous to secure for themselves, the *Riches* which cannot be taken away; remembring, that as *Riches* are not Evidences of God's *Love*, so neither is *Poverty* of His *Anger* or *Hatred*; being such things as in themselves make Men neither *better* nor *worse*; and are equally improvable for Eternal Salvation.

BUT we may pass to the Consideration of the Rules, according to which we ought to *Improve* the outward good things of this Life, so as to serve God therewithal. Now the right and lawful *Using* of these things may be referred to Two Heads, viz. the *Preservation* of them, and the *Expence* of them; both of which the Word of God gives us Direction about.

I. THE *Preservation* of an Estate. It is a favour of God that He bestows upon us a comfortable *Subsistence* in this World; and tho' it be a *common* Kindness, yet it is not to be despised or neglected: And the *Vertue* which is here required to be exercised, is commonly called *Frugality*; which consists in a Prudent Management of our outward Affairs; and is that

that which is Commended in the Word of God, and that which belongs to one that Fears God, *Pſal.* 112. 5. And there are two things to which this may be reduced;

1. *A diligent looking after our Eſtate, to* keep it together, *that it be not, thro' our neglect, expoſed to Waſte.* The things of this Life are liable to *Corruption* and *Decay*, there is *Moth*, *Ruſt* and *Thief* that are ready to ſieze them: And tho' except God Preſerve them for us, all our Watchfulneſs and Induſtry cannot Secure them; yet He requires of us to look after them, which is the ordinary way to enjoy His Bleſſing upon them. It is therefore the Wiſe Man's Counſel, Prov. 27. 23. *Be thou diligent to know the ſtate of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds.* We ought not to Waſte them our ſelves unprofitably, nor ſuffer them to be ſtroyed by our Negligence. Tho' Chriſt could work a Miracle to feed the Multitude, yet He gave thatCommand to HisDiſciples on this Account, Joh. 6.12. *Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be loſt.* And it is certain, that there will be a continual *going Out*, and he that doth not take care to preſerve his *Income*, his Expence will in a little time bring himſelf to *Poverty*; and if he be not Careful to uphold his Eſtate, he will not be long before he will have nothing to Expend, neither upon himſelf, his Family, or the Publick Arrears, or the due Charity to the Needy. Whereas this is the way to live Honeſtly, Honourably and Comfortably.

2. *PRUDENT Endeavour to* Advance *our Eſtate.* It is not ſufficient to take heed that nothing be *Waſted*, but we muſt huſband our Eſtates to *Advantage:* It is not enough to *get* an Eſtate, but there is a Duty to endeavour that it may *proſper* by good Huſbandry of it, in the beſt way. *Proſperity* is a Bleſſing to be deſired, (tho' not inſatiably to be graſped after, which is a Temptation to Sin;) this *Proſperity* is one of the Promiſes of the Covenant, and we may Pray for it; ſo did he, 1 Chron. 4. 10. *And Jabez called on the God of Iſrael, ſaying, Oh that thou wouldeſt bleſs me indeed, and enlarge my coaſt, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldeſt keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me, And God granted him that which he requeſted.* We may then lawfully *Endeavour* it. *Riches* are conſiſtent with *Godlineſs*; and the more a Man hath, the more Advantage he hath to do Good with it, if God give him an Heart to it: Pſal. 112. 3. *Wealth and riches ſhall be in his houſe, and his righteouſneſs endureth for ever.* Prov. 31. 16. *She conſidereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands ſhe planteth a vineyard.*

II. THERE is a Righteouſneſs to be followed in the *Expence* of theſe things. And here there are two Vertues, *Parſimony* and *Liberality.*

(1.) *PARSIMONY*; which conſiſts in a prudent reſtraining our Expences to a due meaſure. God doth not ſee it meet to meaſure a like Portion of theſe things to every one in this World, but ſome enjoy *More*, others *Leſs* of them, which is alſo included, *Pſal.* 112 5. And here the Providence of God is to be eyed, and the Caſes to be compared, and we are to regulate our ſelves accordingly; and great Prudence is here to be uſed. It is true, that God gives us theſe things for our *Uſe* and *Comfort*; and we ought to Uſe them and take the Comfort of them: Hence that, Eccl. 2. 24. *There is nothing better for a man, than that he ſhould eat and drink, and that he ſhould make his ſoul enjoy good in his labour. This alſo I ſaw, that it was from the hand of God.* But ſtill it ſhould be our *Own*, elſe we do not ſerve God's Providence as *this* Command requires. Now there are two Caſes in which this is to be Conſidered, and accordingly Improved; the one is *Ordinary*, the other *Extraordinary*

1. *IN* Ordinary *Caſes*; *our* laying out *ought to bear a due Proportion to our* coming in, *& rather to come ſhort, than to exceed that.* And right *Reaſon* as well as *Religion* requires that there be a Difference here made between one Man, and another, according as God hath ordered his *Eſtate*, and his *Charge*. Hence that may be *Covetouſneſs* in one Man, which would be *Prodigality* in another: And therefore for all Men to maintain the ſame Port in *Diet*, *Apparel* and *Entertainments*, is contrary to the *Parſimony* that is required of us; and whatſoever *Commendation* they may have from Men, they will neither pleaſe God, nor keep a good Conſcience: We ought therefore to acquaint our ſelves with our Affairs, and way of Supply; and conſider then, how many ways there are to Expend, and Compare them together, and ſo Proportion our Port in the World; otherwiſe, we ſhall miſs in our *Arithmatick.* Theſe things are indeed for our *Uſe* and *Comfort*, and ought to be ſo uſed; but God diſtributes to ſome only for *Neceſſity*, to others for *Convenience*, and to others for *Delight.* And tho' thoſe that have *more* of the World's Goods, ought to be very Sober in their Expence, and take heed that they nouriſh not their Luſts with it; yet they that have *more*, may lawfully Uſe it for their Comfort more *Liberally*: Whereas yet, they who have *Leſs*, muſt live more *ſparingly*, and *Cut their Coat according to their Cloth*; and to do according to what we *have*, and not what we have *not*, 2 *Cor.* 8. 12. And tho' Perſons of Publick Station ſhould Live in a more *Noble Faſhion*, yet the Publick which they ſerve ought to maintain it; and Men are not called to Ruin themſelves and Families for this.

2. *IN* Extraordinary *Caſes*, *Men are to take other meaſures.* If God ſees meet to Deny His Ordinary Bleſſing upon Men's lawful Endeavours, and bring them to *Poverty* and *Straits*, they ought to make Uſe of what they have at *Preſent*, and truſt God's Providence for the *Future*; and not to *Famiſh* themſelves to *Day*, for fear leaſt they ſhould have nothing for to *Morrow.* And here our Saviour's Rule muſt take Place, Matth. 6. 34. *Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow ſhall take thought for the things of itſelf: ſufficient*

unto the day is the evil thereof. Only Care is to be had, that we comply with God's Providence in this regard, ſo far as may be, and not profuſely pleaſe our ſelves with the Vulgar Proverb, *Spend, and God will ſend.* There are alſo the Times, when God brings Publick Diſtreſſes upon a People, and all lies at Stake, Times of *War* or *Famine*; and He may now call for a Man's *All*, and he ought to Comport with the preſent Diſtreſs; and not by his ſordid *Parſimony*, think to ſave his own Cabbin, and let the Veſſel ſink. Time was when Chriſtians Sold their Poſſeſſions, and devoted them to the Relief of others; and they looked upon themſelves as called by God to do it; and God accepted it, and they are Commended for it, *Acts* 4. 34, 35. Which would at another time have been folly and diſtraction.

(2.) *LIBERALITY*; which is a Vertue to be exerciſed in a cheerful Diſtribution of the good things we have, according to God's Command. And this is to govern and moderate our *Parſimony*, that it degenerate not into baſe and ignominous *Covetouſneſs*, which is condemned by God. It is our Duty to do Good with, and Diſtribute of our Good things, as there is occaſion offered to us, as there ever will be. Here we are to obſerve, that the Benefit of thoſe things is for *this Life*, & will do us no Kindneſs in *another*, any further than as we have uſed them to God's Glory in *this*; for we are told, 1 Tim. 6. 7. *For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.* This Benefit is actually enjoyed by us, in the laying of them out ſo, as may ſerve to the Ends of them, for the outward Man; ſo that as we cannot preſerve them without *Frugality*, nor long enjoy them without *Parſimony*, ſo neither can we have the Comfort of them without *Liberality*. The Wiſe Man therefore complains of that as a great Vanity, Eccl. 1. 3. *What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the ſun?* Now the Word of God hath here alſo given us plentiful Direction, how we are to Order our ſelves in this regard. And we are not here to diſtinguiſh *Liberality* from *Juſtice*, and reduce it to meer *Charity*; but it contains in it a willing Diſtribution, to all the Uſes for which it is to be employed. And here two things may come under our Conſideration.

1. THE *Subjects* of our *Liberality*; and they are all ſuch to whom we are by Precept required to impart of our Subſtance; and theſe have their Order. In the firſt place it belongs to *Our ſelves* and *Families*; we muſt provide for our particular Charge, and allow them ſuitably for Meat, Drink, Raiment and Education, and a Portion; as we are told, 1 Tim. 5. 8. *If any provide not for his own, and ſpecially for thoſe of his own houſe, he hath denied the faith, and is worſe than an infidel.* And it is the Commendation of the Vertuous Woman, Prov. 31. 15, 20. *She riſeth alſo while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her houſhold, and a portion to her maidens. She ſtretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, ſhe reacheth forth her hands to the needy.* And not to do this, argues the want of Natural Affection. Our *Parents* alſo claim this of us, when Aged and ſhiftleſs; hence that, Matth. 15. 4, 5, 6. *For God commanded, ſaying, Honour thy father and mother: and he that curſeth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye ſay, whoſoever ſhall ſay to his father, or his mother, It is a gift by whatſoever thou mighteſt be profited by me; And honour not his father, or his mother, he ſhall be free Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.* Nor can we ever Compenſate their tender Care of us. The *Common-wealth* alſo is to be ſupported in the neceſſary Charges of it, by ſuch as are Members of it, and have their Protection from it; according to that, Rom. 13. 6, 7. *For, for this cauſe pay you tribute alſo, for they are God's miniſters, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due, cuſtom to whom cuſtom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.* The Maintenance of the *Miniſtry* alſo challengeth a ſhare in our Expence, who ſpend their Time and Strength for the Service of the Souls of their Flock, whereof they have the Charge. Gal. 6. 6. *Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth, in all good things.* 1 Cor. 9. 13, 14. *Do ye not know that they which miniſter about holy things, live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar? Even ſo hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the goſpel, ſhould live of the goſpel.* The *Poor* alſo have an Intereſt in our Expences, and ought to ſhare of it, and to be taken Care of by us, as we are God's Depoſitaries: Hence that Encouragement, Pſal. 41. beg. *Bleſſed is he that conſidereth the poor; the Lord will preſerve him, and keep him alive, and he ſhall be bleſſed upon the earth; and thou wilt not deliver him into the will of his enemies. The Lord will ſtrengthen him upon the bed of languiſhing: thou wilt make all his bed in his ſickneſs.* And here, the *Godly Poor*, or *Chriſtians*, are firſtly to be conſidered by us, Gal. 6. 10. *As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, eſpecially unto them who are of the houſhold of faith.* But yet ſo, as others that are Men, and in Neceſſity, (tho' *Ungodly*, nay tho' our Perſonal Enemies,) be conſidered; and *Humanity* calls for it; and Chriſt hath taught us the Leſſon of it, Matth. 5. 44. *I ſay unto you, Love your enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which deſpitefully uſe you, and perſecute you.* Rom. 12. 20. *If thine enemy hunger, feed him: if he thirſt, give him drink.* Hitherto belong alſo *Strangers* and *Travellers*, for whom we ought to have a Reſerve, that we may be Hoſpitable to them, and give them ſuitable Entertainment; Rom. 12. 13. *Diſtributing to the neceſſity of ſaints: given to hoſpitality.* 1 Pet. 4. 9. *Uſe hoſpitality one to another without grudging.* Heb. 13. 2. *Be not forgetful to entertain ſtrangers: for thereby ſome have entertained angels unawares.*

2. FOR

2. FOR the *Manner* of it, a few Rules may be given;

1. IT muſt be with a *ready and cheerful Mind.* Without this it cannot be called *Liberality.* God regards the *Heart*, and if it be but *Two Mites*, or a *Cup of cold Water*, it is accepted, ſo that it be Right, 2 Cor. 8. 12. *For if there be firſt a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.* On this account a *Liberal* Man is compared to the *Clouds*, which freely diſſolve themſelves for the Relief of the Earth, *Eccl.* 11. 3. We are therefore told, 2 Cor. 9. 7. *Every man according as he purpoſeth in his heart, ſo let him give; not grudgingly, nor of neceſſity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.* And, Prov. 11. 25. *The liberal ſoul ſhall be made fat: and he that watereth, ſhall be watered alſo himſelf.*

2. IT muſt be of that which is our *Own*, and according to our *Ability*, 2 Cor. 8. 12. There are thoſe whom God makes the Objects of *Charity*, who have nothing to give, but are Subjects ready to receive an Alms of another. And tho' theſe ought to have an heart ready diſpoſed, yet it is not required of them that they ſhould give away that which is not their own proper Goods, but another's: And this is *Robbery* for Burnt Offering, which God will not accept, but Charge to them as Sin. Not but that a Man may lawfully *Borrow* of another on occaſion, when he is able to make it Good again: And it muſt be according to his *Ability*, and another's *Neceſſity*: Hence that, Acts 20. 35. *I have ſhewed you all things, how that ſo labouring ye ought to ſupport the weak; and to remember the words of the Lord Jeſus, how he ſaid, It is more bleſſed to give than to receive.*

3. WE ought to *ſtudy and obſerve the voice of Providence*, which calls us to *Diſtribute.* We ought not to ſhut our Eyes, and hide our ſelves from the Knowledge of our Duty on this Account, but watch for the Opportunity, and not frame Excuſes to avoid it. We are therefore acquainted with that as the Character of a *Liberal* Man, Iſai. 32. 8. *The liberal deviſeth liberal things, and by liberal things ſhall he ſtand.* We ſhould inſtead of being ſorry that we know of ſuch a Duty, enquire after it; and not do it *ſparingly*, but with regular *Freedom*, and openhandedneſs.

4. WE ſhould do it *Frequently & Unweariedly.* We ought not to be Tired with it, or Refrain it: We ſhould do it as often as there is Opportunity, *Gal.* 6. 10. We ſhould do it to many, when there is need of it: Eccl. 11. 2. *Give a portion to ſeven, and alſo to eight; for thou knoweſt not what evil ſhall be upon the earth.* And we ſhould not be weary of it, Gal. 6. 9. *And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due ſeaſon we ſhall reap, if we faint not.* We ſhould indeed Commiſſerate, and be ſorry for ſuch as are reduced to Diſtreſs; but this Commiſeration is to ſtir up our Bowels for them, and not to Quarrel with God's Providence, which provides ſuch Objects for us, thereby to prove our Sincerity, Jam. 2. 15, 16. *If a brother, or ſiſter be naked, and deſtitute of daily food; And one of you ſay unto them, Depart in peace, be you warmed and filled: notwithſtanding ye give them not thoſe things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?*

5. WE ſhould do it in the *proper Seaſon* of it, and not uſe Delays. *Bis dat qui Cito dat.* A Liberal Spirit will prompt us to uſe no Delays, but take the hint of Providence, and do the thing when it will be moſt ſuitable, Prov. 3. 28. *Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to morrow I will give; when thou haſt it by thee.*

6. WE muſt *do it for God*: We are therefore commanded, Prov. 3. 9. *Honour the Lord with thy ſubſtance, and with the firſt fruits of all thine increaſe.* And *David* calls it the *Kindneſs of God*, 1 Sam. 9. 3. And we are aſſured in Prov. 19. 17. *He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given, will he pay him again.* And this is that which puts a *Theological* Tincture upon our Acts of *Liberality.*

LET us then be excited to the Exerciſe of this Vertue, conſidering that we owe it to God, who is our Land-lord; and it is part of the Quit-Rent which he expects of us; and that in this way we ſhall be under the Bleſſing, Prov. 3. 9, 10. *Honour the Lord with thy ſubſtance, and with the firſt fruits of all thine increaſe. So ſhall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy preſſes ſhall burſt out with new wine.* We hereby engage God to be our Pay-Maſter; and have good Security that we ſhall not be *Loſers*, but great *Gainers* in the foot of the Account; Eccl. 11. 1. *Caſt thy bread upon the waters: for thou ſhalt find it after many days.*

[JULY 24. 1705.]

SERMON *CCIII.*

QUESTION LXXV.

WHAT is forbidden in the Eighth Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Eighth Commandment forbiddeth whatſoever doth, or may unjuſtly hinder our own or our Neighbour's Wealth or outward Eſtate.

WE may from the *Duties* required, infer the *Sins* forbidden: But becauſe there were ſome things reſerved to be here more diſtinctly ſpoken to, we may briefly Conſider theſe.

THE *Anſwer* is Comprehenſive, every thing that is any way repugnant to *Commutative* Juſtice, comes within the Comprehenſion of it: So many ways therefore as this Command may be kept, ſo many ways it is capable of being broken, and that either by *Omiſſion* or *Commiſſion*. We may therefore reduce the *Unrighteouſneſs* here forbidden, to the ſame Heads to which we before referred the *Righteouſneſs* required in the *Affirmative* part; viz. the *Gaining* an Eſtate, and the *Improvement* of it.

I. THERE is Unrighteouſneſs to which Men are liable in the *Gaining* of the things of this Life. It were endleſs to enumerate all the particulars that belong to this Head; ſome of them, and the more Comprehenſive may be pointed at.

(1.) THIS Command is broken by *downright Stealing*. For this is the thing expreſly forbidden in the Precept; for tho the word uſed, doth properly ſignify a ſecret *Filching* from another without his Privity, yet it is uſed *Synechdochially*, as was before obſerved. *Stealing* in the true Notion of it, is the taking of another Man's Right from him, and Uſurping it as our own, without or againſt his Conſent. This preſumes that there is a Property, that Men have in their Goods or Eſtates, without which there could be no *Stealth*; and that hath been ſufficiently made evident under the *former*. And Men become Guilty of this divers ways.

MORE particularly,

1. BY *Unjuſt War*, where one People make War upon another, who have not given them *juſt Provocation* to it, and make a Prey of them. That there may be a *Righteous* War hath been proved under the *Sixth* Command; but when it is meerly for *Ambition* or *Covetouſneſs*, and Quarrels are made for nothing; all that is gotten in this way is wrongful, and forbidden by this Precept: That therefore is threatned againſt the *Chaldeans* for ſuch Depredations, *Hab.* 2. 8, 9, 10.

2. BY *Robbery*, either upon the *High-way*, or breaking open *Houſes*, and forcibly taking away from the Owner that which he is Poſſeſſed of. This is high-handed *Theft*, and is too often attended with *Murder*, whereby the *Sixth* Command is alſo broken; and is a Wickedneſs moſt pernicious and intollerable, being deſtructive to the Publick Safety, and Weal of a Place; and all Goods ſo gotten bring a Curſe with them: This therefore is a thing that we are warned againſt in the Word, Pſal. 62. 10. *Become not vain in Robbery.* And is threatned, Prov. 21. 7. *The Robbery of the wicked ſhall deſtroy them: becauſe they refuſe to do judgment.* God hates that any ſuch thing be Offered to him, Iſa. 61. 8. *I hate Robbery for Burnt-Offering.*

3. BY *Clandeſtinely Purloining*, by ſecret *Filching* from another, ſo as if it may be, he may not know how it went away; picking Men's Pockets, taking their Goods when their Backs are turned, and conveying them away privately to make them their own. And this is that which is more ſtrictly called *Stealing*, and is forbidden: And this Sin is committed not only by taking away of things of a conſiderable Value, (tho' the more worth it is, the greater Injury is done,) but a Man's Right is as much concerned in one thing as another, and the *leaſt* is equally a Breach of the Command as the *greateſt*. And the moſt injurious of this Nature is *Man-Stealing*; and it is not leſſened, much leſs excuſed, where it is on pretence of thruſting them into *Monaſteries*.

4. BY an *Unjuſt Siezure of*, and *keeping back from*, the Owner, that which is fallen into our hands. And under this, there are many things or Caſes that do fall, I ſhall but name ſome of the principal. Truſtees of the Eſtates of *Minors* may be guilty here, if they alienate to their *own* Uſe, and ſo embezzle the Eſtates of thoſe over whom they have the Guardianſhip, and do not improve it to the beſt Advantage for them: Hence that in Ezek. 22. 7. *In thee have they vexed the Fatherleſs and Widow.* *Mal.* 3. 5 And God is the Avenger of all ſuch. Such as *Borrow* things of their Neighbour for their Uſe, and detain them as their *own*; ſuch *Borrowing* degenerates into *Theft*; and it is a Character of a Wicked Man, Pſal. 37. 21. *The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again.* Such as *Keep* things left with them to keep, and when required *Deny* the thing, which addeth a Sin againſt the *Ninth* Command. Such as *Find*, and take up *loſt Goods*, and keep them, without uſing proper Means that the true Owner may be Re-poſſeſſed, or Diſowning of them when enquired after. Such as find their Neighbour's *Beaſt* gone aſtray, and ſieze it for themſelves, or Sell it to others, and ſeek that he may never come by the Knowledge of it. Such as ſave *Goods* caſt on ſhore in Ship-wreck, and take them as their proper Goods, and keep them from the Perſons whoſe they are: Or preſerve Goods in a time of Fire, and Alienate them to their own private Uſe, as if they had come by them juſtly, which is not only *Theft*, but *barbarous Cruelty*, and directly contrary to the Rule of *Charity*, and Oppreſſing of the Oppreſſed; and there was a *Moral Equity* in the *Judicial* Laws of *Moſes*, which provided againſt theſe things.

5. BY *Receiving of Goods, known to be Stolen away, from the Thief.* It is a Proverbial Speech, That *the* Receiver *is as bad as the* Thief: And it is a general Exhortation, 1 Tim. 5. 22. *Neither be partakers of other mens ſins.* Eph. 5. 11. *And have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs, but rather reprove them.* Now to Receive of another *Stolen Goods*, if we *know* them to be ſo, is to *partake* with him, and Encourage him in his Courſe.

Courſe. And if we have good reaſon to *ſuſpect* ſuch a thing, it ought to make us very Cautious about it; it being our Duty to endeavour the *Suppreſſion* of, and to bear a due *Teſtimony* againſt ſuch Wrongs.

BUT here it may be Enquired,

Queſt. *WHETHER in no Caſe it be Lawful to take away, or keep from a Perſon that which is his own, without or againſt his Conſent?*

Anſw. SOME have thought, that ſuch as are extreamly *Poor*, are exempted from this, and that it is Lawful for them to take for *Neceſſity*, tho' the Owner be ſo Bruitiſh as to Deny them; and that becauſe all Mankind have a common Right to Live in the World, and therefore muſt have their neceſſary Support: But this would be to open a door to *Licentiouſneſs*; and who would not plead *Neceſſity* for their juſt Excuſe when detected? And the Argument of *Agur* would be *Superfluous*, Prov. 30. 8. in that his *Poverty* would acquit him from the Guilt of *Stealing*. And in all well-Ordered Governments, there is Proviſion made that the *Poor* may not Periſh, but they muſt apply themſelves to ſuch as are Deputed for this. And though as to Men, it is a Duty not to over-ſtrein upon ſuch as are driven by extream Indigence to take a preſent Relief for it; (hence that, Prov. 6. 30. *Men do not deſpiſe a Thief, if he Steal to ſatisfy his ſoul when he is hungry,*) yet he is a *Thief*, and the Law of God obligeth all ſorts to Obedience.

NEVERTHELESS, there are Caſes in which it is Lawful for Men to *Take* and *Detain* that which is his Own in Poſſeſſion, againſt his Will; and that either in a Courſe of Juſtice, for the Defrayment of his proper Dues to the Publick Support, which he refuſeth to Diſcharge; or in a *Mulct* which is laid upon him by juſt *Penal* Laws, for ſome Crime which is ſo Puniſhed; or for the ſatisfying of juſt Debts proved upon him, and adjudged to him by the Judges, which he refuſeth to defray, and ſo neceſſitates their being taken by *Diſtraint*: As alſo in Caſe of a Perſon's being *Diſtracted*, or enraged by unbounded Paſſions, to take from him, that wherewith he would Miſchief, either himſelf or others, it may and ought to be forced from him, and detained till he be better Compoſed; only not with a Deſign to deptive him of his Right and Uſurp it for his Own.

AS for ſome other Caſes mentioned by Caſuiſts, they are either dark and dubious, or aliene from the preſent purpoſe, which I therefore wave.

AS to that other CASE which is here uſually handled by Caſuiſts, viz.

Queſt. *WHETHER* Theft *may Lawfully be Puniſhed with* Death?

THE Ground of the Doubt is, becauſe the Law of *Moſes* no where makes meer *Theft* Capital, but hath aſſigned milder Penalties for it; and becauſe there is no Proportion between a Man's Life, and another's outward Eſtate: *Matth.* 5. 25. *Job* 2. 4.

Anſw. HERE let us obſerve, That tho' every Sin as it reſpects the Object againſt whom it is Committed, as Sin, is *Capital*, (*Ezek.* 18.4.) Yet as it is againſt *Man*, there are Degrees of Penalty different for diverſe Crimes, to be inflicted by Men, to which the *Judicial* Law of *Moſes* was accommodated, agreeably to the State of the *Iſraelitiſh* Polity, and not abſolutely binding all other States. But ſtill Theſe, ſo far as they had a *Moral* Conſideration in them, had matter of Direction in them, and have their Uſe in the making the particular Sanctions of humane Laws.

AND here it may in general be obſerved, that a Crime may become *Capital*, either from the Nature of it; or from the Circumſtances attending it; and there may be thoſe Aggravations attending that which in it ſelf would be meerly *Criminal*, which may render it *Capital*: And it is a Rule ordinarily given, and ſeems Conſonant to the Light of Nature, that the End of humane Laws is *Salus Populi*, and therefore they ought to be Calculated for the Publick Good and Safety.

SOME Sins are ſo *Horrible* in themſelves, that the Light of Nature tells us no Puniſhment can be too *Great* for them; as all *Unnatural* Luſts. Some Sins are ſo *Injurious* as there can be no Compenſation for them but *Death*; ſuch is *Murder*; hence that, Gen. 9.6. *Whoſo ſheddeth man's blood, by man ſhall his blood be ſhed.* Numb. 35. 31. *Ye ſhall take no ſatisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he ſhall be ſurely put to death.* Other Crimes may be ſo committed as to make the Tranſgreſſor inſufferable among Men, and therefore to deſerve to be put out of the way. Now concerning *Theft*; doubtleſs *Theft* ſingly conſidered, and by it ſelf, as it is a Wrong done to another in his outward Eſtate, is not of ſuch a Character as to require the Death of the Offender, inaſmuch as the Treſpaſs or Injury done by him, may be Compenſated by a cheaper Penalty, and therefore to put *Thieves* to Death, indiſcriminately, ſeems to be *Inhumane*; and ſo the Law of *Moſes* provided *Reſtitution* to the higheſt, *Five-fold*, and the Sale of the *Thief*, on failure of Ability to Recompence. Nevertheleſs, there were three Aggravations of *Theft*, that by God's Law expoſed Men to Death; *Plagganiſm* or *Man-Stealing*, Exod. 21. 16. *He that ſtealeth a man and ſelleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he ſhall ſurely be put to death.* And the Laws of Civilized Gentile Nations agreed in this, as being according to *Reaſon*, becauſe it was little better than *Murder*. *Sacriledge* was alſo puniſhed with Death, by God's Authority, as *Achan*, *Joſh.* 7. *Robbery* alſo, which is *Theft* committed by *Violence*, as in *Burglary* committed in the Night, if the Perſon was *Slain* in the Act, the Slayer was acquitted, Exod. 22. 2. *If a thief be found breaking up, and he be ſmitten that he die, there ſhall no blood be ſhed for him.* And doubtleſs, when Men turn *High-Way Robbers*, in which Men's *Lives* as well as their *Eſtates*, are hazarded, it makes

makes Men become Intollerable, and *Death* is little enough Puniſhment for them, as Enemies toMankind: And ſuch alſo are *Pirates* by Sea; for theſe have Bloody Intentions, and will not ſcruple to take away the Owners Lives, rather than miſs of their Prey. But as to *ſimple Theft*, there ſeems to be neither Warrant from the Word of God, nor Equity in the thing it ſelf, Indiſcriminately to take away the Life of the Offender. It ſeems therefore ſafeſt to find out ſome other *Media* to ſuppreſs this Sin, unleſs it be Aggravated to ſuch an heighth, as renders it neceſſary for the common Intereſt to rid the World of them.

(2.) THIS Command is violated by Men's *Living out of a Lawful Calling*. That every Man ought to have a Calling, and Live in it, we before obſerved, and that it ought to be a Lawful one; and hence Men may become guilty of Tranſgreſſion on this Account, more ways than one. This might be reduced to two Heads:

1. BY *Idleneſs*, or Living without any Employment at all. Some bring under *Idleneſs*, all Unlawful ways which Men take to Gain a Living; but *Idleneſs* and *Miſemployment* are two diſtinct things, and to be ranked under ſeveral Heads. There is the Labour of the *Head*, and of the *Hands*, either of which is contrary to *Idleneſs*. *Idleneſs* is properly a Living in the diſorderly Neglect of Buſineſs, and ſpending a Man's Time Unprofitably. Not but that God hath Indulged Men with moderate Recreation, to Refreſh their weary Bodies, and Recruit their exhauſted Spirits. But for Perſons able of Body and Mind, to have no Buſineſs, or to Neglect, and ſpend their Time in Sleep, in Paſtimes, in vain Company and Play, in fooliſh Chat, in Gaming, is the *Idleneſs* here Cenſured. A Man may take a great deal of *Pains* in *Idleneſs*, if it be in that which hath no tendency to *Profit*; ſo that it comprehends under it both the *Slugard*, and him that takes *Pains* about Toys and Trifles: Hence that Expoſtulation, Iſa. 55. 2. *Wherefore do ye ſpend your money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which ſatisfieth not*? This is a Sin not only Reproved and Threatned in the Word of God; but alſo born witneſs againſt by the Heathen *Moraliſts*; and therefore Puniſhed by their Civil Governments.

IT contradicts the End of Man's Creation; it makes the Perſon a *Burden* to the World; it Buries the Man Alive; it lays him open to Satan's Temptation, and makes him a Prey to every vile Luſt: Every *Slothful Perſon* is a *Wicked Perſon*, (*Matth.* 25. 26.) It brings *Poverty* and *Rags*; and renders Men utterly Unfit to give up their Account to God, for the Time and Strength He lent them. And ſuch are by the Precept ſhut out from Man's *Charity*, 2 Theſ. 3. 10.

2. BY taking up an *Unlawful Calling* to Support themſelves withal. Theſe indeed are *Catacheſtically* called *Callings*; for they have not a Call from God to attend them, but are interdicted them. But it intends a Courſe of Life which they take up and purſue, as a *Medium* by which to Gain an Eſtate or Support in this World. And we are here to Remark, that there are ſuch Employments, as ſome take upon them, which are *diſallowed* by God, and therefore *Unlawful*. Nor is it a ſufficient Warrant for a Man, that his Employment is *Morally* Good, becauſe to carnal Reaſon it ſeems to have a fair probability of bringing in Gain; for if it bring a Curſe with it, the Man muſt needs be an egregious Loſer in the foot of the Account. Now there are too many of ſuch Practiced in the World; and among thoſe who are called *Chriſtians*, too many to be enumerated: Some of them may be indigitated:

1. IN *General* we may obſerve, that an Employment may be *Lawful*, either in *Itſelf*, or by *Accident*. And here this Rule will ſtand Good, That whatever Employment is either Repugnant to the Life of Godlineſs, and a Reproach to the true Religion, in it's own Nature, or is Pernicious to the Publick Welfare, or tends to the Ruin of others, muſt needs be *Unlawful*; and can on no pretence be juſtified. For every one is bound in Conſcience to prefer the Glory of God, before all his Intereſts in this World, 1 *Cor.* 10 31. And no Man can Lawfully ſeek his *Private* Benefit to the Hurt of the *Publick*, whereof he is a Member; or the undoing of his *Neighbour* either in *Soul* or *Body*, Matth. 22 39.

2. MORE *Particularly* by the right Application of this Rule, we may indubitally Judge among others, that the following Employments are *Unlawful* for Men.

[1.] IN *Themſelves* or their *own Nature.*

AND here more eſpecially,

1. BY *open Stews*, or more *Private Whordom.* There are ſome Places where *Bawdy-Houſes* are Licenſed, and Pay Hire for it to the Government; and in other Places they are too much Connived at, and Pleaded for, as things though *Evil*, yet *Neceſſary*. And how many *Women* are there who drive a Trade of it, to proſtitute their Bodies to the Luſts of all that will give them Hire to Maintain them? This indeed among the Heathen was commonly reckoned no Sin; but they put *ſimple Whordom* among things *Adiaphorus*: And if ſo, no wonder if they allowed *Whoredom* to be one Employment. But there are few *Chriſtians* that will openly defend the *Honeſty* or *Lawfulneſs* of the thing it ſelf, but they Plead *Neceſſity* to tolerate, and *Prudence* to make Publick Profit by Farming in it; *Neceſſary* to avoid greater Evil, by taking away the Hazard of otherwiſe Debauching of *Married* Women; and therefore *Prudent* to make it ſerve to Support the Publick Charges, which would not be, except Licenſed by Authority: But the Word of God teacheth us better things; we are there aſſured, that *Evil is not to be done, that Good may come of it*; nor is *one* Sin a proper Preventive of *another*; that to prevent an Affliction by a Sin, is no good Policy: And ſurely it will afford no Satisfaction to an enlightned Conſcience, to think to keep *one* Command by the Breach of

another;

another; for we are told, Jam. 2.10. *For whoſoever ſhall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.* *Whoredom* is every where condemned in the Scriptures; and the frequenting of *Whore houſes* is one Article in God's Indictment of His Profeſſing People, Jer. 5. 7. *When I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and aſſembled themſelves by troops in the harlots houſes.* And the proſtituting of their Children to *Whoredom*, (which muſt be ſuppoſed to be for Gain,) was plainly forbidden God's People, Lev. 19. 29. *Do not proſtitute thy Daughter, to cauſe her to be a whore; leſt the land fall to whoredom, and the land become full of wickedneſs.* And ſo Odious was it to God, that He forbad them to receive ſuch an Hire to the Service of His Houſe, Deut. 23. 18. *Thou ſhalt not bring the hire of a whore, or the price of a dog into the houſe of the Lord thy God for any vow: for even both theſe are abomination unto the Lord thy God.* Surely then, ſuch an Employment is Unlawful and Pernicious both to the Perſons and the Publick, *&c.* And there is a better way for the Suppreſſion of this Sin, and the Publick Advantage, to make ſevere Penalties for it; and put them in Execution ſtrenuouſly, upon all thoſe that do in this kind offend.

2. BY *Gaming* or *Plays*. Whether there be any ſort of *Play* or *Game* that is in it ſelf *Unlawful*, belongs not to this Command to Diſpute; but, Whether there be any at all, that is *Lawful* to make an Employment of, and to advance an Eſtate by? The *Negative* whereof is to be aſſerted, and will eaſily be defended. That God hath allowed to His People moderate and ſeaſonable Recreations is not to be queſtioned; (tho' I believe they ſhould avoid whatſoever Games are of Evil Report among ſober Men;) but to turn a *Recreation* into an *Employment*, and to advance an Eſtate by ſuch a Courſe, to the Damage of another, is ſtark Naught, and will ſooner or later leave a ſting on the Conſcience. Sober Caſuiſts indeed do not diſallow, that Friends do in their Recreations, expend ſo much as properly ſerves to the End of the Recreation, and is not Detrimental to their Perſons and their Families; and that they may with theſe Limitations, determine the Charge by the Plays to this or that Party: But this is a vaſtly different thing, from Staking Money to *Gain* an Eſtate by, to the Loſs of another; nor will the common Maxim here ſtand, *Volenti non fit Injuria*; for without doubt, a Man may Wrong himſelf by his own Conſent, and yet Sin in ſo doing: Now to make an Eſtate by *Play*, is contrary to the end of Recreation, and an unwarranted expoſing of that which God hath in His Providence beſtowed on a Man, to be loſt at a *Throw*, when he hath no Call for it, nor any Promiſe of a Bleſſing in ſuch a way. The very Light of Nature doth Teſtify againſt it, and all Sober and Civil Men do abhor it: And it is not indeed a thing *Voluntary*; no Man would Expoſe his own Eſtate thus, if he did not ſecretly Hope to *Gain*, and when he *Loſeth* and Empoveriſheth himſelf, he inwardly Vexeth himſelf at it. *One* muſt needs *Loſe*: And it is well ſaid by one, "He that *Loſeth* his Eſtate by *Gaming* "is a *Fool*; and he that *Gains* one is *Diſ*- "*honeſt*, and brings a Ruſt and Moth into his "Eſtate: And doubtleſs the Wiſe Man hath a proper reſpect to this, Prov. 13.11. *Wealth gotten by vanity, ſhall be diminiſhed: but he that gathereth by labour ſhall increaſe.*

3. BY *making a Trade of Begging*. Not that *Begging* is in all Caſes a thing *Unlawful*; For a Perſon reduced to Extremity, and who hath no way to Relieve himſelf, to ask an Alms of *Charity* of another, is not to be abſolutely Condemned. We find in that, whether *Parable* or *Hiſtory*, Luk. 16. that *Lazarus* was a *Beggar*, being Impotent, and Neglected; and yet one Dear to God, and an Heir of Glory. But in well Regulated Places, Care ought to be uſed, that ſuch Objects of Charity as are Diſenabled, and have no Friends to Support them, ſhould be Provided for, and not driven to ſeek a Supply from Door to Door. Tho' for Captives and ſuch as are Empoveriſhed by ſome awful Providence, as *Fire*, a *Brief* for a free Contribution is proper and laudable: But for ſturdy Beggars, or Perſons that are able to Work, to go up and down *Begging* inſtead of *Labouring*, and make this their Employment, is a great Sin, and not to be allowed in any Place. They that can *Work*, and will *Beg*, ought to be conſtrained to *Labour*; and it is a Sin for any to Supply them in ſuch a Trade: And to ſee ſo many Able Perſons and Children capable of being Employed, to ſpend their Time in *Begging*, is a great Shame; for this is to be an unprofitable Burden to Mankind, and properly refers to the Head of *Idleneſs*; and ſuch will not Labour *themſelves*, but would Live upon *other Men's* Labours.

2. BY *Accident*. Employments may be Unlawful, when they are taken and abuſed to *others* Harm. I ſhall here only Inſtance in one which is very Notorious. Not only the *Lawfulneſs*, but *Expedience* of Publick Houſes of Entertainment for *Travellers*, is a thing ſo evident, that it cannot be deny'd with a ſhadow of Reaſon: Nevertheleſs, to Multiply Licences for ſuch Houſes, when there is no need of them, and to have them in every Corner; or for Perſons of their own accord, to take up ſuch a Trade, privately to Sell Drink to all Comers, ſo to maintain themſelves and their Families, is a manifeſt Violation of this Precept, in that it is a blamable Occaſion of drawing in Perſons to ſpend their Money, and their precious Time, to their own Impoveriſhing, and the great Suffering of their Families: Beſides, Theſe *Latter* are an inlet to a World of Miſchief, in the Places where it is practiſed; it occaſions *Drunkenneſs* to abound, brings all manner of Debaucheries, Families are Diſordered, Children and Servants are drawn into Leud Courſes, and provoked to Filch from their Parents or Maſters, and many Whoredoms are Committed.

NOR can *Either* of theſe be defended, either by pleading *Poverty* and *Neceſſity*, for this

this is the way to Maintain *one*, with the Ruin of a *great many*, which is contrary to the Rules of *Honeſty*: Nor that the Publick Stock is encreaſed by it, for neither ought the *Publick* any more than the *Private* be maintained in a way of *Diſhoneſty*, as this certainly is. And certainly, the more ſuch are permitted, or tolerated, the greater Temptation is laid before them, to allow unbounded Licentiouſneſs and Diſorder to gain Cuſtom: And there is more Prudence in maintaining a *few* Poor, than to give them liberty to make a *great many* more ſo: And it is ſuch a Publick Nuſance, that all ſober Divines have, as they had Opportunity, born a ſevere Teſtimony againſt it; and ſerious Chriſtians do groan under the lamentable Effects of it, and feel the doleful Fruits of it in their Families, which they know not how to Remedy. And let others think as they ſee good, yet I am verily perſwaded that the great Immoralities which abound among us, of which there is ſo general a Complaint, will never be reduced, till effectual Care be taken, to Retrench the *one*, and Suppreſs the *other*; for whilſt ſuch Seminaries of Wickedneſs are ſuffered, it muſt be expected that the miſchievous Efforts of them will Encreaſe and grow upon us.

[AUGUST 21. 1705.]

SERMON *CCIV.*

WE are Conſidering wherein we may be guilty of *Unrighteouſneſs* in the *Gaining* of the things of this Life. Two things have been here obſerved, *viz.* By down-right *Stealing*; and by living out of a *Lawful* Calling. 1. In *Idleneſs*. 2. In an *Unlawful* Calling.

(3.) BY *an Irregular following of a Lawful Calling*. It is not ſufficient that the thing be *Lawful*, but it muſt be done *Lawfully*; and if this be not regarded the Command is broken.

AND here are forbidden,

[1.] *A N* over greedy *or* Covetous *craving after the things of this Life*. This indeed is the Root of many Exorbitancies; and where it influenceth an Employment, it will put it out of Order; and every Command is broken in the *Heart*, as well as in the *Life*, and it begins there; we are therefore told, 1 Tim. 6. 10. *The love of money is the root of all evil.* There is a *Covetouſneſs* forbidden in the *Tenth* Command, which is another thing; but there is one proper to *this* Precept; and wherein *that* differs from *this*, may be enquired when we come to Diſcourſe of *that*. That which is here concerned, is an Heart immoderately ſet upon theſe things; which is charged upon him, Jer. 22. 17. *Thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetouſneſs.* And it conſiſts in an over-valuing of the Creature, and Idolizing of it in our Thoughts and Eſteem; whence it is called *Idolatry*, Col. 3. 5. And this *Covetouſneſs* diſcovers it ſelf both in the *Gaining* of theſe things, and the *Improvement* which Men make of them; and the *former* of theſe is the Subject of our preſent Contemplation; and it is to be diſcovered when the World is ſet in the Man's Heart, and he muſt have it by *Right* or *Wrong*, and thereupon all his Projects and Contrivances are how to Compaſs it; and can never be ſatisfied, or ſet any Bounds to his Infinite Cravings, but the more he graſps in, the more doth he graſp after, *Eccl.* 4. 8. *Hab.* 2. 5. Every Man hath in him a natural inſatiable Deſire after Happineſs; he finds that he hath it not in himſelf, but muſt go abroad for it; he accordingly fixeth upon ſome Object, from which he promiſeth to himſelf Satisfaction in the Fruition of it, which carries him reſtleſly after it; and having unhappily fix'd his thoughts upon the *World* as ſuch an Object, he Proſecutes it with the greateſt Earneſtneſs; and becauſe it cannot anſwer his Expectation, he therefore is *boundleſs* in his Purſuit, ſuppoſing, that by accumulating more of it, he ſhall compaſs his Deſire; and mean while is further off from it, than he was when he firſt ſat out.

[2.] *A Breaking of the* Rules *preſcribed in the following of his Employment.* God hath not only ſet Bounds to Employments themſelves, but alſo to the Manner of the Proſecution of them; and Men may Tranſgreſs in *this*, as well as in the *other*: Hence that, 1 Tim. 1. 8. *But we know that the law is good, if a man uſe it lawfully.* A Man may have ſo much of a natural Conſcience ſtirring in him, as to be afraid of taking up a wicked Trade of Life, and yet he may follow that which in it ſelf is *Good*, ſo as to render it *Evil* to him; and this is done more ways than one.

Eſpecially,

1. BY *uſing of* Fraud *in their Employment.* Every Man in his Calling ought to do his Work *ſubſtantially*, that it may be ſerviceable for the End for which it is: When therefore Men ſlubber over their Work, and do it to the halves, to that end, that they may make the greater Gain to themſelves, this is Deceitful, and a meer Cheat; and Men are diſappointed in their juſt Expectations; and this is the too general Complaint againſt Tradeſmen, which is doubtleſs a great Sin and Provocation: Whereas if Men would be content with *honeſt Gain*, there would be no need of this; and no Man of ſenſe but would be willing to be at rational Charge to have their Work well done.

2. WHEN *Perſons that give Entertainment, will allow* Diſorders *in their Houſes, to draw Cuſtom and get Gain.* That ſuch an Employment is Lawful, we have before obſerved, but there is a great Snare and Temptation in it; and if Men take not great heed to themſelves, they will uſe it *Unlawfully*. Such is the Corruption in Men's Hearts, that the moſt will go there, where they may uſe the greateſt Licentiouſneſs,

centiousness, and therefore such Places where there is the most unbounded Toleration, shall be most frequented; and for such in Prospect of Gain, to allow Men to Drink to Excess, to spend away their precious Time in Idleness & Expence, to make Riots, to set up unseasonably, and to the Disturbance of others, and to give Entertainment to Children and Servants, is a thing Vile, and to pervert the End and Use of such an Employment, and turn it into an Abuse.

3. BY *pursuing their Business so, as to Deny themselves the necessary Relaxation which God hath allowed them.* When they are so eager in plotting and pursuing their Affairs, that they give their very Bodies no Ease, and their Cares will not suffer them to Sleep in their Beds; so that they utterly bereave themselves of all present Comfort, except what they extract from their expected Gain: Thus the Wise Man describes them in, Eccl. 2. 23. *For all his days are sorrows, and his travel, grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.* And what is this but to presume to make themselves *Happy*, by rendring of themselves remarkably *Miserable.*

4. BY *encroaching upon* Holy Time, *in following our Secular Employments.* Every thing is Beautiful in it's Season: God hath appointed Time for outward Business; and He hath separated and sanctified, a set part of Time for Religious Worship; in which He hath forbidden our doing our *own* Work, as was observed under the *Fourth* Command; and for this we have that, Isa. 58 13. *If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and shalt honour him, not doing thine own wayes, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words.* When therefore Men cannot contain themselves within their *own*, but will be trespassing upon *God's* Time, it makes that Business *Unlawful*, which else would have been *Lawful*: And it also belongs hither, that Men do begrudge God His Time; are weary of the Length of it, because it is an Impediment to their Worldly Business, and they count it a tedious *Parenthesis*, and so much time lost: Hence such a reprimand, Amos 8. 5. *Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat.*

5. WHEN *the Business of their* Particular *Calling thrusts out the Duty of their* General *Callings.* He that pursues the Concerns of this Life to the hurt of his *better* part, doth not follow it Lawfully; because this is a Concern that calls for our prime Care, as directed, Matth. 6. 33. *Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.* There are the Duties of Reading the Word, Meditation and Prayer, both Secret and with our Families, for which it is our Concern to set apart some part of Time every Day: If then we encumber ourselves so with these things, that we leave no room for the other; and thereupon either totally Neglect them, or slightily Attend them, or think it enough to Attend these on the Sabbath, and count all our own Time lost, which is taken up in Attendance upon them; we Rob God of His due, and hurt our Souls, while we indulge our outward Man.

(4.) THIS Command may be violated by *Injurious Treatments of one another in the way of Traffick or mutual Commerce.* That such Commerce is necessary for the Support of Mankind in this World, hath been before taken an Account of: But there are the Rules of *Honesty* by which this is to be regulated and bounded; and every defect in, or short coming of these, will render us Guilty in this regard.

AND we may here take an Account briefly of the most Comprehensive of these.

1. THIS is done by *Fraudulent Dealing*: When Men seek to over-reach one another in their Commutations, contrary to the Precept, 1 Thes. 4. 6. *That no man go beyond, and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such.* For tho' this is applied nextly to the *Seventh* Command, yet it is a Precept or Prohibition taken from a general Rule in all Cases; it comprehends under it all sorts of *Deceits*, which are used by Men to over-reach one another, in Buying, Selling, or Exchangings, which are very many, and not easily enumerated; but some of them may be just instanced. Here comes in the Fraud that is used about *Weights* and *Measures* which the Scripture declares to be *abominable* to God, *Prov.* 20. 10, 23. When Men Buy by *one* and Sell by *another*, make them so as by a turn they may be more or less, whereby Men are imposed on, which contradicts *Equity.* When Men take Advantage of others *Ignorance*, and put off one thing for another, or put off a *Bad* thing for a *Good*: When they Commend that which they know is *Naught*, or Depretiate that which they know is *Good*; endeavour to cover the Defects of their Wares, by setting a fair Gloss upon that which is Defective: To put off *Bad Money* for *Good*; and whatsoever of like Nature, which are Deceitful.

2. BY *Extortion* or *Oppression.* There may be some critical Difference between these two, but they may well be put together: *Extortion* is in Law, a straining by a Civil Officer, more than is the Due according to Law, for his own private Gain; or a Man taking of an Advantage of his Neighbour, upon his failing either in Day or Specie, to unreasonable Gain: whereas *Oppression* peculiarly is in taking the Advantage of a Neighbour's Necessity, to make him Pay for a thing more than the Value that we would otherwise have stood for, but that we know that he *must* have it, and can have it no where else: And these are Sins which come under the *Dishonest* Gain forbidden in the Word of God, *Ezek.* 22. 29. & *Ver* 12. And to this Head belongs excessive *Usury.*

3. BY *Unfaithfulness in the performing of lawful Contracts according to the honest Agreement.* It is the Principle and Practice of too many, that all their Care is to get into Debt to others; and for that end they will Promise fair what they will do, and to be true to a Day, when in the mean while they neither

intend it; nor yet have any fair Prospect of a rational probability of their being able to fulfil their Word; but must needs fail, either in kind, or in time, or both; whereas every honest Man's Care is to see a fair way how to get out of Debt, before he will run into it; and yet how common a thing is it for Men to violate their Promise, and make no bones of it, and frame all Excuses for it, so to wrong their Creditors. And I must confess that I am ashamed to hear Religion so reflected on, by saying such and such a Man, as high a Profession as he makes, yet he takes no care at all to pay his honest Debts: And that the ready way to be undone by such, is to Pay them before hand; and altho' they Promise from time to time, yet there is no Performance, but they must be Prosecuted at Law, or you must lose your own. Surely this is a forfeiture of Moral Honesty, and that presumes a foregoing of Conscience, and that Man's Religion is vain. I confess, if a Person be cast behind by Providence, and there are those that are able and willing to set him up again, and run the adventure of it, it is another Case; but then he ought to deal plainly, and not impose on Men, and not seek his help of those that are not able to do it, and thereby to Ruin others as well as himself, for the Wise Man hath an Observation, Prov. 28. 3. *A poor man that oppresseth the poor, is like a sweeping rain which leaveth no food.*

4. BY *Engrossing of necessary Wares*, thereby to Advance the Price at their own pleasure. How far *Monopolies* may be warrantable, I shall not dispute; only without question it is Lawful that he who hath found out any thing, which is for common Benefit, ought to have some Advantage by it, for his own Profit: But for Men who live in a way of Traffick, to make a Scarcity of things by keeping them up, that so they may raise the Price, is Injurious and Oppressive, and an Attempt to govern Providence, when we ought to be govern'd by it: And if this be in things Necessary for the Comfort and Convenience of Man's Life, it is aggravated; because these things Men must have, whatsoever it Costs them: Whereas in other things meerly to please the Fancy, none but Fools will suffer themselves to be Cheated by them. We therefore have that Observation, Prov. 11. 26. *He that with-holdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.*

5. BY *Filthood in the discharge of a Trust committed to them.* It is true, Civil Governments have provided good Laws, to prevent such Abuses, by written Bonds, Receipts, and doing things before sufficient Witnesses. But these are not the next Rule of Conscience, nor will the want of these things acquit the Man from his Obligation, because it cannot legally be Proved upon him. If a Man do Lend to his Neighbour any thing upon his Word, if he Deposit any thing into his hand to keep; and because it cannot be legally Proved against him, before Civil Authority, he keeps it back, in whole, or in part, he therein notoriously breaks this Command. Nor is the unjust Steward commended for his Honesty, tho' his carnal Policy is noted in the Parable, when he made up False Accounts with his Lord's Debtors, for his own Advantage, *Luk.* 16.

6. BY *vexatious Law-suits.* Doubtless Civil Laws are Good and Necessary; and Men are sometimes forced to recover their own by Law, or else they would wrong themselves and Families: And this ariseth from the Iniquity of Mankind, whereas if all Men were *Honest*, it might be prevented: This Forwardness to bring every thing to Civil Courts, which might be ended in a more Charitable way, is what the Apostle sharply reproves in them, 1 *Cor.* 6. *begin.* For Men to take the Advantage of the Law against their Neighbours, when their Cause in Honesty and Conscience is Just and Good, is *Oppression* and *Robbery* under a pretext of Justice: For Men to draw out Suits, by unreasonable Non-suits, and any other Tricks of a like Nature, to impoverish their Neighbours, is of the same stamp: For Attorneys to use Tricks to perswade their Clients to Contention, and protract, and blind, or entangle Causes for their own Advantage, is a Scandal, which such as so do, can never wipe off: For Persons, by Bribes and Friends, to draw such as are concerned in Judgment, to have Respect of Persons, so to favour their Cause, which in Equity would go against them, is also a plain violation of this Precept. Thus may Men Sin against this Precept in their *Getting* of the things of this Life.

II. THERE are also those Sins here Forbidden, which have a respect to the *Improvement* of an Estate gotten. Men may come by these things *Lawfully*, and yet Improve them *Unlawfully*; and that also comes under this Prohibition; and that in regard of both those things, wherein we observed, in the *Affirmative* part of the Precept, this *Improvement* is concerned. And the reason is, because if we do not use these things serviceably to the End for which they are bestowed upon us, we do not answer the design of the Precept.

AND this may be considered,

(1.) IN the way & manner of *Preserving an Estate* well gotten, and keeping it in a thriving way. The need of this we have before observed: We are therefore told of a Righteous Man, Psal. 112. 5. *He will guide his Affairs with discretion.* Tho' it be true, that all our Care and Conduct in this Affair will nothing avail, except God afford us his Providential Care over what we have. And there are unaccountable & unpreventable Casualties, which all we have here are liable to, and therefore it is a Disgrace put upon them, Matth. 6. 19. *Lay not up for your selves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break thro' and steal.* All these things have wings, and we cannot so clip them, as wholly to prevent their flight, Prov. 23. 5. *Riches certainly make themselves wings, they fly away.*

away as an eagle towards heaven. But still there are Duties lying on us, in order to this, and the Transgressing of them is Sin.

AND the more especial of these are,

1. BY *Foolish Suretiship.* It may sometimes be a Duty to be Surety for a Friend; but rashly and readily to bind ourselves for another, is that which is Cautioned against in the Word of God; see Prov. 6. *begin. My son, if thou be surety for thy friend, if thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger. Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth.* And, 11.15. *He that is surety for a stranger, shall smart for it: and he that hateth suretiship is sure.* How many are thus Ruined? The greatest Compassion they find, is to be branded for Fools: We are therefore advised, Chap. 20. 16. *Take his garment that is surety for a stranger: and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.*

2. BY *unwary Crediting* of Men. *Lending* is a Duty, and in some Cases without expecting to be reimbursed; but to Lend to others without Caution, such a part of our Estate as we have no good Security for, and the Loss will tend to Impoverish us, is a sinful Imprudence: To Lend to Riotous Persons, and to Persons who are in no likely way to Restore to us again, what we Credit them withal, is to Tempt Providence, and forfeit that Discretion which is required of Men in their Temporal Affairs.

3. BY *Letting our Improveable Estate to ly Idle*; or suffering it to go to Ruin for want of seasonable Reparation. If these things be not Improved, they will of themselves go to Ruin; if they ly still they will not Increase: If Fields be not manured, they will grow over with Thorns: All manner of Negligence and disregard of this Nature, is Folly and Sin to Men: We are therefore commanded in, Prov. 27. 23, 24. *Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds. For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation?*

4. BY *sinful Thought taking.* This is a Sin here in Excess, and Cautioned against by our Saviour, Matth. 6. 31. *Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be cloathed?* When our sollicitude of *keeping*, and fear of *losing* these things, perplexeth our Minds, fills us with disquietments, and hinders us from that sedate Commending all our Concerns to the Providence of God in the way of Duty, it is a Breach upon the Rules of Morality, and a discredit to the Profession of Christianity: hence that, Prov. 16. 3. *Commit thy works unto the Lord; and thy thoughts shall be established.* And to sink in our Spirits, when we suffer Losses in our Concerns, is an Argument that our hearts are too much set on these things, which is an Indication of *Covetousness*, which is here forbidden.

(2.) THERE may be Unrighteousness practised in the way of *Expending* of these things. There is an *Improvement* in this way, as well as the former; and that we may be able for *this*, we ought to be careful in *that*. These things are given for the Use and Comfort of the present Life; and there must be a laying out, as well as a laying up, else the end is lost, and they are an unprofitable Burden; and we are told, 1 Tim. 6. 7. *For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.* Psal. 49. 17. *For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him.* But there may be Errors committed in both these respects;

1. WHEN *Parsimony* or *Frugality* degenerates into *Covetousness*. As there is a Covetousness which appears in scraping by right or wrong, so also in pinching Penury; or an over great sparingness. When Men live beneath their Estates, and cannot find in their hearts to use them for the Glory of God, and the Benefit of Mankind. And this,

1. WHEN they *Deny to themselves and their Families, that which is proper for their Support.* If God bring Men to Poverty and Straits, it is a Duty for them patiently to endure it; but to deny it to themselves and theirs, when God allows it to them, is sordid *Covetousness*: We have the Wise Man's Remark, Eccl. 4 8. *There is one alone, and there is not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet is there no end of all his labour, neither is his eye satisfied with riches, neither saith he, For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good? This is also vanity, yea, it is a sore travel.* When they can neither allow to themselves nor theirs suitable Maintenance, nor afford their Children a Credible Education, but begrudge every thing that is thus expended, it saith that the *World* is their God.

2. WHEN *they with hold doing their Proportion to Publick Supports.* Either they do it not at all, if they can avoid it, or do it grutchingly; when they are constrained to it; and all that goes out that way, is as so much Blood from their Hearts. There is a Maintenance which God requires for such as do Service in Church or Common-wealth; and none but Beggars and Impotent Persons are discharged from it: Hence that, Rom. 13.7. *Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.* Gal. 6. 6. *Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth, in all good things.* And when Men use all means to avoid *this*, and think all that is thus held back is so much saved, they put a great Cheat upon themselves.

3. WHEN they can *allow nothing for Charitable Use* when called to it. The *Hebrews* call *Justice* and *Alms* by one Word, to let us understand that deeds of Charity are not *Arbitrary*, but belong to Righteousness, and cannot be neglected without Sin. God will have such Objects to be among Men always, Mat. 26. 11. *For ye have the poor always with you.* And hath made it the Duty of such as are able to Relieve them. When therefore such

carry it so Churlishly, harden their Bowels against them, Rail at them, instead of Relieving them; send them away and bid them come to Morrow; when it is in the power of their hands, see them starve rather than succour them; and if they do any thing for them, it is sparingly: These break this Command, refuse to Lend to the Lord, or pay Him His Quit-Rent, which He hath required of them; these hurt themselves, put themselves from under the Blessing promised to such, *Psal.* 42.11. And are Enemies to their own Prosperity, *Eccl.* 11.begin. *Prov.* 11.24,25. 2 (*or.* 9. 6.

[.]WHEN *Liberality* degenerates into *Prodigality*. Men are too apt to put wrong Names upon things, and to reckon their *Vices* for *Vertues*; and thereby to put a Cheat on themselves, and baffle their own Consciences. Thus they are apt to write good Husbandry upon sordid Covetousness, and to give the noble Title of a Generous Spirit to Profaneſs: But they will not so cover them from the sight of God, or be able to make them to pass under such a Disguise; and these things are repugnant to this Precept.

1. BY *Living Above their Estate.* God hath not seen meet to give every one a like Portion of these things, and by that He hath told us, that every one is not to aspire to Live in the same Expence. Ordinarily, for Men to make their Expence *Exceed* or *Equal* their Income, is Profuseneſs, and argues them Discontent with God's Allowance. When all are Ambitious in their costly Building, rich Furniture, fine and costly Apparel, and expensive House-keeping; and think it a Disgrace to come behind the Best in these things, tho' by it they bring themselves to Poverty, and run themselves behind in the World, they certainly are guilty of Profuseneſs; and Abuse instead of Using the Favours of God, and prove foolish Stewards of the Good things which He bestows upon them: When also Men are over-lavish in their Entertainments, and Charitable Deeds; for in these also there is Moderation to be used, and a Rule of Proportion to be attended, otherwise it will not be *Hospitality* and *Charitableneſs*, but *Profuseneſs*; and an honest plain Dinner will shew as much of true *Liberality*, in one, as a rich Feast in another; and two *Mites* are a greater Charity in one, than so many *Pounds* in another. It was a close Sorcasm in the Philosopher, when asked, *What made him so Prodigal as to Beg a Talent at once of such a Person?* He answered, *That it was because he expected not another Opportunity, but must take it while it was Going.*

2. BY *exceeding the bounds of Sobriety*, to gratify some inordinate Lust. It is a common Plea of some to justify their Prodigality, that it is their *Own*, and they can Allow it, and therefore they will take the Comfort of it: But a Man may Abuse the Good things of God, and make the Goodness of God to be Fuel to his exorbitant Concupiscence. There is Riot to Excess, which is forbidden; and such do not Honour but Dishonour God with their Substance, who indulge it with these things: Hence that, Rom. 13. 13, 14. *Let us walk honestly as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenneſs, not in chambering and wantonneſs, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.* And a Wo is denounced upon such, Amos 6. 4, 5, 6 *That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; That chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of musick, like David; That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.* It was laid to the Charge of that Rich Man, whose incomes could bear it well enough, Luke 16. 19. *He was clothed in purple, and fine linnen, and fared sumptuously every day.* When Men will waste their Incomes in pampering their Bodies, and feeding themselves up for the Day of Slaughter; when they will expend it to nourish Pride and Profuseneſs, in Gaming, Company-keeping and Drunkenneſs, and thereby nourish themselves in carnal security, Scorn and Contempt of God, and Despising of their Neighbours, who will not, or cannot do as they do; and their usual Dirge is that of the *Epicurean*, 1 Cor. 15.32. *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die.* And so they put away the evil Day from them. And it is an usual Observation, That such Persons as are thus Profuse in these irregular Courses, are as sordid and base in those things wherein they might glorify God, and do good in their Generation; are as backward to Publick Service, and as hard-hearted against the Poor, as they are Profuse in their Irregular Expences: And it cannot well be expected to be otherwise, since they, to gratify their Lusts, do cut themselves short, of doing that which is their Duty in other things. Thus many Families are almost starved, when the Heads spend all in Drunkenneſs and Lewdneſs; thus are Children Beggared, and left to the wide World, whilst their Parents spend all to maintain a vain and foolish Port in this World: And many other mischiefs ensue.

USE. LET us then be advised to use *Discretion* and *Piety* in *avoiding* these Sins, and constant *practising* of the contrary Duties. Let us therefore consider, that we are Accountable to God for these things, they are of the Talents which He hath betrusted us withal, and will reckon with us about them. If we have gotten these things Dishonestly, they will be a Worm at the Root that will corrode us one Day, and leave a Blast on all our Dishonest Gains, *Hab.* 2. 10. And if we Abuse them instead of rightly improving of them, it will be Bitterneſs in the latter End.

CONSIDER, There is a way to make these things serviceable to God's Glory, and our true Comfort hereafter, to make ourselves Friends

Friends of this Unrighteous Mammon, and prevent the rising up of these things against us, in the Day o Judgment; which is a gracious Contentation in the Providence of God, and a careful Endeavour to Improve these things so as not to hinder us, but further us in the great and most necessary Work that lies upon our hands: When we use the World, not abusing it, whether we have *little* or *much* of these things, we shall have the true Comfort of them here, and the Commendation of our Lord another Day, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.*

[SEPTEMBER 18. 1705.]

SERMON CCV.

QUESTION LXXVI.

WHICH is the Ninth Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Ninth Commandment is, *Thou shalt not bear False Witness against thy Neighbour.*

BY the *former* Precept we were taught what is the Duty of Love which we owe to our Neighbour, with regard to his *outward Estate*; we are now to pass over to the Consideration of this Love, as it is to be exercised in regard of his *Good Name*. The words of the Command seem to have a special reference to a Publick Testimony that is born against another, before Judges that have Power to enquire into a Case; but it is not to be restrained to that, but hath a respect to all the Reports that we make concerning another unto others. The word translated *Bear*, firstly signifies to *Answer*, because Judges are wont to ask the Witnesses what they can Testify in such a Case; but it also signifys to *Hear* what another saith, intimating that we are not to receive a Report to another's Infamy; and it is extended to all manner of speaking, whether asked or no. The word *False* signifys both that which is *Lying* and *Perfidious*, and so engrosseth not only things *False*, but things spoken to *Defame* another, tho' *True* in themselves. The word *witness*, doth not signify the Thing asserted, but the Person asserting: it doth not signify *Testimonium*, but *Testis*; and is, q. d. *Thou shalt not speak as a false witness.* And by *Neighbour*, tho' the word firstly signifys an *Associate* or *Companion*, yet it is used in Scripture for any other *Person* whatsoever.

AND we may here observe, That *this* Command doth not aim at the Confirmation of a Testimony by an *Oath*, for we formerly observed *That* to have a proper reference to the *Third* Command, where we took an Account of it. And there is a great difference between a plain *Testimony*, and an *Oath*, which is sometimes added for the *Confirmation* of it. But the true *comprehension* of the direct meaning of this Precept will be discovered in the Consideration of the things that follow.

QUESTION LXXVII.

WHAT is required in the Ninth Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Ninth Commandment requireth the maintaining and promoting of Truth between Man and Man, and of our Own and our Neighbours Good Name, especially in Witness bearing.

UNDER this *Answer*, we have the *Comprehension* of the *Affirmative* Duties which properly refer to the *Ninth* Command, which are generally assign'd to Man's *Credit*, or *Good Name*; because a Man's *own* Credit is greatly concerned in his speaking of the *Truth*, nothing being a greater Reproach than to be branded for a *Liar*; and *another's Good Name* is exposed by *False* and *Infamous* Reports against him.

BUT the Command it self, is of a *larger* extent, and grasps in it whatsoever belongs to a *Testimony*, which is born by *one* concerning *another*, or concerning *himself*; for the word *Neighbour* comprehends under it both the Man *himself* and every *other* Man; and a Person may Break this Command, as well by a wrong *Testimony* concerning *himself*, as concerning *another*. And some think that *this* Precept, as well as the *next*, hath a respect to the *Four* that go before in the *Second* Table; And the *Heart* or *inward* Man is as truly concerned in this Command, as the *Tongue* or *outward* Man; we may *think*, as well as *speak* Falsely concerning our selves or others.

THE general Vertue which is required with respect to this Command is *Veracity*, as it refers to a Testimony: Tho' there be other Vertues also required to be exercised in a right observing the Duties here required, as will be afterwards observed. *Truth* then is the great thing that we are here concerned about with respect to a *Witness*, which is born by us, either to and in *our selves*, or openly to *others*. We may therefore begin with considering the Nature of *Veracity*, and of a *Testimony*, which will open a way to a more distinct Consideration of the several Duties comprized under this Precept.

I. *VERACITY*,

I. *VERACITY*; if we ſpeak of it as an *Habit* or *Vertue*, is, *a Diſpoſition in the Man to maintain and promote the Truth.* This therefore is put into the Character of a Godly Man, Pſal. 15. 2. *He ſpeaketh the truth in his heart.*

AND here we may obſerve,

[1.] THE *Subject* about which this Vertue is employed, i. e. *Truth.* Now *Truth* may come under a *Threefold* Conſideration, *viz.* As it is in the *Thing* it ſelf, as it is in the *Underſtanding*, and as it is *communicated to others*; and all of theſe are here to be conſidered, tho' the two *latter* are nextly intended in this Command.

1. TRUTH in the *Thing* is, *a Relative Aſſertion of it, whereby it is ſuited for the Underſtanding to diſcover it, in its Nature, Cauſes and Effects.* It is founded in the Thing it ſelf, and it is ſo whether the Underſtanding do rightly reſent it or no. This is uſually called *Metaphyſical* Truth, and belongs inſeparably to every thing that hath a Being; it conſiſts in the reality of the thing; if the thing *be*, it is True, and all that wherein it diſcovers it ſelf to *be*; and to be ſuch a thing, and no other, is from the Truth of it. And this is the Foundation on which the other Notions of *Truth* are built, and to which they muſt be reduced.

2. TRUTH as it is in the *Underſtanding*, is, *the right Conception which the Mind entertains concerning the Thing.* When the Mind takes up a right Conception of the thing as it is, and is not miſtaken about it; when it hath a true Idea of the thing, that is Truth as it is ſeated in this *Faculty*; and this is uſually called *Logical* Truth, or *Axiomatical*, when the Underſtanding paſſeth a true Judgment on the thing, and takes up therewithal; and a miſtake here is properly *Error* which contains a *Falſhood* in it, which is contrary to the *Truth*, and proceeds from a deceived Judgment; and this eſſentially belongs to the *Veracity* under conſideration, for if the Mind be impoſed on, and entertains wrong Conceptions of things, it lays a foundation for a Falſe Teſtimony.

3. TRUTH in *Communication*, is, *when we expreſs the thing as it is, according to a Right notion which we have taken up of it.* And there are two things which muſt here go in Conjunction, to render it *Truth*, according to the mind of this Precept, *viz.* both a *Conformity* to the *Reality* of the Thing, and to our *Conception* which we have taken up about it: If we declare not the thing as it *Is*, it is *Falſe*; and if we ſay the *Truth* of the thing, yet if we ſpeak it contrary to our own Underſtanding of it, it is a *Falſhood* to us; and this is that which is called *Ethical* or *Moral* Truth, and is eſſential to *Veracity*, as it is rooted in the *Will*, which enclines the Man to chuſe and love the *Truth*, and to renounce and hate all *Falſhood*, which influenceth both the Words and Actions.

Hence,

[2.] IT is a *Diſpoſition* in the Man to *Maintain* and *Promote* the Truth. A Man may know the *Truth*, and ſometimes ſpeak it, and yet be no Friend to it: Whereas this Principle is required to be in every one that would Obey this Precept; it therefore is a Diſpoſition of one that is Gracious, Pſal. 119. 104. *I hate every falſe way.* Hence that, Eph. 4. 25. *Wherefore putting away lying, ſpeak every man truth with his neighbour.* And tho' there be ſome in whom the Moral Principle of right Reaſon hath ſuch influence, that they abhor *Falſhood*, and glory in *Truth*, and ſimplicity of Carriage; yet without the *Sanctification* of the Spirit, which puts *Truth* into the inward parts, every Natural Man hath a Natural prevalent Diſpoſition to *Falſhood* in him; for which reaſon the Pſalmiſt ſo earneſtly Prayed that it might be removed from him, Pſal. 119. 29. *Remove from me the way of Lying.*

II. CONCERNING a *Teſtimony*, we may obſerve, that the Word in ſtrictneſs of ſpeech, is, *an Evidence given in to lawful Authority, to confirm the Truth of ſome matter of Fact, the Truth whereof is under Enquiry.* Some therefore have reſtrained this Precept to be a Direction about the Righteouſneſs required in Legal Proceſſes; but tho' this be comprized in it, yet it hath a larger extent; and accordingly, the Word *Teſtimony* will admit of a more *Lax* Interpretation; and it may be applied to both the inward Witneſs of the Man's practical Underſtanding in him, and to the Diſcovery that the Man makes of his Mind, by Words or Actions. In the former of theſe regards, it is the witneſs which the Man's Judgment bears in him, to the Truth of the thing which he gives Credit to, or is Conſcious of: hence that, Rom. 9. 1. *I ſay the truth in Chriſt, I lie not, my conſcience alſo bearing me witneſs in the holy Ghoſt.* In the latter Senſe, it is the Confirmation of a thing, that is ſaid, or done, upon the Credit of the Perſon himſelf, who ſaith or doth it; and that, whether it be in a ſolemn manner, before lawful Authority, or in ordinary Converſe among Men. And here are two things to be conſidered, *viz.* The Thing that is ſpoken or done, which is the *Matter* of the Teſtimony; and the *Affirmation* or *Negation* of it, by the Perſon, which is the *Form* of it. A Man may mention a thing which is either *True* or *Falſe*, but he neither Affirms nor Denies it, and this is no *Teſtimony*; but when he adds one of theſe two to it, it then amounts to a *Teſtimony*. And there is this difference between an *Oath*, and a plain *Teſtimony*; In an *Oath*, the Man calls in the God of *Truth* to be a witneſs of the *Truth* of what he ſpeaks: Whereas in the *other* he only pawns his own Credit for the Confirmation of it; and for that reaſon, the Credit given to it by Men is, according to the Eſteem he hath among Men for his *Veracity*: If therefore the Man hath a Reputation of a common *Liar*, his Teſtimony is deſpiſed and rejected by all that know him; but if he hath obtained an Opinion of being a Man of *Truth*, his Authority will go a great way with ſuch as have ſuch an Eſteem for him. Now a *Teſtimony* may come under a double Conſideration, or is of two ſorts.

1. *ASSERTORY:*

1. *ASSERTORY*; When a person bears Witness to a thing that already is, or *hath been*. And this is that which is of the greatest use in matters of Judgment, or trials of Cases between Man & Man; and hath also its necessary use in the common Converse between Men, and humane Society cannot be preserved in quiet and safety without *Veracity* in it. This is concerned in matters of Fact, and in all Historical discourses, concerning Persons and Things; in all of which, regard is to be had to the *Truth*; and all *Falsehood* is to be carefully avoided. Hence that, Zech. 8. 16. *Speak ye every man truth to his neighbour.*

2. *PROMISSORY*: When a person gives his Testimony to something that is *Future*, to which he obligeth himself: on this also he pawns his Credit, which stands for the performance of it, and his *Veracity* is the *bond* which he gives, and another accepts of, and depends on him for the performance of which he so gives his word for: and this also is put into the Character of a good Man, Psal. 15. 4. *He sweareth, and changeth not.*

THESE things thus premised, we may descend to take a more *particular* account concerning the Duties which have a proper reference to this Command.

HERE let us observe this *General* Rule, *viz.* That *This* Precept belongs to the Second Table of the Moral Law, and therefore refers to the Love which is required of Mankind one to another, and which every one owes both to *Himself*, and to his *Neighbour*; and therefore whatsoever properly belongs to that Love, in regard of the *Testimony* that the Man giveth, is hitherto to be referred; which will open to us a very large field. And I shall here confine my self to these things which are *principal* & *comprehensive*. And here,

First. IN *respect of an* Assertory *Testimony*, whether in the Courts of Judicature, or out of them. There is a Duty incumbent both upon those who *give* their Testimony, and those who *receive* it.

I. IN regard of those that *Give* their Testimony. There are several weighty Duties incumbent on them; the principal whereof are these that follow:

1. *THEY are to be very cautious when they do Give their Testimony concerning any matter, and that whether before Authority, or in their Ordinary Discourses*. They ought therefore duly to ponder in their Minds, whether they have a Call of God to declare what they know upon the Account. The wise Man observes, Eccl. 3. 7, 11. *There is a Time to speak, and a Time to keep silence: every thing is beautiful in its season.* And here two things are mainly to be observed,

(1.) *TO Testify against Sin, when we are called to it*. We may have a call from *Authority*, when cited to give evidence in a case, wherein wickedness is to be detected, and that is a call from God, and we cannot righteously withhold it: and when the Sins are such, as the not bringing them forth, & witnessing against them, will tend to the *Publick* hurt; especially, when *Notorious* Crimes cannot be legally detected without our *Testimony*, we then owe it as a Duty to the Glory of God, and the welfare of the People we live among, to offer our Witness against it. But when we are not put upon it, and the Transgression be an *Infirmity*, Charity may require, that we do not offer a complaint against others; for Love covers a Multitude of Sins.

(2.) *TO defend our own or our Neighbours Innocence*, when exposed, and this both in *Publick* Judicatories, and *Private* Occasions. When any are openly accused of Scandalous Crimes, and like to suffer *Ignominy & Penalty*, and we are able to *Relieve* them by our honest *Testimony*, both Justice and Charity requires it. Prov. 24. 11, 12. *If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain: If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not: doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall he not render to every man according to his works?* And when they are like to suffer in their *Estate*, and we can afford them relief, there is a like reason that we hold not our Peace; we ought also to be ready to defend them against the reviling Reproaches of Malevolent Tongues, and take their part; and we ought to speak also in our own defence, when like Injuries are offered us: So did *Paul*, Acts 24. 10.

2. *THEY ought to Testify Nothing but the Truth, and that upon their own Knowledge*. We before observed a difference between a meer *Report*, and a *Testimony*: the *former* being only a *Declaration* of a thing, neither the *affirming* or *Denying* of it, but the *Other* is *Attested* to. By the former of these, it is certain, that Men are by this Precept required, to be cautious how they spread *Uncertain* Reports, lest they be made the *Authors* of them; but it is yet more important, that Men be exceeding careful, how they lay their Credit to the stake for any thing which they say: and for that reason it is requisite, that they are not mistaken in the thing, but that it is certainly so. For if the Thing it self be *False*, it hath the matter of a *Ly* in it, and our rashness in asserting it, will involve us in guilt: and tho' the thing it self should eventually prove *True*, yet if we did *not Know* it to be so, we break this Command. For if a Man give a *True* Testimony, it is not enough, that there be *Truth* in the thing, but this *Truth* must be imprinted on our Understandings. When therefore God speaks of Himself as a Witness, He thus expresseth it, Jer. 29. 23. *I know and am a witness, saith the Lord.* Now a Man's *Conscience* may be a sufficient Assurance to him, in respect to *himself*, (*Rom.* 9. 1.) because it is privy to what is within him; but in respect of *another*, it must be by the Senses, either *Hearing*, or *Seeing*, *Auribus hic*, &c. Now there is a *Moral* certainty, as some call it, when though Men did not *See*, or *Hear* the thing, yet they have strong reasons to Credit it; either from notorious Circumstances, or *credible* Reports;

Reports; but this is but *presumptive*, and may be *Fallacious*. A Man may testify that he *Heard* such Reports, but to assert plumply, that the thing *it self* is so, is too much; and he that sets a due Value upon *Truth*, will be careful to himself in this regard.

3. *THEY ought to give their Testimony, in plain intelligible Words, and without a mental Reservation.* A *Testimony* is to give Credit to the thing Testifyed, and to inform others of the Truth of things, and therefore should be adapted thereunto: It ought therefore to be made *Plain*, and not be delivered *Fallaciously*, either in Words which are of *Ambiguous* sense, or may be understood otherwise than *Vulgarly*, and in the common sense of Men they are used: [It is true, *Tropical* and *Figurative* Words, may be used, when they are as well understood as *Plain* ones, but all *Ambiguities* are to be avoided, else Men will be imposed on, and made to Credit an Untruth:] And Men ought to shun all *Reserves* in the Mind, which if uttered, would make the matter quite contrary: (*But of these, more under the next Question.*) But this is certain, For a Man to assert a thing, so as purposely to *Deceive*, or *Impose* on the Credit of another, is a Breach of *this* Command: And that is included in, Psal. 15. 2. *He speaketh the Truth in his Heart.*

4. *THEY ought to speak the* Whole *Truth, when called to it.* A Man may say the thing which is *True*, and yet by suppressing *Part*, may be guilty of Wrong, Injury, Slander, and it is many times pernicious; and there have been many such *Testimonies*, as have cost Men their Lives, when if related in the *Full*, would have justified them. To take *Part* of a Man's Words, and omit the rest, may impute *Blasphemy* to a Man, as if he repeats, Psal. 14. 1. *The Fool hath said in his heart, There is no God*, &c. And if we examine *Doeg's* Testimony, 1 *Sam.* 22. 9, 10. there seems to be no *Falshood* in it; but he told not the *Whole* Story, and it costs the Priest's Lives; and for it he hath the brand of a *False* Tongue put upon him. Not as if a Man were bound at all times, to any that ask him, to tell *All*, or any *Part*, of the *Truth* of what is enquired of him, when he is not obliged in Duty to it; and there is no wrong done by the *Concealment*, especially when *Hurt* is like to be done by the telling of it, either to his *own* damage, or the harm of *another*: And tho' we may not tell a *Ly* to suppress the *Truth*, yet we may either plumply refuse, or put Men off with other Discourse, or only tell them *one* part, and conceal the *other*. It was no breach of this Command in *Saul*, 1 Sam. 10. 16. *And Saul said unto his uncle, He told us plainly that the asses were found. But of the matter of the kingdom, whereof Samuel spake, he told them not.* Nor in *Jeremiah*, Jer. 38. 27, &c. Tho' as to the reply of *Rahab*, in regard of the Spies, *Josh.* 2. And that of *Egyptian Midwives*, *Exod.* 1. 19. tho' some Justify them, I rather think, it is to be imputed to their sinful *Infirmity*; and tho' God Blessed them on account of their *Faith*, yet He did not by it *Commend* their Sin, tho' He *Pardoned* it.

5. *THEY ought to keep their Own and their Neighbour's Secrets.* A thing is therefore called a *Secret*, because it ought not to be Divulged to all, or made Publick; and there is no Man of thought, but hath those *Secrets* which he cannot comfortably keep so close, but that he must have some Confident, to whom he may unbosom himself; and in nothing more is a *Friend* necessary than in this; and he must needs be unhappy that hath none, because he dares to trust none. But then, he is *False* to himself, who betrays his own Secrets, and he is *Untrue* to his Friend that divulgeth his. *Faithfulness* is here required, and it is an evil time, when that of the Wise Man is verified, Prov. 20. 6. --*A faithful man who can find.* And that, Mic. 7. 5. *Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.* It is therefore advised, Prov. 25. 9. *Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another.* There is always an implicit, and for the most part an explicit Obligation of *Secrecy* in such a Trust, which cannot be Broken without *Falshood*.

6. *THEY ought to be careful to maintain each others Credit in the world.* There is a *Good Name which is better than precious Ointment*, Eccl. 7. 1. And such an esteem we ought to have both of our *Own* and our *Neighbours*. And there are *two* things, which are our Duty on this account;

One is, THAT we should take all proper Advantages to speak *Well* of our Neighbour. It is true, *Self* Applause is not here encouraged; and for Men to Trumpet their *Own* Praise, is not Good; and it is a sign, that either a Man lives by *Bad* Neighbours, or hath little Commendable in him, that he must needs be his *own Herald*; tho' it is a Duty incumbent on every Man, to endeavour that in all things his Life may Commend him; as, Matth. 5. 16. *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.* But for our *Neighbours*, it is our Duty to observe what is Commendable in them, and be ready on all proper occasions to give it to them freely. Prov. 31. 31. *Give her the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates.* Only Care is here to be had, that we do not do wrong to the *Truth* on the *other* hand, by giving to any the Commendation of *Vertues* which they are strangers to, or practising them for that which is indeed their shame; which would be to impose upon others, & encourage them in things which are indeed their shame.

THE *other* is, To *Hide* their Infirmities, the discovery whereof would tend to their Reproach. There is a great difference between *Frailty* and *Wickedness* The *Best* of Men, in this Life, do labour of much sinful Infirmity, and are too frequently overtaken

with

with that which would be their Reproach among Men, if publiſhed on the houſe-top: But we ought to be very Cautious of wounding their Reputation, by Reflections upon them in this regard. We ſhould therefore beware of *Deſtraction*, as well as *Flattery*, both being contrary to the Duty required in this Command. It belongs to the Love required of us, to have a Mantle to caſt over ſuch things as theſe, 1 Pet. 4. 8. *And above all things have fervent charity among your ſelves: for charity ſhall cover the multitude of ſins* As therefore it is a ſin & folly for a Man to publiſh his *own Diſgrace*, ſo it is Uncharitable to lay open *anothers weakneſſes*.

7. *THEY ought to uſe great Candor in Interpreting the Words & Actions of their Neighbours*. It is true, *Charity* is not to put out its Eyes, there may be things very plain & notorious; but it ought not to look thro' the perſpective of *Prejudice*, and *Suſpicion*, but to be always ready to make the moſt *Favourable* Conſtruction, and as far as may be, to take things in the better part. The Philoſopher was wont to ſay, *That every thing hath Two Handles, and we ſhould beware, by which of them we take hold of it.* We may *Hear* the words that are ſpoken, or *See* the things that are done, but they may be capable of a *Double* conſtruction, and this Command enjoyns us to put the *Beſt* on them, which they may fairly bear. *Raſh* Judgment is to be ſhunned, and we ſhall need our *Neighbours* Charity in this regard, and therefore ſhould allow him *ours*, elſe we may meet with our own meaſure: Mat. 7. 1, 2. *Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye ſhall be judged: and with what meaſure ye mete, it ſhall be meaſured to you again.* It is one of the remarks which the Apoſtle makes upon Charity, and it is here applicable, 1 Cor. 13. 5. *Charity thinketh no evil.* Every Man of Candour is willing to Think the *Beſt* of his Neighbour, as well as to ſuſpect the *worſt* by himſelf. It is eaſier to know what is done; then to judge of, and determine what are the Intents and Purpoſes of him that doth it. To ſay, *ſo he ſaid*, and *ſo he did*, meaning ſo, which ſome put unto their *Teſtimony*, is ordinarily too much, and makes it a *Falſe* witneſs; to reſolve that this was of prepenſe *Malice*, when it might as well be of *Ignorance* & *Inadvertency*, is too hard a Cenſure. Not to allow another to give his *own* Meaning, in things *Ambiguous*, but to *make one* for him, is over hard. If Reaſon be on the *Beſt* ſide, we ſhould take up with it, and reſolutely ſuppreſs all Jealouſies on the other hand, as injurious. If arguments *Pro* & *Con*, do ſeem to be of equal weight, we are to put in our *Charity* to turn the Scale. If it ſeem more to incline to the *worſt* Interpretation, tho' we may prudently *ſuſpect*, yet not raſhly to *Determine*: And we ſhould always be ready to embrace that which may rationally remove the Jealouſies, and reſtore our perfect Charity.

IT is too remarkable, that profeſſing Chriſtians are very defective in this duty; Jealouſies and Suſpicions do readily dart into us, and our Corrupt Nature over eagerly entertains them; and there is nothing which maketh more diſquiet and troubleſome diſtance in Affection between Men; for which reaſon we ought to be very Watchful over our ſelves, to uſe all Endeavours to nouriſh this Candour, wherein God would be more Glorified, and mutual Chriſtian Love and Edification be advanced.

[NOVEMBER 13. 1705.]

SERMON CCVI.

II. IN reſpect of thoſe that *Receive* a Teſtimony. Here alſo great heed is to be taken, if we would not incur the Guilt of breaking this Command. There is a great deal of Sin and Miſchief may ariſe from our *Believing* of a *Ly*, eſpecially when the Belief is *Practical*, and not meerly *Hiſtorical*. There are ſome Reports in which we are no further concerned, than to be acquainted with them, whether they are ſo or no; as, Whether *this* was a *Cuſtom* in *Rome*, whether there are *Lions* in *Africa*; and whether ſo or no, it is of no great Concern to us; and it is enough here, that we do not believe *Incredible* and *Contradictory* things, leſt we make our ſelves ridiculous. But there are other things, in which Men's Eſtates, Credit, and ſometimes their Lives are concerned; and in theſe there ought to be a critical Care about our *Receiving* a Teſtimony about them; becauſe otherwiſe a wrong Judgment may paſs, by which Innocent Perſons may be Sufferers, and thereby be greatly Injured; and we our ſelves impoſed on, to our no little Damages, by Prejudice on the one hand or other. And this may be conſidered either with reſpect to *Private Reports*, or ſuch things as come under the Cognizance of *Publick Judicatories*.

(1.) WITH regard to *Private Reports*, or *Stories* that paſs between Man and Man with regard to their Neighbours, which are of a *Moral* Conſideration. And here in *General*, we are to maintain a Value for our Neighbour's Credit and Safety: And for that reaſon, as not to undermine it by our *own* injurious Delations, ſo to preſerve it, as far as we may, from thoſe of *others*: And here more *eſpecially* there are theſe *Four* things concerned in this Duty;

1. *WE ought to be very* ſlow *in our* giving Credit *to ſuch Reports*. We ſhould not be of an *eaſy* Belief, to take up whatſoever is brought to us againſt our Neighbour, but be very *backward* of Believing it, till ſuch time as we have good grounds of the *Moral* certainty of it: This therefore is one of the Notes of a good Man, Pſal. 15. 3. *Nor taketh up a reproach againſt his neighbour*. If the matter be of moment, we ought to *ſearch* into it, that we may come at the bottom of the Truth; if otherwiſe, we ought to *ſlight* and *diſregard* it. To believe every thing againſt our Neighbour, becauſe it is *Reported*, is contrary to Believing with Diſcretion, which is a Property of every diſcreet Man: And it is a Sign that a Perſon is naught himſelf, when he Believes any thing that is ſaid againſt another, and is defective in that Charity which he ought to maintain.

2. *WE ought to be very Backward in Reporting such things again.* We may sometimes hear things, which may bring our Belief into a *Suspense*, and put us upon Caution, which yet will not be sufficient to determine our firm Credit of them; or if it do, we may be under Duty to suppress it, and not for every such thing to stage our Neighbour, and make him a *Town-Talk*: We may have ground enough to debate the Matter with him alone, and yet a Call to suppress it; much less then, may we, either in Prudence or Honesty, to turn *Speaking-Trumpets*, to Publish the Calumnies of others, and be glad when we can hear any thing of another to Reproach him for, whether right or wrong, as the Prophet complains of his Neighbours, Jer.20.10. *For I heard the defaming of many, fear on every side: Report, say they, and we will report it: all my familiars watched for my halting, saying, Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him.*

3. IF we think our selves concerned to make such Reports, *we must be ready to produce our Authors.* Sometimes both our Charity to others, and our own Safety obligeth us to discover what hath been brought to us; if we tell it him *alone*, it may be only a Caution to him, but if we tell it to *others*, and it is to his Damage, we ought to tell *whence* we had it; and it is not enough to say, *I promis'd not to produce my Author*, for that is Caution enough to any Man not to Publish the thing, for in *Justice* and *Equity* he will be made the *Author*; and it prevents the accused Party of one Advantage to vindicate his own Innocency. When therefore *Paul* tells his *Corinthians* of a Report, he acquaints them from whom he had it, 1 *Cor.* 1.11.

4. *WE ought to Discountenance the Broachers of such Reports.* We should be so far from *Encouraging* them, that we should discover our *Anger* at them, and let them know, that we have a vile Esteem of them. We should not be of *itching Ears*, hearkning to every thing that is said or done, but shun the very Company of such as go about as *Tale-Bearers*; and be so far from thinking they do us a Kindness, as to look upon them as the common Pest of Mankind, and therefore to turn away from them. Prov.20.19. *He that goeth about as a tale-bearer, revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.* And, 25.23. *The north-wind driveth away rain: so doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.* He that hearkens to *Tale-bearers*, will never maintain that Charitable Perswasion concerning his Neighbour, which the Rule requires.

(2.) WITH regard to such things as come under the Cognizance of *Publick Judicatories*. My meaning is, Such as are Examined, Tried and Censured by lawful *Authority*, and that whether *Civil* or *Ecclesiastical*; which are wont to be transacted openly, in which Men are to stand or fall, according to the determination which is there made. Here still there is a proportionable Care in the Credit given to Accusations and Testimonies entred against a Person. And here in *General* observe, That besides a *Moral* certainty, which every Man ought to be perswaded of in his Rational judging of a thing, there ought to be a *Legal* certainty of the thing, in order to the finding of a Person Guilty, and passing a Sentence upon him. I shall not here pretend to search into all the Niceties of Civil Judicatures, but only lay down some *Rules* in this Case, wherein the Consciences of Men are concerned.

[1.] THAT *a free, plump and ingenious Confession of the matter of Fact, is sufficient for Conviction.* It is to be presumed, that the Man can ordinarily better tell the thing as it is, than any others can; only this is as to the thing *it self*: The Judgment of the Relation which it bears to the Law belongs to another Consideration: But the *Fact* it self is the first thing to be cleared, and lays the Foundation for the following Process.

THE Light of Reason tells us, That if the Man Accuse himself *premeditately*, and before a Tribunal, it is *superfluous* and *unnecessary*, to search after further Proof: Hence that, if it had been rightly grounded, was a good Reason, Luk.22.71. *And they said, What need we any further witness? for we our selves have heard of his own mouth.* And so we have *David* declaring, 2 Sam. 1.16. *Thy blood be upon thy head: for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the Lord's anointed.* Only Caution is here to be used, else great Wrong and Injury may be done; I therefore say, that it must be Free, Plump, and Ingenious: And here two things are necessary to be considered,

1. THAT *the Confession be* Free & Voluntary, *and not* Forced. It is doubtless Lawful for a Judge to examine the Person accused, upon *Interrogatories*, for the finding out of the *Truth*; but he ought so to do it, that the Person be not *Frighted* into a Confession of that which possibly he may not be Guilty of; but carry it *Candidly*, and manifesting as great willingness that he should defend his own *Innocency*, as become his own *Accuser*; for the Party is not Guilty in Law, till he be Legally Convicted; so that the Examining him by *Threatnings* and *Frights* to make him confess, is an invaliditating of the Credit of his Confession. Tho' God had discovered *Achan*, yet how tenderly doth *Joshua* put him on Confession, Josh. 7.19. *And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done, hide it not from me.* Much Less then, ought any to be put to *Tortures*, to *Extort* a Confession from them; or any *Force* to be used, to make them to discover the Truth of any thing, whereof they are accused; which doth certainly take away from the *Validity* of the Confession.

2. THAT *the Person be in his* Right Mind *when he confesseth.* And here there are two thing,

things which, when they are, ought to invalidate a Confeſſion: viz. *Diſtraction*, and *raging Melancholly*, or *Diſcontent*. The *Teſtimony* of a perſon *beſides himſelf*, may not be taken againſt *another*, and then ſurely not againſt *himſelf*, for he is not able to judge between *Truth* and *Falſehood*. And as to Perſons under the power of *Melancholly* and *Diſcontent*, *Experience* hath proved, that ſuch are often prevailed on, by their diſquiet Minds to accuſe themſelves of things, which either their deluded Imaginations have perſwaded them of, or which *Deſparation* hath put them upon, hoping thereby to rid themſelves of life.

[2.] THAT if the proof entirely depend on Humane Teſtimony, *there muſt be at leaſt Two ſufficient Witneſſes to one Individual Fact.* Here two things are ſuppoſed;

1. THAT *the perſon upon Trial doth not make a free Confeſſion before the Judges.* If he have made it *Privately*, and will not ſtand to it on his Trial, proof muſt be *openly* produced that he did ſo, and then no more than a due weight is to be put upon it; which, what that is, I determine not; only, if upon Trial he deny it, I think it will not amount to a full *Conviction*; whereas, if he ſtand to it, it is to be ſuppoſed that he hath done it deliberately, except there be reaſons to judge that he is not *Compos Mentis*.

2. THAT *the proof entirely depend upon Humane Teſtimony.* This I inſert, becauſe it is generally ſuppoſed, that there may be other Artificial Evidences to prove the matter: Tho' I think that it is a Vulgar Error, unleſs it intend that there may be ſuch things alledged againſt the perſon, as do not directly prove the thing, for which he is indicted, but only by rational Conſequence, which amounts to a Demonſtration, of which we may conſider afterwards. But theſe are the things from which this Demonſtration muſt have its foundation of Teſtimony. For if the thing it ſelf be not proved, the Demonſtration cannot be applied to the Perſon, to render him Guilty; for ſtill the matter remains Hypothetical. Now all Teſtimony of Credit, is either Divine or Humane: As to Diabolical Teſtimony, there is no ſuch Credit to be allowed it, as to determine a Judgment upon one accuſed; and I believe, that the over Credit given to it, eſpecially in matters of Witchcraft, hath taken away the Lives of the Innocent, and left a Publick Guilt & Blot behind it, which not Time, but only Repentance will wipe off. Now as to Divine Teſtimony, it is extraordinary; and uſually, when God ſo bears Witneſs againſt Perſons, He Teſtifies in His Providence, and that by ſtrange Puniſhments which He inflicts on Men; or if He ſo diſcovers Men, to be brought to Puniſhment by Men, the Proof is to be made according to Civil Judicature, as was done in the caſe of *Achan*, Joſh. 7. Humane Teſtimonies then only remains as to the matters of Fact, by Bearing Witneſs to the thing ſpoken, or done, but are not Judges of the Merit of the Cauſe, that being the Province of ſuch as are lawfully empowered. Now in this regard, there are two things aſſerted in our Poſition.

1. THAT there muſt be at leaſt, *Two ſufficient Witneſſes.* As to the ſufficiency of them, it will be conſidered under the next; but for the Number of them, Fewer than Two in the caſe ſuppoſed will not do; and the Reſtrictions which ſome put to it, are Miſtakes: ſome reſtrain it to matters Capital, but will not have it binding in leſſer Crimes; others will allow it only in Matters between Man & Man, and tell us, One Witneſs is enough for the Thing, but theſe are repugnant one to the other. Some, and the moſt will have it to do, when there are no other Circumſtances, and then think One ſufficient to determine a Cauſe. But we obſerved the Miſtake of theſe latter, in that they confound the Evidence with the Judgment. Witneſſes are not Judges of the Law, but Evidences of Matter of Fact, and every ſuch Matter is to be proved, in order to a Judgment on the Perſon. Now the word of God requires that there ſhall be Two at leaſt, in this reſpect, Numb. 35. 30. *Whoſo killeth any perſon, the murderer ſhall be put to death by the mouth of witneſſes: but one witneſs ſhall not teſtifie againſt any perſon, to cauſe him to die.* Deut. 19. 15. *One witneſs ſhall not riſe up againſt a man for any iniquity, or for any ſin, in any ſin that he ſinneth: at the mouth of two witneſſes, or at the mouth of three witneſſes ſhall the matter be eſtabliſhed.* And hence our Saviours remark, Joh. 8. 17. *It is alſo written in your law, that the teſtimony of two men is true.* And it is confirmed under the Goſpel, 2 Cor. 13. 1. *In the mouth of two or three witneſſes ſhall every word be eſtabliſhed.* So that it is Moral, and denies the ſufficiency of One, and becauſe it is Moral, therefore the former Limitation, in reſpect of Perſon, or Caſes, is trivial: for this Precept hath no regard to Perſons, or Caſes, but to determine what is a Legal Truth. There may be a difference of Penalties, but the Truth of the Evidence is the ſame, and can have but one Rule in all caſes, leſſer, or greater, and this ſeems to be built on common Reaſon; for doubtleſs one Man's denial is as good as anothers affirmation; and Charity binds us to maintain every Mans Credit, till there be ſomething more forcible to overthrow it; which cannot be, unleſs it be over-weighed by Two at the leaſt, to ſuch Matter of Fact; from whence it may be judged, whether the perſon be Guilty or not Guilty, whether directly, or by neceſſary Conſequence: beſides that the Veracity of the Teſtimony will better the diſcovered, when there are Two, as will be conſidered in the next.

2. THAT *it muſt be to One Individual Fact.* Here I know that diverſe weighty Divines diſſent, and think, that if it be to Facts of the ſame Nature, tho' at diverſe Times, it may ſuffice, in that it ſerves to prove an habitual Cuſtom; and they exemplify it, ſuppoſing that one reports that he ſaw Lions in *Africa* at one Time, and another that he had ſeen ſome, tho' at another Time, and not the ſame Lions, it is ſufficient proof of the thing. But I think with ſubmiſſion, that the Inſtance is neither True nor Probable, to the caſe under Conſideration. That it is not True, *i. e.* doth not infallibly Prove the thing, tho' it makes it very Probable,

and tho' I may Believe it with a common Faith, yet it doth not give me a full Certainty; and such Reports sometimes proves *False*: And let us allow what Evidence we will to it, yet the thing is different; for in the *former*, the greatest danger is in being Deceived whereas in *this*, the Name, Estate, or Life of the Person is concerned, which is of greatest Moment. Only here observe, that it is not necessary, that it be at the same Instant; the same Fact may take Time for the perpetration of it; and Two Persons may successively look thro' a Hole, and see the same Person doing the same Act of Murder, Adultery, Theft, which cannot in the least *invalidate* the Testimony.

[3.] *THERE ought to be a due regard had to the* Quality *of the Witnesses.* We observed before, that they must be sufficient Witnesses; and if great Care be not used by such as are to judge and determine Cases, in this regard, great Wrong may be done. And here we are to observe, that the Force of a *Testimony* to gain Credit, depends upon the *Qualification* of the Person that gives it; for we observed, that the Witness pawns his Credit for the *Truth* of what he asserts: If therefore *He* deserves none, neither can his *Testimony*, and so it ought not in Conscience to establish any thing for a Truth.

NOW there are *Three Qualifications* required by right Reason in a *Testimony*, to render it *Valid* among Men, and the want of any one of them renders it insufficient.

1. *PRUDENCE* or *Discretion.* A Man must know what he bears Witness to, and have so much Discretion as to be able to put things together, and rightly discern the mind and meaning of what it is which he Testifys. For want of this distinctness, he will confound things, and labour of unavoidable Mistakes: Hence *Fools* or *Naturals* are not admitted for Witnesses; or Men that are *Distracted*: *Children* also, who are not arrived at Years of Discretion, are not admitted to be Witnesses against others, nor can their Evidence Confirm a Matter.

2. *VERTUE* or *Conscience.* He ought to be a Person of approved *Morality*; and here peculiarly, that he be a Person of approved *Truth* and *Fidelity*; for Truth is an essential Qualification in a Witness: Hence we have those Epithets, Rev. 3. 14. *The faithful and true Witness.* And for this Reason *Debauched* Persons are not easily to be Credited, peculiarly such as drive a Trade of *Lying*, and cannot be Believed among their Neighbours in any thing they say: For a *common Lyar* to be admitted as a Witness, to turn a Case in which a Man's Concerns are interested, is contrary to the common Reason of Mankind.

3. *BENEVOLENCE*, or a Free and Candid Spirit, and every way disengaged by *Prejudice.* And there are divers things which may be reckoned as such Prejudices and weaken such an Evidence; as the near Bonds of Relation; or a being concerned in the same Cause, or any known Malice entertained against the Person, or Threatnings uttered against him, or receiving a Bribe to Testify in such a Case: Any of these will say, that his Word is to be little Valued—. These things therefore ought to be enquired into, in order to the receiving such as offer Witness in any Case.

[4.] THE *Matter testified, ought to be reduced carefully to the true Mind and Meaning of the Law.* In Judicatures, Witness is taken, for the end that *Justice* may be Administred, and no Man may suffer Injury. Now for this end, there are two things to be done:

1. THE *Truth of the Witness* is to be searched. There are some Men, who tho' not *Wicked*, may be *Weak*, and *Mistake* in what they do affirm; and others are *False*, and ready to be *Knights of the Post*: If therefore there be any just grounds of suspicion, utmost Means are to be used to find out the Error or Falsehood; by distinct Interrogatories propounded to them, and sometimes examining the Witnesses apart, to see how they agree; and this seems to have been done by Christ's Enemies, Mark 14. 56. *Many bear false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.*

2. DUE Enquiry is to be made, *How far it Agrees with the Case that is brought in to clear.* It is one thing, to be satisfied that what is Testified is *True*; and another, to find out whether it be to the *Purpose* for which it is pretended. If the matter of Fact be in it self a direct Transgression of the Letter of the Law, it is a Legal Conviction; and determines the Case; but if it be only a secondary or presumptive Proof of the thing, it requires a greater Care: The Man may possibly have done the thing, and yet no way Broken the Law, or not to such an height: These Two ought therefore to be brought together, and well compared; and meer *Presumptions* or *Probabilities* are not enough; but there must be that which needfully infers the Conclusion, else the Man is judged without due Proof, contrary to the Divine Precepts. The Man is Innocent till proved Guilty; and we are told, Prov. 17. 15. *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord.*

[5.] EVERY one *that is concerned in the Process of Judgment, ought to maintain and exercise a due respect to the Truth.* God expects *Righteous* Judgment, which cannot be, unless it be Built on the Basis of Truth. Now there are several sorts of Men which are concerned in this, and each, in his Capacity, is bound to promote it, viz. *Judges*, *Jurors*, *Advocates*: And there are the several Duties which this Command requires of them, if they will approve themselves Men of *Veracity* And we may take a brief View of each of these in a *Theological* respect;

(1.) IN respect of *Judges*: Here let me premise concerning *this* and those that *follow*, that I only design to mention such Duties as refer to this Command, *viz.* The maintenance of

of *Truth*, and the *Good Name* of thoſe they are concern'd withal. This therefore is one of the neceſſary Characteriſtical Notes of a Good Judge preſcribed by *Jethro* to *Moſes*, Exod. 18. 21. *Thou ſhalt provide out of all the people, able men, ſuch as fear God, men of Truth.* ——And without this *Truth*, they can never execute Righteouſneſs in Judgment, which is the great End of their Office; and if they fail in *This*, they are rather Plagues than Benefits to a People: Hence that complaint, Pſal. 82. 5. *All the foundations of the earth are out of courſe.* Now there are two things which Judges are concerned in, as ſuch, in both whereof they ought to maintain the *Truth* to their utmoſt.

I. IN the *Trial of Perſons*. It belongs to theſe to ſit in Chief in *this*, and there is requiſite to be a fair Trial made, in order to a Righteous Sentence; and the proper deſign of this is to find out the Truth of the Cauſe, thereby to prevent an Error in Judgment.

AND here, theſe things are mainly conſiderable,

1. THEY *ought to bring a mind no way prepoſſeſſed with Prejudice.* They ſhould not Prejudge the Cauſe before they Hear it; nor reſolve before-hand, which way they will Determine it; and hence Private and Preparitory Examinations of Perſons, is more proper for others in Authority, than for thoſe who are to ſit in Judgment upon them; leſt they ſhould thus be Pre-poſſeſſed in their Reſolves. It is alſo very improper for them to Hear either Party before hand in Private, who will endeavour to make their Caſe fair, and too eaſily pre-occupy their Judgments and become a Bias to them: Much leſs ought they to receive Bribes, or Gifts before-hand, which have a dangerous tendency to engage the Affections and preponderate the Judgment. This therefore is forbidden, Deut. 16. 19. *Thou ſhalt not wreſt judgment, thou ſhalt not reſpect perſons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wiſe, and pervert the words of the righteous.* And it is given as a Note of one who ſhall be ſecure in the Day of God's Controverſy with a People, Iſa. 33. 15. *He that walketh righteouſly, and ſpeaketh uprightly, he that deſpiſeth the gain of oppreſſions, that ſhaketh his hands from holding of bribes.*

2. THEY *ought to put off all Reſpect of Perſons.* This alſo is one thing mentioned in the fore-cited, *Deut.* 16. 19. The Ancients were wont to Paint *Juſtice*, as a ſpotleſs Virgin, ſtopping her Ears, and ſhutting her Eyes, intimating, that as ſuch ſhould not receive any Private Information, ſo they ſhould not look upon the Quality or Condition of the Perſon, but reſerve an entire reſpect to the Cauſe. *Reſpect of Perſons* is frequently mentioned in the Scriptures, and it hath no Conſideration in *Gratuitis*, but only in the Adminiſtration of Juſtice; and it is then a Sin, when any Quality or outward Conſideration, puts weight into the Scale to turn it; when a Rich Man ſhall be Preferred for his Wealth, and a Poor Man deſpiſed for his Poverty: A Man in Power and Place ſhall be Feared, and the Mouth of the Judge ſtopt becauſe he is ſo; and a mean Man Oppreſſed, becauſe he hath one in Power for his Adverſary; when Friends are preferred for Friendſhip, or the like. If Judges imitate God, who is the ſupream Judge, they ſhould remember, Rom. 2. 11. *There is no reſpect of perſons with God*, elſe they cannot Judge in Truth.

3. THEY *ſhould examine the Caſes that come to their Enquiry to the Bottom*: Not take up with an eaſy Scrutiny, or be impoſed on by a fair Delation, but make a diligent Search; for a foul Cauſe, may have a fair Varniſh put upon it, and therefore muſt be ſought into. This was one of *Job*'s Vindications Job 29. 16. *The cauſe which I knew not, I ſearched out.* And we find how great weight God puts upon this, as neceſſary to be attended, to prevent a precipitate Sentence paſſing upon any Perſon, Deut. 13. 14. *Then ſhalt thou enquire and make ſearch, and ask diligently: and behold if it be truth, and the thing certain.* Truth indeed may poſſibly be miſſed after the moſt careful Scrutiny, but then the blame will not be on the Judges, and ſo leave a publick Guilt, but upon the Witneſſes, whom God will call to an Account. A juſt Judge will be Deliberate in his proceeding to Judgment, tho' he will be Reſolute in the Execution of it; and the Reaſon is, becauſe the Truth is not always eaſily diſcovered; but when found out, it is then directive.

4. THEY *ought to ſuſpend their Judgment, till both Parties have had ſufficient Liberty given them to lay open their Cauſe.* It is the Wiſe Man's Obſervation, Prov. 18. 17. *He that is firſt in his own cauſe, ſeemeth juſt, but his neighbour cometh and ſearcheth him.* And it was the Word of a Heathen Judge, *Audi alteram partem*; and our Proverb is, *One Man's Caſe is Good, till another's be heard.* There ought therefore to be Freedom given in this regard, elſe the Judgment will be Precipitant, and in all likelihood Falſe. And this ought to be not only in Caſes commenced between Man and Man, but alſo in ſuch matters as are Criminal or Capital. He that is Accuſed muſt have as full Freedom as he that Impleads him; and the Judge ought not to Fright or Terrify him, but be ready to receive his Defence, and allow it it's due weight. This the Light of Nature teacheth Men, and was well exemplified in that Heathen Judge in *Paul*'s Caſe; Acts 24. 10. *The governour beckned unto him to ſpeak.* 26. 1. *Then Agrippa ſaid unto Paul, Thou art permitted to ſpeak for thy ſelf.* 25. 16. *I anſwered, It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accuſed, have the accuſers face to face, and have licence to anſwer for himſelf concerning the crime laid againſt him.* And *Saul* therein ſhewed his Injuſtice and Falſhood, when he would not ſuffer *Abimilech* to vindicate himſelf from *Doeg*'s Accuſation,

but

but paſt a Sentence of Death upon him unheard, 1 Sam. 22. 16. *And the king ſaid, Thou ſhalt die Ahimelech, thou, and all thy father's houſe.*

5. THEY *ought to admit of no unneceſſary* Delays *in bringing the Caſe upon it's Trial.* It is true, there ſhould be due Allowance on both ſides to prepare for a Proceſs, and Precipitancy on this account is Injurious; but to allow frivolous *Non-ſuits*, to encreaſe Men's Charges; or to lay Men up, and keep them in Priſon beyond the proper Seaſon of the Trial, is an Argument of *Raſhood*, and not a little ſerves to Vindicate the Innocence of the Accuſed, and puts him upon unneceſſary Charge, which if he ſhould be found Innocent afterwards, is an irreparable wrong; for the Publick will never repair either his Name or Damage ſuffered on this Account. And this alſo is provided againſt by the juſt Laws of Civiliz'd Governments; and the Light of Nature directed even an Heathen Judge in this matter, Acts 25. 17. *Therefore when they were come hither, without any delay on the morrow I ſat on the judgment ſeat, and I commanded the man to be brought forth.* And it would be a ſhame to Chriſtians to do otherwiſe.

[JANUARY 8. 1705.]

SERMON *CCVII.*

II. IN *the Paſſing of the* Sentence *after Trial.* The *Trial* was to make way for *this*, and therefore this muſt be the upſhot of it; and that is either *Abſolution* or *Condemnation.*

AND here,

1. THEY ought to be *ſatisfied in the Righteouſneſs of the Law*, according to which they paſs the Sentence. I know there are hot Diſputes in this Caſe; and many think, that Judges are not concerned to enquire whether the Law be Juſt or no; it being the Province of the Law-maker to enquire after that, and if the Laws be Unjuſt, they muſt anſwer for that; and that if the Judge were alſo concerned in the Making of the Law, he ought to have withſtood that which his Conſcience told him is Unjuſt; but it being his work as Judge, to execute the Eſtabliſhed Laws, he hath nothing to do to Queſtion the Juſtice of them, but is bound by his Oath, and conſequently his Conſcience, to execute them according to the mind and meaning of them. But I think there is juſt Exception againſt this Aſſertion, tho' Cauteouſly to be guarded. Here then, it is to be granted, that a private Perſon ought not to make open Diſturbance againſt the Laws of the Place, and the Law-maker for Injuſtice; but rather to Suffer, than to diſquiet the Publick Peace: Nor is every private Perſon a ſufficient Arbiter, to Judge of the Equity of every Law that is Enacted. There are ſome Laws which are General, and are but the Ratification of the Laws of Nature, with Civil Sanctions; and in theſe there is a *double* Conſideration, *viz.* The Juſtice of the Law it ſelf, and the Equitableneſs of the Quality of the Sanctions. There are other Laws which are purely Poſitive, and are Vulgarly called *Prudential*, and that either as to the Laws themſelves, when the thing it ſelf is Indifferent, but made neceſſary by Circumſtances, and for the Publick Benefit; or in regard of the Sanctions, when nothing is determined by the Word of God, but is in the Diſcretion of the Law-givers, who are to conſult the Good of the Subject. But we are to obſerve, that every Perſon, who ſits in Judgment upon others, is to be active in paſſing the Sentence, and by Conſcience bound to Fear God and keep His Commands. He is therefore bound by God's Command, who is the ſupream Law-giver, to do Juſtice to all, which he cannot do, unleſs he do that which is Right; and God hath ſeverely threatned, Prov. 17. 15. *He that juſtificth the wicked, and he that condemneth the juſt, even they both are abomination to the Lord.* Now God's Law is the Rule of Juſtice, and that which is directly contrary to that, muſt needs be Injuſtice; and no Law of Man can make that Juſt, which He hath immutably determined to be Unjuſt: And He hath ſaid, Pſal. 94. 20. *Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowſhip with thee, which frameth miſchief by a law?* He therefore that condemns a Man for doing his Duty, and he would have ſinned againſt God if he had not done it, doth Injuſtice, and ſets himſelf againſt the Truth: The Jews pretended they *had* a Law, Joh. 19. 7. *We have a law, and by our Law he ought to die.* And yet ſee, Acts 2. 23. *Him ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and ſlain.* And it is a vain Plea which ſome pretend, that a Judge hath a Publick and a Private Conſcience, and that by One he may Condemn a Perſon becauſe he is Sworn, and yet by the Other Acquit him, as knowing the Law to be Unjuſt: Nor will this be a Plea another Day, when he muſt Account to God how he diſcharged his Truſt; nor can an Oath to Man bind, when in performing of it, the Perſon breaks his Allegiance to Heaven; and tho' Men may Applaud him, yet God will Condemn him. In ſuch a Caſe therefore, a Man is bound, rather to lay off his Office, than wrong his Conſcience: Tho' as to *Prudentials* a Man may Judge, tho' he may think that the Sanctions ſeem too hard, if the thing it ſelf be allowable for the common Good.

2. THEY ought alſo to be *ſatisfied, that the Perſon is Righteouſly Convicted.* And here obſerve, that there is a Righteouſneſs in the Courts of Civil Juſtice, and in the Court of a Man's own Conſcience.

AND here a CASE is ſtated, *viz.*

Queſt. *WHETHER a Judge may always Pronounce a Sentence*, Secundum allegata et probata, *provided the Law it ſelf be a Juſt Law?*

Anſw. THAT it ought to be thus ordinarily, is as I ſuppoſe indiſputable; but that it ſhould *always* be ſo, will admit of a Debate. It is certain, that a Judge is Sworn to go according to Law; and this beyond queſtion includes this

Negative,

Negative, that he hath not Liberty to determine any Caſe contrary to Law, tho' he ſhould have never ſo great a Moral certainty of the Truth of the thing; becauſe nothing is to be counted True in Civil Judicature, but that which is Legally ſo, which muſt therefore be ſufficiently Proved: And becauſe *He* is under the Law, as well as the Perſon upon Trial, he can do nothing warrantably, but what the Law empowers him to. Nor will it be ſufficient for him to Condemn a Perſon, becauſe he thinks him really Guilty, unleſs he is Proved ſo; nor yet to Acquit him that is Legally proved *Guilty*, becauſe he hath a Charity for him, that he is either *Falſely* accuſed *Deſignedly*, or upon a *Miſtake*; altho' theſe ſurmizes may and ought to put him upon the more curious & inquiſite Inquiſition, to find out the Truth of the Caſe, leſt there ſhould be an Error that might with Care have been prevented. But, tho' this be ſufficient reaſon for him to paſs a Sentence of Condemnation, becauſe his Oath obligeth him to it; yet in caſe he is Certain, that either the Law is Unjuſt; or if it were never ſo Righteous, that the Perſon is *Innocent*, and that if he condemn him, he ſhall aſſuredly condemn an Innocent Perſon, the Caſe with him is altered; tho' he cannot acquit him, becauſe the Law allows it not, yet he ought to excuſe himſelf from doing the thing, becauſe herein he ſhould wrong his own Conſcience; and this comes under that fore-cited, *Prov.* 17. 15.

(II.) IN reſpect of *Furors*. Theſe are nextly concerned in matters of Judicature, to ſearch out the Truth of Things, and give in their Judgment upon it; the *Truth* therefore is the buſineſs which is incumbent on them to uſe utmoſt endeavours to trace, and diſcover, which if they do not, they Tranſgreſs directly againſt this Precept. Now in the uſual courſe of Law, there are Two ſorts of theſe, viz. *Furors of Inquiſition*, uſually called *Grand Furors*, and *Furors of Trials*; We may conſider them apart:

(1.) *GRAND Furors*, or ſuch as are to make Enquiry into a Caſe, in order to the Preparing of it for *Trial*; and their buſineſs is, either to bring it Forward, or to put a ſtop to it; and there is Truth & Fidelity required in them, in order to the right procedure of Juſtice; and their Truſt in this regard is very great, and of great Conſequence: and there are theſe Four Duties peculiarly incumbent on them.

1. *THEY ought to be exceeding Tender of Expoſing Perſons.* Every Man's Name, Eſtate, Limbs, Life ought to be precious to them: So that they ought not to expoſe them without juſt reaſon for it. They are to judge of a Report, & ought not to Confirm it upon ſlighty grounds, Pſal. 15. 3. *He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach againſt his neighbour.* An eaſy Credit, will hazard an Unjuſt Calumny. It is a thing too much pleaded, that ſuch a Jury need not be *Curious*, becauſe the perſon will be brought upon an after Trial, which will determine the Caſe; but this is a great Fault. If theſe bring a Perſon to the Bar, it ſaith that there is a juſt Suſpicion, and let the Caſe go as it will afterwards, yet it Fixeth this Blot upon the Perſon, that he was Once judged by wiſe Men to be juſtly ſuſpected of ſuch a Crime, and this will abide to his Scandal.

2. *THEY ſhould enquire into the Accuſation that is given in.* Men are many times clamorouſly Accuſed, when the thing it ſelf upon deliberation, will be found no Tranſgreſſion of the Law; and if ſo, it gives no ground of Indicting of the perſon: It is Nonſenſe to deny *Grand Furors* a right of comparing the Thing alledged with the Law; for if there be no Law broken, there is no foundation for bringing the Man upon his Trial: So that if it hath no relation to a Law, it will command an *Ignoramus* in all equity. Enquiry therefore is neceſſary, and it belongs to that Precept, Deut. 13. 14. *Thou ſhalt enquire and make ſearch, and ask diligently.*

3. *THEY are to conſider the Quality of the Witneſſes*, that offer to Teſtify to the Matter of Fact. It is not ſufficient that there is ſuch a Number of Witneſſes that offer themſelves, but they muſt enquire of what *Validity* their Teſtimony is, they may poſſibly be proved to be Sons of *Belial*, *Knights of the Poſt*; they may be found out that there is an Impoſſibility of their Witneſſing in ſuch a Caſe of their own Knowledge, by convincing Arguments; there are many Reaſons to *invalidate* their Evidence, and this Command requires that they be look'd into, as far as may be.

4. *THEY ought to weigh the Evidence given, with the Law ſuppoſed to be Tranſgreſſed.* There are often impertinent Teſtimonies given, which are nothing to the purpoſe which they are Preſented for, and certainly theſe can have no influence to direct to the finding againſt the perſon to bring him upon the open ſtage Such was *Doegs* Teſtimony againſt the High Prieſt; he told a fair Story againſt him, but it no way proved him Guilty of a Conſpiracy, for which he died, tho' it might probably bring him into Suſpicion. And doubtleſs ſuch Evidence as no way toucheth the Caſe, is to be rejected by theſe as Idle & Impertinent, there being no Logical Argumentation capable of being built upon it.

(2.) *JURORS of Trials*; are ſuch as are, in ſome Governments aſſigned to Try perſons at the Bar, in order to their being found *Guilty*, or *Not Guilty*: and it is counted a great Privilege of the Subject, that he may thus be Tried by ſuch as are his *Peers*. Now it is a Matter of great Importance, that Theſe proceed according to Truth, ſo far as they are capable of finding it out, and therefore they ought in order to the Verdict to ſhew themſelves lovers of Truth. As to that Caſe,

Queſt. *WHETHER ſuch Furors are concerned with the Law, or the Merit of the Cauſe, or only with the Matter of Fact?*

Anſ. THERE are great diſputes *Pro* & *Con*; and it ſeems to me, rather a Queſtion of *Law*, than *Divinity*; and it depends on the Power which is devolved on each order of Men, according to the Fundamentals of the Government: only

only in *General*, there can no True and Equal Judgment paſs upon any, unleſs the Fact be a ſufficient Evidence of the violation of the Law, for the Breach whereof the perſon is put upon his Trial: and if *this* belong to the Conſtitution of theſe *Jurors*, they cannot be True to their Truſt, except they thus do. And it ſeems to belong to them according to Law, otherwiſe they are very improperly asked by the Judges, Whether they find the perſon *Guilty*, or *Not Guilty*. For every Man of ſenſe knows, that the bare finding of a Fact, doth not declare the Man *Guilty*, for that neceſſarily refers to the Law, from the Breach whereof Guilt properly ariſeth. Nevertheleſs in regard to the Enquiry after the Fact, there are theſe *Two* Duties come under this Command;

1. *THAT they bring with them an Unprejudic'd, Unbyas'd Spirit.* The Laws allowing of the Party at the Bar to make *Exception* againſt the *Jurors*, is grounded on right Reaſon, and is a Privilege which the Law of Nature allows Men. He who hath Judged a Cauſe before he hath Heard it, is Prepoſſeſt, and his Judgment is Preoccupied. He that bears a Grutch againſt a perſon, cannot be thought a competent Perſon to offer his Verdict againſt him. He who is under ſpecial Obligations to one Party, cannot be thought to hold the Ballance Equally in his giving his Voice. Such an one ought to lay aſide all reſpect of Perſons, and tie himſelf entirely to the thing it ſelf, as if both perſons were utter Strangers to him. It is the excellent Commendation of the Tribe of *Levi*, Deut. 33.9. *Who ſaid unto his father and to his mother, I have not ſeen him, neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor know his own children: for they have obſerved thy word, and kept thy covenant.*

2. *THAT they curiouſly endeavour to ſatisfy themſelves in the Matter of Fact.* This is the Firſt thing neceſſary in the Inveſtigation of the Truth, and that which indiſputably belongs to this order of Men. Either the Fact was done, or no; that therefore muſt needs be Proved, elſe the Law is not concerned in this Matter. We have therefore already proved, that every one, who is concerned to Search & Try a Cauſe, muſt be curious in this buſineſs, becauſe an Error in this, cannot be rectified afterwards. And here often falls out to be great Doubts & Difficulties in this, which therefore calls for the more diligent and deliberate Enquiry, according to the forecited, *Deut.* 13.14. and *Haſte* here many times prevents Juſtice.

(III.) *ADVOCATES.* Theſe alſo are an order of Men, whom neceſſity calls for; and, if they are true to their Truſt, are of great Uſe & Service to a People; but if they degenerate, they are a *Peſt* to the Places where they live in. I ſhall not here enquire into the Diviſions of them, into the ſeveral Orders, or Services allowed them; inaſmuch, as with reference to this Precept, it is only their *Truth* and *Fidelity* in their Function that is under our Conſideration. As it is neceſſary that they be well skilled in the *Law*, both *Natural* and *Civil*, elſe they cannot anſwer the End of their Employment, tho' they deſire it; ſo they ought to be Men of Integrity, and a good Conſcience, elſe the more Skilful, the more Dangerous. Now the duties lying on ſuch are more principally,

1. *TO enquire into the Nature of the Cauſe offered them, before they undertake it*, and be fully ſatisfyed in their Conſciences that it is Juſt. The proper End of *Advocates* is to endeavour that Juſtice & Equity may take Place in Civil Judicature; and to *that* they are to bend their whole endeavour; and that whether they are concerned for the Publick or for Private Perſons: for it is ſuppoſed that all Men are not fully verſed in Law & Equity, and ſo may ſtand in need of better information. They labour of an Error who think, that ſuch an one is obliged to Defend the Cauſe he is concern'd in, whether *Right* or *Wrong*, as far as his Wit can reach, and Invalidate the contrary, by all Tricks he can deviſe. He ought therefore firſt to Know the Cauſe throughly, and be aſſured that there is Juſtice on his ſide. No Man is fit for a Pleader or Counſellor, but one that is able to ſay, as *Paul*, 2 Cor. 13. 8. *For we can do nothing againſt the truth, but for the truth.* His duty therefore is, if he Knows the Caſe to be *Bad*, to *Refuſe* to undertake it, and give his ſolemn Advice to the laying of it aſide; and tho' he have Fees offered him, to Reſolve that his Tongue ſhall never be made Mercenary, to Proſecute any Falſely, or to Defend a Cauſe that is Unjuſt, and he knows it to be ſo, leſt he bring himſelf under that Malediction, Deut. 27. 25. *Curſed is he that taketh reward to ſlay an innocent perſon: and all the people ſhall ſay, Amen.*

2. *IN his Pleading, to avoid all Tricks*, either to Blind the Truth, or Defer the Execution of Juſtice. If he pleads againſt any perſon, he ought to be Impartial in laying open the Caſe as it is. If it be for the Publick againſt a Criminal, he muſt take heed, that he neither put a Wrong Face on the thing, to Aggravate the Matter beyond what it is really, nor to ſuppreſs the Truth, in Favour to the *Defendent*, which he knows would Detect and Convince him, either in Affection to the Perſon, or for the ſake of an Underhand Bribe; and he ought to avoid all Inſolent & Virulent Reflections, for it belongs not to his Poſt, either to Prejudge the Perſon, or to Determine his Cauſe; but only to lay Open the Matter, to Prepare it for the Judgment of Others: his Buſineſs is not to contend for Victory, but to manifeſt the Truth, and plead the Cauſe of the *Innocent*, but not the *Nocent*; ſo that if he, before, was perſwaded the Cauſe was good, yet when he finds himſelf miſtaken, he ought to be ſilent, and let his Client know, that he is his Friend no further than the Altars; and that he will not wrong his own Conſcience, whatever he may Gain by it. The Precept

for

for this is plain, Exod. 23. 2, 6. *Neither shalt thou speak in a cause, to decline after many, to wrest judgment. Thou shalt not wrest the judgment of thy poor in his cause.* Nor yet ought he to use endeavours to Delay a righteous Process, by endeavouring needless *Non-suits*, which will tend to the Injury of the Righteous Party: Nor to instigate any Persons to maintain *Litigious* Suits, when he knows the Case is *Bad*, in hopes thereby to advance his own private Interest; it being every Man's Duty, as a Christian, to endeavour in his Place, to be a *Peace-Maker*, if he hope to enjoy a title Claim to Blessedness; Matth 5. 9. *Blessed are the Peace-makers: for they shall be called the children of God.*

[6.] WHEN *Cases* offered to Civil Judgment, do after all *remain Dubious*, they ought to be *left to the Judgment of God.* It is good for every Man to maintain a Zeal for the Truth, and in his place to use regular Endeavours for the maintaining of it; but this Zeal ought to be managed by Knowledge, and a Submission to the All-governing Providence of God. It is a great Truth, that there is a great deal of wrong done, and Sin committed in the World, which God doth not bring to light so as to convince the Perpetrators of it, as that they may be born Witness against for it by Civil or Ecclesiastical Censures. Many times things may be so far detected, as there may be reason enough to suspect Persons, and be Morally perswaded that they are Injurious to their Neighbours, or have broken the Rules of the Moral Law; and yet there is no legal Proof to be brought to Convince them, agreable to the Rules of the Word of God. We are to be humbled, when it is in things of an heinous nature, and ought to use Endeavours to detect them; but it is sufficient to take Care that no publick Guilt be contracted by it, which will not be, unless the Rule be neglected. We are acquainted with the Direction God gave about the Case of a *Private Murder*, Deut. 21. For Men to make Laws for the Punishment of Sin, upon slighter Evidence than the Word of God hath prescribed and limited, will not be to prevent Guilt, but to occasion it. We are assured, that some Sinners are here brought to Light, but others are suffered to scape; some Persons are Wronged by their Neighbours, and have no Means in their hands Justly to Right themselves in this World: We ought to Adore God in this, and rest satisfied that He is Judge of all; and though things may ly Hid for the present, yet that is a Truth, Eccl. 12. 14. *For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* And the Tho't and Belief of this, ought to quiet our Minds, and make us to resolve to Commit it to Him; assuring our selves, that tho' we must tarry a while, yet it will not Repent us at last.

WE have Considered an *Assertory Testimony*, and the several Duties belonging thereto, wherein we are to maintain and promote the Truth in regard thereof. It now follows that we proceed to the Consideration of,

Secondly, A *Promissory* Testimony; which hath respect to something that is *Future*, to which the Man obligeth himself.

A *Promise* is properly, an *Obligation*, wherein one Bindeth himself to another, to the True and Faithful *Performance* of any thing, in which he stakes his *Truth* for Security of his doing it; and therefore ought very carefully to endeavour, that he may herein shew his great Value which he hath for the Truth. Now concerning *Promises*, it is to be observed, that some are made to *God*, others to *Men*; the *former* are usually called *Vows*; and the *Promises* which Men oblige themselves in, are either *Hypothetical* or *Inconditionate*, which I shall not consider severally; only observing, that a *Conditionate Promise* doth no further Bind the Conscience to Performance, than upon the Performance of the Condition by the Party to whom it is made: And the Duties referring to this Command, may be reduced to *Two* Heads;

I. WE ought to have regard to the *Truth*, in our *Making* of them. Tho' a Person might possibly be *Free* before, yet when once his Word is past, he is become *Bound*, and therefore his love to the *Truth*, ought to make him very Cautious how he enters into such a Bond.

AND here are *Two* things,

(1.) WE ought to *Make* no Promises, but such as we can *Perform*. He who Promises beyond or besides this, doth notoriously betray his *Falshood* in the very Act of Promising; and that either *Rashly* without Deliberation, or *Falsely* without any Intention of Performance, if when he *Promiseth*, he knows it is out of his Power. And here is a *double* Ability to be considered,

1. A *Moral Power*: which saith that it must be a thing that is *Lawful* for him. That which would be Sin for the Man to *Perform*, because in it he will Transgress some Moral Precept, is to be judged Morally impossible; nor can he be *True* to *Men* in it, but he must at the same time be *False* to *God*, to whom he hath promised Allegiance; and for that reason when he *Promiseth*, he is at that time under a Bond of Obedience not to *Perform*; for God hath forbidden it, who hath the power to break all his Bonds by His Disallowance; and therefore he is Guilty of Sin in so *Promising*, and would encrease his Guilt if he should *Perform*. And such a Promise was *Jeptha's* Vow, if he bound himself without Limitation. They are therefore out of the way, who think, that tho' they are convinced, that their Promise cannot be accomplished without Sin, do yet think, that because their Word is past, they must *Do* it: whereas God requires of them to Repent of their *Rashness* and *Impiety*, and seek of Him *Forgiveness* for their Sin and Folly.

2. THERE is a *Rational Power*: When according to the Ordinary Course of Providence, the Person is able to *Perform* it. The thing it self is Lawful, and the Man Binds himself to it; but tho' it may be a thing Lawful in it self, yet it may not be Lawful for him. For

tho' there is a governing Providence of God over all humane Affairs, so that a Man ought always to subordinate his Promises to himself, or others to it, (*Jam.* 4. 15.) yet the Ordinary Course of this Providence must be considered, and nothing is to be Promised in Contradiction to that. We ought not therefore to *Promise* any thing, but what we have a rational assurance, that we have it in our Power to *Perform*. We ought not to Promise that which is not within our Compass; we neither have it in our own hands, nor is there any rational likelihood that we should: or to Warrant a thing, that we can give no good Warrant for; or to Promise to do such a Business in such a Time, when we are sure, or have reason to judge, that we have already Promised as much as we are capable of compassing.

(2.) WE ought to make no Promises, but with a firm *Purpose* to Perform. We must have this Resolution in our hearts, when we give our Word, else we are *False* in it, and dissemble in our Expressions. Here therefore was their Fault, which the Prophet Charged them withal, Jer. 42. 5. *Then they said to Jeremiah, The Lord be a true and faithful witness between us, if we do not even according to all things for the which the Lord thy God shall send thee to us.* With, ver. 20. *For ye dissembled in your hearts, when ye sent me unto the Lord your God, saying, Pray for us unto the Lord our God, and according unto all that the Lord our God shall say, so declare unto us, and we will do it.* There must be no *Reserve*, but what is under the Divine Government, for that is an *Æquivocation*; much less a *contrary* Purpose, for that is a down right *Ly*: And tho' we may Impose on Men by such Tricks, yet God is not Mocked, but will Charge *Falsehood* upon us, when he enters into Judgment with us.

[FEBRUARY 5. 1705.]

SERMON *CCVIII.*

II. WE ought to maintain the *Truth*, by a *Faithful Performance* of our Promises. In our *Vows* to God, we must carefully *Pay* them; Eccl. 5. 4. *When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it: for he hath no pleasure in fools; pay that which thou hast vowed.* And when we Bind our selves to Men, by our *Word*, we must prosecute it, and be very punctual in the doing the thing, according to *Promise*: and this is that which is usually called *Fidelity*, and is a thing of indispensible Necessity for the upholding of human Society: And there are *three* things in which it is mainly concerned:

1. IN *Keeping of Secrets*. We *formerly* observed, that there is a Necessity for Man's comfortable Living in this World, that there be a *Communication* between Men, of things that are not to be made *Publick*, but kept *Secret*, between Men; and this is to be maintained, either between such as are intimate Friends, or such as are concerned in the consulting of Publick Affairs, in which matters are to be kept in the Breasts of the Persons concerned, and not divulged. Now in these there is either an *express* or a *mental* Promise of Secresy; and we are advised, Prov. 25. 9. *Discover not a secret to another.* 13. 3. *He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips, shall have destruction.* And nothing can argue Men of greater *Falshood*.

2. IN *preserving of Leagues*. This is of a more *Publick* concernment, and it is necessary for the preserving of the Tranquillity of Nations, that there be Combinations between them; and this Command requires that they be Faithfully kept, else there can be no Safety, nor Civil Commerce maintained; but Men must ever live in *Hostility*, and stand upon their Guard: Nor are Advantages to be taken to violate these, which cannot be done without *Falsehood*: We therefore find how *Zedekiah* is animadverted upon, on this Account, 2 *Kings* 24. 20. 2 *Chron.* 36. 13.

3. IN *mutual Dealings between Man & Man*. Such indeed is the *Falsehood* in Men's Hearts, that Necessity hath, in matters of Moment, put Men upon drawing of *Instruments*, signing and sealing of Bargains, and taking of Witnesses, thus compelling them to be *Honest*, if they would not expose themselves to suffering Damage by their Default: But there is an higher Principle, put into the Consciences of Men, to which they ought to give heed, if they would not fall under the Remorces of it another Day; and it hath greater Obligation in it, than all the Instruments and Witnesses in the World. And that Man that will not make Conscience of his *Bare Word*, will no further regard his *strongest Obligations*, than Necessity compels him. And there are these Four things especially contained in it,

1. WE *must look upon our Word, when once past, to be Sacred*. Before we Promised we were at *Liberty*, but now our own Tongue hath brought us into a *Bond*, which we cannot Break, without doing Violence to the *Truth*; which is to offer an Affront to the God of Truth, in whose Presence we uttered it. And that Man who doth not esteem himself as really Bound by his *Word*, as if he had past all the *Protestations* and *Oaths* conceivable, hath a *False* Heart in him: He that little regards his *Word*, forfeits his *Reputation* justly among Sober and Moral Men; hence how doth *Paul* plead his *Veracity* in his *Word*, tho' hindred by God's Providence, 2 *Cor.* 1. 17, 18.

2. WE *must not* Repent *of it*. It is true, a Man may *rashly* Promise to do a thing, which on Deliberation he finds is to his Disadvantage, and may therefore so far Repent, as to wish that he had not done it; and accordingly to Debate it with his Neighbour, who ought to consider him in it, if it be of moment; but

but he ought not so to Repent as to Fly off from it, and *Refuse* to do it, which is a Breach of Promise, and contradicts the Character of a good Man, *Psal.* 15. 3. And his *Word* in this Case, is as really Binding as his *Oath*, in regard of Truth.

3. WE *must use no Tricks to Evade it.* We Promise, and our Neighbour takes us at our *Word*, and depends upon it, confiding in our *Honesty*, esteeming the common Maxim to be a Catholick Truth, that an *Honest Man will be as good as his Word.* We ought therefore not to *Disown* it, and put him on the *Proof* of it; for tho' the Civil Law may acquit us, yet God and our own Hearts will condemn us. Nor ought we to Delay it, beyond the Affixed Time, but to be Punctual. And it is a great Truth, that a Christian pretending to Godliness, brings a great deal of Reproach upon his Person and Profession, by using *Evasions* to Break his Word. Nor may we seek to put it off upon the Providence of God, when it is indeed the Effect of our own Carelessness, and disregard of our Obligation; this is a piece of Profaness, and God's Name is taken in Vain by it, and it can in no wise excuse us from *Falsehood*; and it many times is occasion of no little damage to such as we are engaged to.

4. WE *must use no Deceit in the Performance of it.* For this also is contrary to the *Fidelity*, which we ought to use in our Promises; and indeed, it is a perfect Cheat, and plainly declares, that we are strangers to the Principle of common Honesty required of all. But as to the thing *It self*, is was considered under the *Former* Precept, only as it refers to Truth, it so comes under *this*, and it adds to the Force of it, and we had better suffer in our Estates, than Forfeit our *Veracity*. And this may suffice for the *Affirmative* part of the Command.

Question LXXVIII.

WHAT is Forbidden in the Ninth Commandment?

Answer.

THE Ninth Commandment Forbiddeth, whatsoever is Prejudicial to Truth, or Injurious to our own and our Neighbours good Name.

THE *Affirmative* of a Duty, being well laid open and established, carries in it a discovery of the *Negative*, or what is a falling short, or violation of such a Duty. But such is our dullness to learn, that we need to be particularly told, What is *Sin*, as well as what is *Duty*: and there are some *Sins* in respect of this Command, which will call for a more distinct Consideration. And here, because there are some things which scrupulous Consciences are at a loss about, I shall First take notice of some things which are not any breach of this Precept, and then of what are notoriously so.

I. THERE are some things which may *seem* to be a *Breach* of this Command, but do only *seem*, and are not such in *reality*. And these may be reduced to these heads,

1. *ALL Suppression of the Truth, is not to be accounted Falsehood.* If a Man suppress it, when he is called of God to Declare it, he thereby renders himself Guilty: whereas at another Time, not to suppress it will be Sin. We before observed, that there are Secrets to be kept, which others will enquire after; but we ought to put them off, tho' not with *Falsehood*. And tho' a Man ought to speak *True*, yet neither Conscience nor Prudence obligeth him to *speak All* that he knows. Christ himself did so, Mat. 26. 62, 63. *And the high Priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace.* Sometimes a Man may lawfully *tell* part of the *Truth*, and *suppress* part, when there is no Obligation on him to *tell* it, and he might do hurt by divulging it. That instance of the Prophet is imitable, *Jer.* 38. 26, 27. A Man may lawfully put off a busy Enquirer, with telling him *another* Story, to divert him from his Impertinency: or he may flatly Deny to tell him. Nor is a Man chargable with *Falsehood*, for pleading *Not Guilty* at an humane Bar, tho' he be Conscious of the Fact. Nor can I see the reason of their Judgment who think that a Man is bound to Reveal the *Truth* against himself, which cannot otherwise be proved: nor is this a denial, but only a putting himself upon a Legal Trial; tho', if the Man sees an *Innocent* Person like to suffer for the Fact, it alters the Case.

2. *ALL Tropical or Figurative Expressions.* There are many *Oratorical* words, which we use to express our Minds in, which are not in the bare Letter of them *True*, yet Custom hath made them common, and they are servicable to Mankind both for need, and so move the Affections, and are to be understood according to the design of them. The word of God therefore makes frequent use of them, both for *Ornament*, and *Illustration*. Such are *Metaphorical* words, which are but contracted Comparisons, than which nothing is more common. Thus Christ calls himself a *Vine*, *Joh* 15. 1. A *Shepherd*, *Chap.* 10. and many the like. Thus He calls *Herod*, a *Fox*; and *John* calls the Pharisees, a *Generation of Vipers*: such are not to be counted *False*, for they are used by way of *Similitude*, to represent the nature of the thing, for which they are translated to it. *Metonymical* Expressions also, are not to be censured as *False*, for the word of God warrants them; how often is the *Type* put for the thing *Typified*? Thus is Christ called, the *Lamb of God*, and our *Passover*; thus is the *Sacramental* Bread called, *His Body*; and thus He calls *John*, *Elias*. *Hyperbolical* words also are not to be counted *False*. And tho' there be some who deny these to be used by the Spirit of God in Scripture, yet they manifestly mistake: What other sense can be put on *Judg.* 20. 16. 2 *Sam.* 1. 23. *Deut.* 8 4. *Job.* 21. 25. *Joel* 3. 18. and a great many more.

Ironical Words are also to be allowed, when one thing is expressed, and the contrary intended; only it is to be noted, that such Words are so to be used, that it may appear that a Mock or insulting is designed in them. Thus we have the Prophet brought in speaking to *Baal's* Prophets, 1 *Kings* 18. 27. *Micaiah* to *Ahab*, Chap. 22. 15. thus, *Job* 12. 2. thus *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 4. 8, 10. Hither also are to be referred *Feigned Stories*, used to represent things, tho' in themselves they be Fictions; and to this all *Parabolical* Speeches are to be referred, many whereof the Word of God furnisheth us withal; which do not intend that such things ever were, but are to set forth *Truth* under such a shadow; such was *Jotham's* Parable, *Judg.* 9. And our Saviour made frequent use of them; for we are told, Matth. 13. 34. *All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables, and without a parable spake he not unto them.* Such things therefore as these are, ought not to be charged as if they were *Breaches* of this Command, because all Men do or may understand the design of them.

3. *ALL* falling short *in the performance of Promises.* If it be thro' the Man's own Default, it must needs be a guilty *Falsifying* his Word, and he cannot excuse himself from Sin: But we before observed, that there is a governing Providence, which superintends the Affairs of Men, which oftentimes frustrates Men's most probable Designs, and unexpectedly disables them from accomplishing their Honest Intentions, for which they had laid in with the greatest Prudence: And all Men that are not *Atheists*, are supposed to acknowledge themselves to be under this Government; and to make no Promise but under this *Hypothesis.* And when it is so, it may be the Man's Grief, but cannot be imputed to him as his Sin, that he cannot perform his Engagement. Sickness, Fire, Shipwreck, Robbers, may be an inevitable Hindrance to Men of performing their Word; and God is to be Adored in this, and the Man himself not to be Faulted any further than his Negligence, Imprudence, or going beyond a Call in Providence, may be charged upon him; but God is to be Adored in all these things.

4. ALL *Simulation* is not here condemned. Some have disputed whether Military Stratagems to Deceive an Enemy and draw them into a snare; or the making a shew as if one Intended one thing, when he Designs the contrary, be not a practical Breach of this Command: Some have so Censured it; but there needs a Distinction. There are Stratagems which are sinful, and betray *Falsehood*, and are utterly *Unlawful*; as when by fair Treating and Promises, they are brought into our hand, and we violate such Promises. But to use such *Shews* as an Enemy may be eluded withal, and so drawn into an Ambush, or drawn away from his Post, is allowed both by the Light of Nature and the Law of God. To lay *Ambushment*, to Feign a *Flight*, thereby to draw the Enemy into them, was approved by God's own Direction, *Josh.* 8. And was practised afterwards by *Israel* against the *Benjamites*, *Judg.* 20. Provided there be no *Ly* told, nor breach of *Truce* made: It is beyond question that it is Lawful to Conceal Counsels against them, to endeavour to surprize them unawares, to make a shew of attacking on *this* side, with a design to do it on the *other*, and many such things; for here is no breach of a Moral Obligation, nor violation of any Contract, or any thing but what an Adversary ought in prudence to expect, and guard against. And for a Man sometimes to pretend to do a thing, which he Intends not, except he declares positively that he will do it, is not to be argued of *Falsehood*; as that of our Saviour, *Luk.* 24. 28. A Man may thus conceal the *Truth* of his Purpose, and yet not be under the Imputation of *False* Dealing. But,

II. WE may pass to the Consideration of those things which are a *notorious Breach* of *this* Command; some of the principal whereof may be a little spoken to.

I. ALL *Lying* is here to be condemned. The Word of God every where testifies against a *Ly*; we are are told, Rev. 21. 8. *All Liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.* We may here first enquire into the *Nature* of a *Ly*, and then observe wherein Men may become *Guilty* of it.

1. A *Ly* according to the Words of this Command, is a *False Testimony*; but then it is to be considered, *What is a* False *Testimony?* And here there are different thoughts; some think that a *Ly*, properly so called, only intends, the telling of a *Known* Falsehood, with a purpose to Deceive; and doubtless this is a notorious *Lying*, both for *Matter* and *Form*, and wholly inexcusable: But I suppose this is not a sufficient Characterizing of a *Ly*, but it ought to come under a more distinct and deliberate Consideration; and as to a purpose of *Deceiving*, tho' it is a usual Concomitant of a *Ly*, and is designed for the most part by him that tells it, yet it is not of the *Essence* of a *Ly*. But a *Ly* may be more fully described, *A Testimony wherein a Man asserts a thing, which he either knows to be False, or doth not know to be True.* Some think that the Latin word *Mentiri*, is as much as, *Contra Mentem ire*: Some distinguish a *Ly* into that which is only *Materially* so, or which is so also *Formally*; and thus they express it, The thing Testified is the *Matter* of the Testimony, the Asserting or Denying it, is the *Form*; so that whensoever a Person Affirms a *Falsehood*, or Denies a *Truth*, tho' he *thinks* that he speaks *True*, yet the Assertion is *materially* a *Ly*; but if he *knows* that the thing he speaks is *False*, then not only is the Assertion a *Ly*, but the Person asserting it *Lyes*. But this will be a little more distinctly laid out, in considering the Description given, which shews us,

2. *WHEN Men become Guilty.*

HERE

HERE then observe a few things,

1. *THAT* Truth *is rooted in the Things themselves, and cannot be altered by the Person asserting.* The Man's *Testimony* doth not make the thing *True* or *False*, by the Authority of him that Testifies; but his Testimony is either *True* or *False* according as the thing is in *it self*. If the thing it self be *not* True, an hundred Witnesses cannot alter it, and make it *True*, but it saith that they are *False* Witnesses. CHRIST who was the *Truth*, yet plumply lays down such a *Hypothesis* concerning Himself, Joh 8.55. *If I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you.* And the Reason is, because *Truth* is in the thing it self, and therefore it must needs be the *Measure* of the Truth of the Testimony. If the thing be *so*, it is *True*, and if it be *not* so, it must needs be *False*.

2. *IF a Man Asserts a thing* contrary *to his own Perswasion about it, it is to him a Ly.* A Thing it self may be *Truth*, and may afterwards be proved to be so; but if he is fully perswaded in his own mind that it is a *Falsehood*, and yet affirms it for *True*, it is Formally a *Ly*, as it proceeds from him; and the Reason is, because he *thinks* one thing, and *speaks* the contrary, which carries the Formality of a *Ly* in it; and herein he designedly Divulgeth a *Falsehood*, contrary to the Dictates of his own Conscience: And tho' he should be able afterwards to Prove the thing so asserted to be *True*, yet he cannot Answer his own Conscience before God, howsoever he may Evade the Censure of Men. There is not only in it a purpose to *Deceive*, but a design to *Pawn* his Credit to establish a *Falsehood*; and there needs nothing more to make a Man a *Liar* before God's Tribunal. For in every Testimony, to render it *True*, there is required, not only that the Testimony be conformable to the *Thing*, but also to the *Mind* and *Judgment* of him who gives it, which here it is not.

3. IF *a Man Assert a thing for* Truth, *on his own Knowledge, which is not so in* it self, *it is a Breach of this Command.* For the thing *it self* is False, and therefore he cannot possibly *know* it to be True: And if the Man would have Consulted and duly enquired, he might have discovered the *Falsehood* of it. It is certain, that he was *Mistaken*; and tho' he may have strong Presumptions, and his Senses may be Imposed upon; yet to do such a thing *Rashly*, and take it up Precipitantly, and without due Deliberation, discovers a want of a due regard to *Truth*. A Man may Mistake another's Words, and put a wrong meaning on them, thro' Prejudice and Misinterpretation; or he may be Mistaken in the *Person*, and take one for another; and upon a due Enquiry he might be Convicted of his Error; the neglect of which makes him inevitably Guilty of a *Ly*.

4. HE *that gives a plump Testimony to a thing, which he only receives upon* Report, *it is to him a* False *Testimony.* And the Reason is, because he Testifies to that which he *Knows not* of his own Knowledge to be *True*. A Man may be called to Testify, that he *Heard* such and such Assert such things, but he cannot, on that, ground his Certainty, that the thing must therefore needs be so; for it is only on humane Credit, which is *Fallacious*. Some Reports may Challenge more human Credit than others do, but nothing of a Testimony but what is *Divine*, can establish a Certainty of Faith: Tho' in a way of Judicature, *Human* Testimony must determine Cases by a Legal Proof, else Civil Judgment must cease; but then it must be by Witnesses that Testify their own Knowledge; and if they do it upon *Report*, they have no *Validity* in them.

5. FOR *a Man plumply to* Deny *a known Truth, is a notorious Ly.* It is one thing to put the Truth of a thing upon *Proof*, and another to Assert that the thing is *not* so, when it really *is*: The *former* may be no Breach upon Truth, but the *latter* always is; and all Men's pretences will never excuse it from a *Ly*, as will afterwards be considered. The Man knows in his heart, that he speaks *False*; and if this be not every way a *Ly*, Mankind must be at an utter loss to know what is.

6. *EVERY voluntary Breach of a lawful Promise, must needs be a practical Ly. Infidelity* is added by thus doing to *Falsity*. If a Man, who, when he *Promiseth*, doth it without a purpose to *Perform*, much more if he purpose *not* to Perform, Lyes unto God, and to his Neighbour; for his *Tongue* and his *Heart* Contradict one the other. And if after he hath so Promised, he so Repents of it, as to alter his Purpose, and resolve *not* to perform it, he so turns it into a *Ly*. And in all these ways a Man brings Guilt upon himself unavoidably.

BUT here the perverse Minds of Men, hath made it necessary to Enquire,

Quest. *WHETHER it be Lawful for a Person, on any score, to Ly?*

AND though one would think that the Words of the Command, and the great dependence of the Well-being of human Society upon the Truth, were enough to satisfy all sober Men in the *Negative*; yet the World hath been perplexed with Disputes on this Account; and it is too much practised among Men, to Excuse themselves from Guilt under a pretext of Necessity and Duty: It may be a little enquired into.

Ans. SOME therefore have coined a Distribution of a *Ly* into Three sorts, viz. *Officious*, *Jocose*, & *Pernicious*; which cannot be a Distribution of a *Genus* into *Species*, or of a *Whole* into it's *Parts*; but is only a *Distinction* put upon them with respect to the Circumstances, or the Design on which the Ly is told.

AN *Officious* Ly is, When a Man Lyes to do himself or his Neighbour a Kindness, or to prevent some Damage which he might otherwise be exposed unto. A *Jocose* Ly is, When a Man meerly to make *Sport*, tells False and ridiculous Stories of himself or others, or of things that never were. A *Pernicious* Ly is, When one raiseth a False Report, with a mischievous design to hurt himself, or his Neighbour, in his Name, Estate or Life, and asserts

the

the Truth of them upon his own Knowledge, or is a Witneſs to them.

1. AS to a *Pernicious* Ly, very few are found to appear in the Defence of it; but it is generally confeſſed that it is Wicked, and a very ſinful Breach of this Command. Tho' too frequently Men practically allow it, either to vent their Malice againſt their Neighbours; or for Lucre of Money offered them, to be Knights of the Poſt; or ſometimes in Trouble of Mind, Accuſe themſelves Falſely, that ſo they may rid themſelves of a burdenſome Life; but the very clear Light of Reaſon and common Senſe declares the horrible Iniquity of *this*; it will therefore be *ſuperfluous* to Diſſert about this Point, it being taken for granted.

2. AS to a *Jocoſe* Ly: This hath it's Patrons, who deny it to be any Sin; and plead that it ſerves to the Ends of honeſt Recreation; and their Defence is grounded on two Pretences, *viz.* That it ſtands in the ſame rank with *Metaphors*, *Hyperboles*, *Ironies* and *Fables*, which are allowed, and are yet *Falſeboods*; and that ſuch *Jocoſe* Tales are uſed, not with a deſign to *Deceive*, but only to make innocent *Sport*: But here is a great Miſtake, for as to *Tropical* Expreſſions, there cannot truly be ſo much as the *Matter* of a Ly charged to them; they only expreſs the Truth in a *figurative* Enunciation, and are to be interpreted according to the meaning of the thing they are brought to ſignify, and the common Uſage & Cuſtom of a People, which puts the Senſe upon them. And as to *Fables*, they are alſo uſed to ſet forth a thing, by a *Reſemblance* and *Similitude*, and by way of *Illuſtration*; and in themſelves they make it evident, that there is no other Deſign in uſing of them; ſo that they are but one Mode of expreſſing a *Compariſon*, and therefore are far from coming into the Definition of a *Ly*: And then it is a Miſtake, that a Ly ſhould be told, without either a purpoſe to *Deceive*, or at leaſt without a pawning the Credit of the Teller of it, for the *Truth* of it; elſe it cannot be a *Teſtimony*, which is eſſential to a *Ly*. A Man may tell many Stories which are meer Inventions, but he may tell them ſo as to ſignify, that he is no Voucher of the *Truth* of them, but meerly as *Tales*; and this is not to Ly at all, and therefore it amounts not to a *Jocoſe* Ly; tho' poſſibly it may be vain and fooliſh, and thereupon muſt be ſinful. But if a Man tells a thing *aſſertorily*, either of himſelf, or of another, as a thing *really* ſaid or done, which never was, this muſt needs be a *Ly*; and tho' his deſign be to make the Company Merry, it no way ſalves it; becauſe whether he expects to be Believed or no, yet he both hurts his own Soul, and lays matter of Prejudice before others; and every one that hears him, may not know that he is a reputed Lyar.

3. BUT that which here mainly comes under Debate, is concerning an *Officious* Ly: When a Perſon tells a Ly with a deſign for his *Own*, or his *Neighbour's Benefit*, to ſave himſelf from *Harm*, or to obtain ſome great Advantage, or to preſerve his Neighbour or Friend from Suffering, or obtaining for him ſome *Good*; and for this they produce ſeveral Scripture Inſtances, ſuch as that of *Abraham's Denying* his Wife, and calling her his *Siſter*; of *Rebeckah's* impoſing upon, and *Jacob's* Lying to blind *Iſaac*, and ſo obtaining the Bleſſing; the *Ægyptian* Midwives putting off *Pharoah*, and ſaving the Male Children of *Iſrael* alive, when commanded to ſlay them; *Rahab's* denying the Spies, when asked of about them, and yet this ſaving them, is aſſigned to her Faith. But tho' ſome have endeavoured by nice Diſtinctions to prove, that theſe were not *Lyes*, yet 'tis needleſs to ſpend time in vindicating them; for all the Examples of the Children of God, are not for *Imitation*, who had their failings even in thoſe things wherein they exerciſed their Grace; there being a mixture of Sin in their *Beſt*; and our Duty is to ſtick cloſe to the *Law* & *Teſtimony*, and interpret and improve Examples according as they agree to, or differ from the Rule. Now it is an unexceptionable Rule, that *Evil is not to be done, that Good may come of it*: *Paul* cannot mention the imputation of this in Chriſtians without abhorrence, Rom. 3. 8. *And not rather, as we be ſlanderouſly reported, and as ſome affirm that we ſay, Let us do evil, that good may come? whoſe damnation is juſt.* A *good End* cannot ſanctify an *evil Action.* This Command forbids all *Lying*; and a pretence that we did it not *Maliciouſly*, but in *Kindneſs*, will not make it ceaſe to be a Ly, which is ever a Moral Evil. Nor did God ever Command or Commend, any Tranſgreſſion of any Moral Precept; tho' He hath ſometimes by His Sovereign Command, made that *not* to be a Tranſgreſſion, which otherwiſe *would* have been one. Let there never ſo much of outward Good acrue from our Lying, yet it ſtill remains a *Ly*, and that is a Tranſgreſſion of the Law; which is the very Definition of Sin: 1 Joh. 3. 4. *Whoſoever committeth ſin, tranſgreſſeth the law: for ſin is the tranſgreſſion of the law* And it is a worthy ſaying of *Auguſtine*, and very agreable to the Word of God, 'That 'if by thy Ly thou couldeſt ſave a Man's Life, 'yea ſave his Soul, nay ſave all the Souls 'that ever were in the whole World, and 'bring as much Glory to God, as all the holy 'Prophets and Apoſtles ever did; yet on *thy* 'part all were ſtark naught; and except the 'Sin of *this* Ly be Pardoned to thee, thro' the 'Blood of Chriſt, thou muſt be Damned for it 'for ever.' How deeply then doth this Condemn ſuch, as to ſave a Penny, or to ſalve their Reputation among Men, or to Advance any little inconſiderable Worldly Intereſt, make no bones of a *Ly?* Surely theſe will have a doleful Account to give in another Day, before the God of Truth.

LET

LET us then be afraid of *This*, as a thing that will not Profit us, but be pernicious to us; and carry always in mind that caution of our Divine *Herbert*;

Dare to be True, there's nothing needs a Ly,
A Fault that needs it moſt, grows Two thereby.

[MARCH 5. 1706.]

SERMON *CCIX.*

II. *JESUITICAL Equivocations.* Theſe indeed are but a *Ly* in a painted dreſs, and do not look ſo naked as a down right *Ly*, but are nothing the better for that: Theſe are called *Jeſuitical*, not becauſe *Jeſuits* only uſe them, for they are too much in practice every where, but becauſe they have appeared as Champions to defend the Lawfulneſs of them, and the Duty of ſometimes uſing them: theſe Men being the principal Emiſſaries of the *Roman* See; and finding that often they have no other way to ſave their Necks from an Halter, have found it neceſſary for the Catholick Cauſe; all whoſe ſupport in this World, is built upon *Lies*. In defence of which, many Volumns have been written, the Vanity & Falſity whereof hath been detected by the Orthodox: A few words may here ſuffice.

AN *Equivocation*, is an Aſſerting of a thing, which in it ſelf, according to the Vulgar acceptation, is a *Falſehood*, under the cloak of a *Mental* Reſervation. There are indeed Equivocal Words, many whereof are in uſe, which have a diverſe ſignification; and in common diſcourſe, a Perſon may intend them in one ſenſe, and the Hearer may take them up in another; theſe may be uſed for Diverſion & Recreation without blame, and cannot be charged as Falſehood. But there are two ways in which a ſinful Equivocation may be uttered.

1. *WHEN a thing is Uttered for a Truth, which is in it ſelf Falſe, and cannot be any way True, without a Limitation, which is Reſerved in the Mind, but no way Uttered.* As, when a Perſon be asked, *Whether he be ſuch an One*, or, *of ſuch an Occupation?* And he plumply denies it, meaning, that he is not ſo to tell it to the Enquirer: or, when he is demanded, *Whether he was at ſuch a Place at ſuch a Time?* and he directly ſaith, *No*, with the ſame reſerve.

2. *WHEN a Perſon Aſſerts a thing, which is Falſe according to the Univerſal Acceptation of it, though in an Unuſual ſenſe it may be True.* If I demand of One, *Were you not at ſuch a Place, or in ſuch Company?* Or, *Did you not ſpeak ſuch Words, at ſuch a Time?* and he Anſwers, *If I ſhould ſay ſo, I ſhould be guilty of a Ly*; only meaning that he had promiſed not to ſpeak of it: The *Former* of theſe is the moſt Heinous, but the *Latter* cannot be Excuſed; it being to all Men's apprehenſion, to be underſtood for a manifeſt Denial of the thing. Now, that ſuch *Equivocations* are notorious Breaches of this Command will appear,

1. *A Teſtimony is for the giving Evidence to the Truth of a Matter*; and therefore when it is offered for the confirmation of a *Ly*, it plainly and directly contradicts the deſigned End of it: and it is uſed to confirm a thing to others, as a Truth, the contrary to which is both the deſign and nature of an Equivocation.

2. *OTHERS are only concerned with the Words of a Teſtimony, & what the Man Reſerves in his Mind, is on purpoſe that it may not be known.* If therefore the Perſon had ſaid the quite contrary, and that had been a Truth, then this muſt neceſſarily be a Falſehood; and becauſe it is ſpoken *contrary* to his Knowledge, it muſt be a Ly; and aggravated, in that it is uſed on purpoſe to Deceive.

3. IF this be not to Ly, *any Perſon may clear himſelf from the Scandal of Lying, or being Puniſhed as a* Falſe *Witneſs*; and it makes it of no Service for the Benefit of Mankind, that Teſtimonies be taken, if a thing *Falſe* may be Juſtifyed as *True*, with ſuch a mental Reſerve. Thus alſo may *Juſtice* be made *Injuſtice*, and all humane Society held under a perpetual Cheat. For a Man to ſay, yea to Swear, that he is not ſuch a Perſon, nor did ſuch a Thing; only meaning that he hath no Mind to *Tell* it to another; is to ſay, that Truth is not in the Thing, but in the Man's Will; than which nothing can be more abſurd, the thing then is a *Ly*: and the Caſes in which the Patrons of it allow it, are only a Plea, that it is Lawful for a Man to *Ly* in ſome Caſes; which hath been anſwered.

III. *PREACHING or Publiſhing of Falſe Doctrines.* Every *Error* about Goſpel-Truths, is Falſehood, and ſuch as embrace it are ſaid to *Believe a ly*, 2 *Theſ* 2. 11. Thoſe then that Vend them, muſt needs be Guilty of putting off *Lies* to Men, for *Truth*; which muſt be Repugnant to this Ninth Command: Nor can there be any more Pernicious ſort of Lying, that offers more Damage to Men, whoſe Corruption enclines them too readily to embrace *Error*, and tenaciouſly hold to it; inaſmuch as Men's Souls, and their Salvation are nearly concerned in it, they being Lies, the belief whereof is Damnable, as is evident from the fore-cited Text. And how many *Erroneous* and *Heretical* Doctrines, are there at this day preached, publiſhed, and ſtrenuouſly Maintained in the Chriſtian World? And all that appear for them, or ſtand up in the Defence of them, are truly the Patrons of *Falſehoods*. Nor is it ſufficient for Men to plead, that they verily *Believe* them to be True, and that it is their Duty to Maintain them as ſuch, and ſo to excuſe themſelves from Guilt; for as we formerly obſerved, Truth is not firſtly rooted in the Underſtanding, but in the Thing *it ſelf*; and is the ſame, whatſoever different Sentiments Men may entertain about it. A thing is not True, becauſe I Believe it to be ſo, but my Faith is right, when I Believe the thing as it is. And beſides this pretence will not excuſe us, that we conſcientiouſly Believe it, for Error in the *Conſcience*, is a Sin, and is rooted in Original Sin; and it is one of the fearfulleſt Judgments of God in this World, to be given up to

Believe

believe a *Ly*; for tho' we know but in part, and *Err* in many things, yet whilst we are of a *Teachable* Spirit, and wait humbly sensible of our need, upon God for His Spirit, He knows how to pity our Mistakes; yet to Maintain *False* Doctrines, and Teach them Men, will prove Fatal to us, unless God gives us Repentance. And our Saviour assures us, that many grievous Persecutors of his Church will do it conscientiously, Joh. 16. 2. *The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God service.* It is also against this Precept, for Men to Receive & readily Imbibe *False* Doctrines; and a Note of God's anger against a People, when he leaves them to a giddy Spirit, and to run after the Teachers of Lies.

IV. *RAISING, Receiving, and Spreading of Evil Reports to the Infamy of our Neighbours*, or *not appearing in their Defence when we are called to it.* To Invent Calumnies to take away Mens Reputation, is slandering them, and a *Slander* is a *Ly*; and Slanderers are the Inventors of Lies: and Backbiters will come under the same Censure, for this is to Defame Men Unjustly, and contrary to the Rule of *Charity*; contrary to, *Tit.* 3. 2. And here also is forbidden a Facility to *Take up* an Evil Report, to give an easy Credit to the Reproaches which are raised upon our Neighbour. Doubtless that was a great Sin in those, of whom he, Jer. 20. 10. *Report, say they, and we will Report.* And it must needs proceed from a *Malicious* Spirit, to receive & believe such Reports upon slighty grounds, and that we rejoyce in evil & anothers harm; whereas we are told, 1 Cor 13. 5. *Charity thinketh no evil.* When every *Whisperer* shall prejudice us against one, whose Life is otherwise Regular & becoming, is very singular, and a readiness to believe an Untruth: And this is further aggravated when we Divulge such Reports, and spread them abroad on such slighty grounds, as the *Whispers* of Tale-bearers, who themselves mean while are not willing to be known; whereas we ought to *Reprove* them, and shew our real Displeasure at them, according to, Prov. 25. 23. *The north-wind driveth away rain: so doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.* Yea, and not to appear in the Vindication of our Neighbour, when we *Know* him to be Injured, and are able to clear up his Innocence, is to suppress the Truth, when we are called to appear for it; and argues too much, that we are Glad of his Reproach, or Envy his Good Name. These things the very Moral Heathen have declaimed against, as being contrary to the very light of Nature.

V. *UNDUE Suspicions, Evil Interpretations, and Overstraining Aggravations of the Faults of Others.* These also tend to unjust Infamy, and tend to Mischiefs, and not a little hurt the Tranquillity of humane Society. There is in some more than in others, a *jealous* Spirit, that is apt to surmize Evil without good reason, in all their Neighbours Words, Looks and Gestures; and that too readily puts them upon rash Judgment, and resolving that there is some *ill* design or other in it, & accordingly they construe all; and because they are *Suspicious*, the other must needs be *Criminal*, which is a very Unreasonable Inference, and it flows from a naughty heart. For however the Natural Constitution may encline some to it more than others, yet it is nourished by Original Sin: and there is too much reason to suppose, that such Measures others by themselves, which is a Fallacious Rule. How often do we put a *sense* upon Words, which they can in no tolerable sense bear? How often do we *mistake* Words to be spoken which never were? How often do we put a *Bad* Interpretation on Words or Actions, which are as capable of bearing a *Good* one, and possibly more probable? How frequently do we make *Beams* of *Motes*, and look thro' a Microscope of Suspicion, and blow up an *Infirmity* into a *Crime*, and an *Inadvertency* into a piece of *Malice*; and emblazon every *Folly* and *Frailty*, as if it were the most prodigious *Villany*? Hence Anger, Hatred, Quarrelling with our Neighbours for things which are *Innocent*, and were far from any *evil* design: this would not be, if we valued Truth, according to its worth.

VI. THIS Command may be many ways broken *in the Management of Civil Judicature.* That *this* Command hath a special regard in it, to direct to a right Management of such Affairs, hath been already observed; and because the Duties referring to *this* have been particularly laid forth, I shall only touch at the more notorious *Breaches* which may here be committed.

1. IN respect of *Judges.* It is a Violation of this Command for such, to receive *Bribes* to blind their Eyes, and engage them to Favour ones Cause, whether right or wrong; to *Daunt* the person on Trial with Threatnings, and Menacing Words; to Deny him the free Liberty to plead his Cause, and clear up his Innocence as far as he may; to have any *Respect of Persons* in Judgment, and pronounce the Sentence accordingly; to put a *wrong* sense upon the *Law* to clear the *Guilty*, or condemn the *Innocent*; to condemn a person without clear Legal Testimony, such as the Word of God approves for such; to put a wrong Name and Title upon a *Crime*, either to Moderate, or Aggravate the Penalty; to condemn any by an *Unjust* Law: for in all these is the *Truth* injured, and the God of Truth dishoured by such as do bear an Image of His Authority upon them.

2. IN respect of *Jurors*; who are either to *Enquire after* a Cause presented to them, for putting persons upon Trial; or to *Judge of*, and give in their Verdict about the Matter of Fact in order to the determination of the Cause, or finding the person *Guilty*, or otherwise. The *former* of these do break *this* Precept, if they Expose persons to be estaged upon Trivial accusation and without a fair probability of their being found legally Guilty;

if

if they do not make a due Enquiry into the *Quality* of the Crime alledged, and candidly compare it with the Law; if they do not use proper endeavours to know, not only the Number, but also the Qualities of the Witnesses, and the Agreement of their Evidence: And the *Latter* are alike Guilty, if they agree to a Verdict, when in their Consciences they are perswaded that it is *not* right, or are born down with private Prejudices, or are not satisfyed in the Validity of the Thing Testifyed, to prove the Matter of Fact, but are Determined by meer Presumptive Probabilities.

3. IN respect of *Advocates*. They may several ways be Guilty of offering Injury to the *Truth*, more especially, when they undertake the Defence of a Cause which is apparently *Unjust*, and tends to the wrong of the *Innocent*, and clearing of the *Nocent*; when they use endeavours to Blind a *good* Cause, or put a Fair Face upon one that is *bad*, by tricks & quillets; when they use endeavours to stop the Course of Justice, and Delay the bringing of Matters to an Issue, to the hurt & vexation of those who are Righteous in their Cause; when they for filthy Lucre sake prompt Men to Litigious Sutes, and over-skip the Honest & Religious Courses of preventing troublesome and chargable Controversies; when they deal *Deceitfully*, in drawing up Writs for their Clients, purposely leaving *Flaws* in them, to leave room for *Non-sutes*, or altering the true state of the Cause. In a word, when they do not carefully Study and Pursue the Glory of God, and the good of Men concerned in the Cause they ingage in.

4. IN respect of *Witnesses*, which are made use of, to *clear up* Matters of Fact, which are under a Civil Trial. These also may be sinfully Guilty of the Breach of *this* Precept, when they give Testimony to a thing which they know not by their *own* knowledge, but upon *Report* from *Others*, or their own meer surmizes; when they Testify but to *Part* of the Truth, suppressing that which is necessary to the Case for which it is given, and will give a Misrepresentation of it; when they hold their Peace, and withdraw their Testimony, when either the Glory of God, or the concern of their Neighbour requires it of them; by which means, either Sin is not detected for a due punishment, or a Righteous Man in his Cause is Oppressed, for want of his declaring what he *knows*. These, and other things of like Nature are Sins of no small Guilt, and tend not only to private wrong, but publick Mischief, in the Places where such Men live.

VII. THIS Command is broken by *Mens Flattering of themselves or Others, in their sinful Ways or Courses*. A *Flatterer* is always a *Liar*, because he *Commends* that which ought to be *Reproved*, and *Justifies* that which deserves to be *Condemned*, and it is certain that Deceit is in the bottom of all these things, and that is quite contrary to *Truth in the inward Parts*, which all Men ought to maintain, *Psal.* 51. 6. And a Man may Flatter Himself, and that either in respect of his State or Actions; if a Man judgeth himself to be in a State of *Grace*, when he is in a State of *Nature*, that is a *False* Judgment, and there is a *Ly in his Right Hand*; he judgeth not of himself according to *Truth*, but *Falsehood*, and perverts the Rule according to which he ought to judge himself: and if we judge that our Actions are pleasing to God, when they are False & Hypocritical, and done with a dissembling heart; we are false to Our selves, when we *Pretend* one thing, and *Intend* another: We compass God with Lies, much more then, when we justify our sinful Actions, and bear our selves up with vain and trivial Excuses, promising our selves that God will accept them, and not lay Sin to our charge. Again, when we flatter *Others* in their Sin, Encourage them with *false Hopes*, *Commend* them for such things as we should *Rebuke* them for, sew Pillows under their Arms, call their *Vices*, *Vertues*, and sooth them up in an high opinion of themselves, and thereby encourage them to live in their *Natural* State, and pursue those Courses which tend to destruction: We cannot offer them a greater Injury, because hereby we expose them, as far as we can, to suffer Eternal Vengeance.

VIII. *By Revealing and Publishing of those things which ought to be kept Secret*. There are some things which we Promise *Secresy* in, and the Revealing of these belongs to promise-breaking; and there are other things which Duty and the Command of God, bind us not to divulge to anothers Reproach; and tho' this doth not directly contradict *Veracity*, yet it doth *Fidelity*, which belongs to *this* Command. It also is a Violation of the Duty which is generally reduced hither, *viz.* a regard to our *Own* and our Neighbours *Good Name*, which by this is disregarded. It is true, we ought together with our Charitable Allowances for each others Infirmities, to Rebuke one another for more *bold* Transgressions; and of what weight this is, appears from, Lev. 19. 17. *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.* But in all this we are bound to seek our Neighbours *Good*, and not *Hurt*, his *Recovery*, and not his *Reproach*; and for that reason to keep such things *Private*, till the Rule requires us to make them *Publick*. Hence our Saviour's direction is, Mat. 18. 15. *Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee & him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.* And we are acquainted that it belongs to the Nature of true *Charity*, 1 Pet. 4. 8. *Charity shall cover the multitude of sins*. This Rule therefore is broken, when in stead of seeking to salve a Man's Reputation, by his Recovery, we proclaim his Disgrace by telling *all* we know of him abroad; instead of telling him, to his *Face*, of his Faults, with meekness, we vilify him Behind his *Back*, which is a discovery of his hatred: how much more then, when in *Distress of Mind*, and under a burdened Conscience, he Unbosoms himself to us, for our pity, and counsel, and prayers, we Blab that to others, which we ought to have kept in perpetual silence: and what Tragedies

such Treachery hath occasioned in the World, is hard to tell.

IX. BY *Dissembling our Religion in Times of Persecution, or for fear of Suffering.* It is true, a Man is not always called to come in Publick, and declare his Religion, to expose himself to the Cruelties of Men; and those zealous Christians who are recorded to have done so in the Primitive Persecutions, either did it by an extraordinary Spirit, or else were acted by a misguided Zeal: And we are assured, that it is sometimes Lawful and a Duty for the People of God, to save themselves by *Flight* or *Absconding*, as those did, *Heb.* 11. 37, 38. But when Men are called in Question for their Religion, and appear before Judges for their Profession, for them now to *Dissemble*, and suppress their Faith; and Deny, or not plumply to Confess it, whatsoever they are menaced withal, in case they stand by it, it is *Falsehood*: it is Falsehood to *God*, and to the Covenant which they have plighted with Him; and Falsehood to their *own Consciences*, which gave them the Ly in the very Fact: And we know what our Saviour Christ hath denounced against such, Mark 8. 38. *Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.* And therefore we have that Exhortation given, when *Christianity* was Persecuted with the greatest Virulence, 1 Pet. 3. 15. *Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.* For tho' the Church may sometimes be *Latent*, and the open Profession of the *Truth* be suppressed, yet every true Christian ought to maintain Heart Integrity, and not forego it whatsoever befalls him, but commit himself to the all-governing Providence of God, and count it his glory to suffer for Him, when called to it: Hence that, 1 Cor. 15. 58. *Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

X. THIS Command is also violated, By Men's *Breaking their Promises.* God indeed reserves a Power in His hands, and Rules over all our Concerns by His Providence; and if He pleaseth can evacuate our Promises, without our Blame; and His Sovereignty is here to be adored. But there are ways, wherein we may make our selves Guilty in this regard, by our offering Indignity to the Truth in regard of them: And tho' there are some Promises that are better broken, than kept; and as it is a Sin to *make* them, so it would be a greater Sin to *perform* them; yet, if we make them Lawfully, and it would be no Moral Evil to accomplish them, tho' it may be to our outward Loss, all Fallaciousness and Falseness in these, is an Evil, and will bring us under the Guilt of *Lying*; but this is sufficiently laid down under the *former* Question: Here only, there is a CASE which our Adversaries have made it needful for us a little to deliberate, *viz.*

Quest. *WHETHER Christians are obliged to keep their Promises with Hereticks?*

Answ. THIS some *Papists* do strenuously *Deny*, and strongly Plead, that it is Lawful to break such Covenants and Obligations, and that God is not provoked, but pleased by our so doing. Some indeed express their Tho'ts more closely, and seek to cover it under a *Distinction*, and limit it to such things as they ought not to Promise to them; but if we consider withal, that they allow no Civil Converse Lawful with such, it will amount to the same; and therefore, if sometimes they are constrained to do it in *Fear*, the Promise binds not, it amounts to the same thing. I shall not here dispute, that they whom they call *Hereticks*, are the faithful Servants of Christ, and are *falsely* thus branded by them; but if we will observe, that tho' we acknowledge that unlawful Promises, to do things Wicked ought to be broken; yet we also assert, that they are not to be made, and if made, repented of, and avoided for the future; and so to make Promises to Men, and give Oath to Perform, meerly to ensnare them, and with a purpose to trapan them, and to boast of such Practices and defend them, is directly contrary to both the *Veracity* and *Fidelity* required in this Precept.

DOUBTLESS *This* Command was given in the Moral Law, in which Mankind are concerned; and it is necessary for the upholding of Humane Society as such. If therefore Men are not made out-Laws from Mankind, and thereby secluded from all Contracts or Covenants being made with them, (which if they be, there are no Promises to be made to them,) they ought to be treated according to the common Rules laid down for Men; which cannot be, unless Promises be sincerely made, and inviolably preserved. Nor are Men allowed to do *Evil*, that *Good* may come of it, as all *Lying* and *Promise-breaking* is. And tho' Christians ought to use laudable Endeavours to win *Pagans* and *Hereticks* to the acknowledgment of the *Truth*, yet *Treachery* and *Falsehood* is no lawful nor probable *Medium* for the Advancement of this Design; but is indeed an horrible Reproach and Scandal to those that make this to be an Article in their Faith. In a word, to allow and applaud the making Covenants with a sort of Men with whom they declare it *Unlawful* to keep them, meerly to be a snare to entangle them in Mischief, is an unparalel'd piece of horrible *Villany*, and renders the Defenders justly hateful to Mankind.

USE. LET the Consideration of what hath been said to this Precept, call us all, Young and Old, to make it our great *Endeavour to Maintain & Promove the Truth, in our whole Conversation.* Let us turn the Rules laid down, into so many Directions for our *constant Practice.*

AND

AND to instigate us to this, Consider,

1. *THIS is the way to be like God, and to please Him.* It is God's Glory which He assumes to Himself, that He is a *God of Truth*, and that He *cannot Ly*: Hence we are told, Tit. 1. 2. *In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began.* Heb. 6. 18. *It was impossible for God to lie.* And God hath declared His Approbation of this in Men: We are told, Psal. 51. 6. *Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts.* These shall *dwell in his Tabernacle*, Psal. 15. 2. This makes Men fit for *Publick* Service, *Exod.* 18. 21. And we are told, Prov. 12. 19. *The lips of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment.*

2. *OUR sinful Natures prompt us to Falsehood. Lying* is rooted in the Corrupt Nature of Man, as he derives from sinful *Adam*, and it is *Universal*, Rom. 3. 4. And there are the *Remains* of this in the *Best*, whilst they carry about with them this Body of Death; and therefore *David* Prays to have it Cured in him, Psal. 119 29. *Remove from me the way of lying; and grant me thy law graciously.* And how often do we find the *Best* of Men on Scripture Record to have been overtaken with this, in an Hour of Temptation? And this tells us, that we have the more need to use great Caution and Circumspection about it.

3. *THE vice of this, is the misery and bane of humane Society. Truth* is the Cement and Bond of Converse between Men; and without it Men cannot Live together in any Safety, but must always stand upon their Guard. Men must always live in Suspicions and Jealosies, and not know how to put a Difference between Friends and Enemies; and to trust one another would be an Argument of Distraction, as being always in hazard of being betrayed; which would be to turn the World into a Wilderness; and a *false Friend*, is worse than an *open Enemy.*

4. *OUR Credit among Men principally depends on this Truth.* If once a Man forfeit his Esteem for *Truth*, he is a Lost Man to the World; if he gains the Reputation of a *Liar*, he is the scorn of all Men, and every one stands off from him as a common *Pest*: And let him make never such pretence of Piety, it gives him the more Disgrace, and leaves a stain upon his highest Profession: And if he is *False* to his *Word*, his *Oath* and most solemn Protestations are not regarded.

5. *THE most fearful Judgments of God are denounced against Liars.* All Miseries wait upon them in *this World*, Psal. 120, 3, 4. *What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper.* And, 52. 3, 5. *Thou lovest evil more than good, and lying rather than to speak righteousness. Selah. God shall likewise destroy thee for ever, he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling-place, and root thee out of the land of the living. Selah.* And Everlasting Plagues are reserved for them in the *World to come*, Rev. 21. 8. *All liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.* Psal. 5. 6. *Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man.*

LET us then be very Watchful over our selves; labour we to Mortify this Lust in us, and set a Guard upon our *Hearts* and our *Lips*. Let us get and maintain a Love for the *Truth*, and preserve it as the most choice Jewel Thus may we preserve the Favour of God, have great inward Tranquillity in our Consciences, uphold our Credit among Good Men, and appear with Comfort before the great Judge, who loveth *Truth*, and abhorreth *Lying*, and will Reward Men accordingly.

[APRIL 2. 1706.]

SERMON CCX.

QUESTION LXXIX.

WHICH is the Tenth Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Tenth Commandment is, *Thou shalt not Covet thy Neighbours House, thou shalt not Covet thy Neighbours Wife, nor his Man-Servant, nor his Maid-Servant, nor his Ox, nor his Ass, nor any thing that is thy Neighbours.*

IT was *formerly* observed in the *Introduction* to the opening of the Commands of the Decalogue, That every one of these Commands hath a *distinct* Subject about which our Obedience is required. And this may be a good general Rule to direct us in our Enquiry after the special mind and meaning of *This* Command.

BEFORE I proceed to a *distinct* handling of it, there are Two things that must be a little enquired into; *viz. Whether it be* One *Command, or* Two? And, *What is the Subject particularly designed in it?* Because in both these Points there are Disputes.

1. THE *Papists* who have for a *Wicked* Design, made but *One* Command of the *First* and *Second*, to keep up the number of *Ten*, have made *Two* of this *Last*; and their main Defence of this Partition, is the mentioning of the Prohibition *Twice*, which would not be, as they suppose, unless they were *Two*. But this is of no force; The thing *It self* forbidden, is

the same, as to the Nature of it, and is only distinguished by the several Objects; which Distinction doth not alter the Nature of the Precept it self; for if they did, we must make so many Precepts of it, as there are particular sorts of things offered; & how many must be contained in the last Words? Besides, If we should make *Two* of them, then the Order will be inverted; for what in *Exod.* 20. is made the *Ninth*, is the *Tenth* in *Deut.* 5. making the *First* and *Second* but *One*: And *Concupiscence* is the same for Kind, whether it be set upon a *Delectable*, or a *Profitable* Object, which is their Distinction.

2. BUT then there is a matter of *greater* weight, to consider what is directly intended in the *Covetousness*, which is the Subject of the Command. The Word here used for *Coveting*, properly signifies, *vehemently to Desire* a thing, and is used in Scripture *Æquivocally*, sometimes in a *Good*, sometimes in a *Bad* Sense. *Desire* it self is an *Affection*, which is put into the Creature, and was for *Use*, and is therefore in *it self* Good, as all the Powers which God did put into His Creatures are. And in *Man* these Affections are necessary for the Will to execute it's *Imperate* Actions by.

BUT these Affections being in Men, put under the Government of the Understanding and Will, are subjected to the Rule of *Special Government*, and are either *Good* or *Evil* Morally, according as they are Subject to, or Rebelling against the Moral Law; and that not only in respect of the *Actions*, but the *Disposition* too of these *Affections*, which is lodged in them, whether they be exercised or no. So that *this* Command doth not forbid *all* Desires, but only such as are *Irregular*, and contrary to the Rules which God hath prescribed to them, in His holy Law. For *Desire* it self is Natural to Man, as he is Man, tho' in sinful Man there is a depravation on them, as in all the other Powers in him.

BUT then it remains a Question, *In what respect these do peculiarly belong to* this *Command, distinctly from any* other *Command in the Decalogue*? And there are different thoughts about it.

SOME think, that the *Other* Commands of the *Second* Table forbid the *External Actions*, which are prohibited in them; but *This*, the *Inward Motions* and stirrings of the Heart about them, before they are perpetrated; and the *Pharisees* thought, that if they abstained from the *outward* Act, they were blameless; against which Christ says, Matth. 5. 28. *But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.* But this cannot be the thing intended, for the *Law is spiritual*, Rom. 7. 14. And every particular Precept forbids the Sin in the *Heart*, as well as the *Life*: He that Lusts after another Man's Wife, breaks the *Seventh* Command directly.

OTHERS reduce it to *Original Sin*, supposing that all the Acts of Sin, with respect to our *Neighbour*, are prohibited in the *Five* fore-going Commands respectively, but that Original Sin, which is the Root from which they all proceed, is forbidden in *this*: And that, in this regard, it comprehends all the several Objects, about which the *other* are severally concerned; and they infer it from that of *Paul*, Rom. 7.7. *What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.* As if he Justified his Actions, so far as they referred to the particular Precepts, only by this *Tenth* he found them sinful. But this also is a mistake; for the whole Law in every Precept, requires perfect Sanctification in the Man, without which he cannot Obey any Command, according to the Perfection required in it; it supposeth that the Man *had*, and chargeth him with Guilt, because he now *hath not*, that Integrity, which was once put into him; thro' the Loss whereof he Sins in all that he doth, and cannot stand the Trial of the Law in any Duty: So that Original Sin in fallen Man, stands Arraigned for every Defeat, in every thing which he medleth withal: Hence that, Rom. 7. 20. *Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.* Whereas there is something in *this* Command, which is Diverse from what is in the *other*, which makes it a *Distinct* Precept.

OTHERS there be, who refer it to the *first stirrings* of *Concupiscence* in us, with respect to a forbidden Object; and in this a great many Judicious Divines do determin it.

THERE are *three* steps observed in the Production of a *sinful Action*, there are the *First stirrings* in the Mind, wherein a Motion is offered to draw the Will to comply with it; there is an *Inclination* in the Mind towards it, which puts the Man upon *Deliberation*; and there is the *Choice* of the Will, by which it embraceth the Motion, or Consents to the doing of it: And when this *last* Act is past, the Conception of the Sin is ready for the Birth, and waits but for an Opportunity. As to the Two *last* of these, they are generally acknowledged to be Sin by our Adversaries; but the *former* they Deny to be Sin at all; supposing these Motions to arise from the Inferiour Powers of the Flesh, which they say were in *Adam* at First. But all the *Orthodox* do say, and prove, that these *First* Motions tho' resisted as soon as started, cannot be without Sin; which it would be too great a Digression here to Insist upon, except it were to the present Purpose, which I think it is not.

BUT several are of Opinion, That these are the very things which this Command immediately intends; and that the other refer to the several Commands, to which the things themselves do refer.

BUT the *Answer* given to the *former*, may here suffice, *viz. That if these Motions are the First born of Original Sin, and are the Ebullitions of it, then the same Command that forbids Original Sin, forbids them too*: And must therefore

fore needs refer to the *same* Command, which the Overt Acts do come under the Cognizance of; and so cannot be the distinguishing Note of this Command from the rest.

THAT therefore we may Essay to come at the thing designed, I shall offer the following *Conclusions*, which will at least amount to a fair probability of the meaning of the Command:

1. THAT this Precept *belongs to the* Second *Table of the Moral Law, and is to be restrained to That.* All the things mentioned in the Body of the Command, are terminated on our *Neighbour*, and are therefore proper to the *Second great* Command, which our Saviour saith, *is like to the First*, in *Matth.* 22.39. And it is apparent that Christ divides these *Two* with regard to the *Next* and *Immediate* Object, about which these are to be exercised; *God* being the Object of the one, and our *Neighbour* of the other; altho' it is certain, that God is the *Ultimate* Object of both, for both Obedience and Sin, have their Denomination, as such, with respect to Him who is our Lord and Lawgiver. Psal. 51. 4. *Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.* And who is to be understood by our *Neighbour*, we formerly considered, and may again glance at in the sequel.

2 THAT *This Command comprehends under it all the Objects pointed at in each of the foregoing Precepts of this Table.* What these are, we have taken an Account severally, in the handling of them, and wherein they differ one from the other. And that they are here referred to, is evident from the very Words used: Some of them are mentioned, as *House*, *Wife*, *Servants*, and all the rest are comprized in the *General*, *Any thing that is his*: *q. d* If there is any thing else, which is to be thought of, in which thy *Neighbour* is concerned, this *Coveting* about it, is here Prohibited, as if it were distinctly named. And we before observed, That the Words of every Command in the *Decalogue* are *Synechdochical*, inasmuch as they comprehend the whole Moral Law under them; for it was that whole Law which was revived at Mount *Sinai*, *Exod.* 20.

3. THAT hence, *It must have some distinct Respect to these Objects, from what was proper to those Commands.* The reason of this seems to be Cogent, because otherwise *this* Command would be *Superfluous*; for tho' it be true, that the *same* Duty may in diverse respects, be enjoyned in several Precepts, yet they are not to be conceived to belong to more than *One*, in the same respect; for so one Command would be confounded with another, which is not agreeable to the Infinite Wisdom of God in giving the Law. So that it is not enough to say such a thing is Commanded or Forbidden by *this* and *that* Precept; but if we would be distinctly acquainted with the Mind of God, we must enquire after what manner it refers to *this*, and how to the *other*.

4. HENCE it follows, *That the thing aimed at, is something wherein we either express our Love or our Hatred to our Neighbour.* For one of these belongs to every Command of the *Second* Table, the *former* attaining to the *Affirmative*, the *other* to the *Negative* part of the Precept. Now the Apostle hath plumply assured us of this in, Rom. 13. 9. *For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet*; *and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.* And hath given us this reason for the Confirmation of it, in Ver. 10. *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore Love is the fulfilling of the law.* And this he doubtless gathers from our Saviour's laying open of the Law, in the fore-cited, *Matth.* 22. 37, *&c.* So that in the breaking of *this* Command, that *Love* which God requires of us to *Men*, is directly transgressed against, and thereby comes under the Definition of *Sin*, 1 Joh. 3. 4. *Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.*

5. THAT *though this Command be delivered with respect to the Inward Motions of the Heart, yet it hath its External Actions which refer to it.* There is this Difference in the Mode of Expressing of *This*, from that of the *other*, that it nextly speaks of *Coveting*, which we observed intends the stirrings of *Concupiscence* within, and doth not mention any outward Deed; whereas the *other* do directly speak of the *Action* it self, and not of the framing of the Mind and Affections; but, as under *These* the *other* is Comprehended, as hath formerly been Proved, so in *This* are *these* contained; and this may be the Apostle's meaning in the fore-cited *Rom.* 7. 7. Because in his *Pharisaical* State he was deluded with the Vulgar Error, that if he performed the Matter of Duty, and abstained from the Overt Acts of Sin, he was Blameless; and this is the meaning of that, Acts 23.1. *And Paul earnestly beholding the councel, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God, until this day.* But when he better Meditated on this Precept, he found himself Deceived, because he was now Convinced, that the Law, in all it's Precepts, required the *Heart*, and the having of a Sanctify'd Principle in it; and that every Command was broken, as well by the Inward stirrings of the *Heart*, as by the breaking out of such Motions in the *Life*: And not, as some have thought, that every such Motion belonged peculiarly to *this* Command, and were not a Breach of any *other*: For as he ascribes Spirituality to the whole Law, *Ver.* 14. so he applies the Resistance of Sin in him, as the Obstruction of his aright performing every Duty which is Good, *Ver.* 21. Nor is *this* Command restrained to *Inward* stirrings, but it also requires the suitable *Actions*, and forbids such as are contrary; which, what they are will be considered in the sequel.

6. HENCE

6. HENCE it seems that the thing here aimed at, *is something that is a Resultancy from all the rest, and yet distinct from them.* It is not a thing inconsistant, that out of a great many Duties laid together, there may be one great Duty gathered, which is something Different from them, and that not only in the *Degree* of it, as some would make it here, and therefore tell us that this Precept requires the most Intense *Degrees* of that *Love* which is required in every of the rest; but, whether the *Maxim* be universally true, that *Degrees* do not vary the *Kind*, which some Dispute in point of Morals; yet this must be acknowledged, that every Command requires *Perfection* in regard of the Duties enjoyned by it; and so there needs not a special Command to oblige us to this Intenseness, because it is included in the Command it self: The same Command that binds us to *Love God*, binds us to do it with *All our Heart*, and that which requires us to *Love our Neighbour*, directs us to *Love him as our selves.*

7. FROM the Premises it follows, that the thing here required is, *a suitable Frame & Deportment in respect of our selves & others, with respect to the Providence of God, in both regards.* That the Man *himself* is an Object referred to, in all the Commands of the *Second* Table, yea and *primarily* so, hath been formerly sufficiently proved; the thing therefore intended, must refer to the Man *Himself*, as well as to his *Neighbour*, else how shall he make his Love of *Himself*, the Pattern of his Love to *another*? Now if we sequester what is pointed at in the *other*, there seems nothing else to Remain for *this*, but a Consideration of the Providence of God, so far as it concerns the Affairs of this *Love*; and that as both we *our selves* and our *Neighbours* are concerned in it, and are the Subjects on whom it terminates: It therefore directs to our suitable Deportment thereto, according as the Over-ruling Providence of God determines it; which, what it is, will come be considered in the laying open of the *Affirmative* and *Negative* part of the Precept.

Question LXXX.

WHAT is required in the Tenth Commandment?

Answer.

THE Tenth Commandment requireth full Contentment with our own Condition, with a right and charitable frame of spirit towards our Neighbour, and all that is his.

WE before observed, That *this* Command, in the manner of Wording it, nextly strikes at the *Inward Motions* of the *Heart*, tho' not excluding, but supposing the *Outward Actions* in which the thing is discovered: We may therefore Consider it with a peculiar respect to the *former*, in which we may observe the rise of the *latter*.

HERE then observe, That there is a *double* Condition of this *Life*, in which Men are concerned, which comes under the General Denomination of *Prosperity* and *Adversity*, the *one* whereof bears the Consideration of *Good*, the *other* of *Evil*. Now these may be considered, either as they are ordered by the governing Providence of *God*, who is the Supream Disposer of all the Affairs of Men, and under that respect the Duty incumbent on us, refers to the *First* Table, and the *First* Command in it; or else as we *Our selves* and our *Neighbours* are nextly concerned in them, and so they belong to *This* Command in the *Second* Table. Now we are here acquainted with a *double* Duty, the one in regard to *Our selves*, the other referring to our *Neighbour*.

I. WITH respect to *Our selves*; it requires of us, *full Contentment with our own Condition*: And that when we compare *Ours* with that of *Others*, the State wherein we are, or the Lot which befals *us* in this World, satisfies us, whatsoever the Lot of *other Men* may be: So that the great Vertue here prescribed is *Contentation*, which is a thing to be learned from Above; and therefore the Motives to it, must be fetch'd from God, and learnt of Him: Hence that, Phil. 4. 11. *For I have learned in whatsoever State I am, therewith to be content.* Nor ought the contrary Condition of our *Neighbour* move us to any exorbitant Thoughts, or Carriages, with respect to our *Own*; but we ought to rest satisfied in it, as that which is *Best* for us. Now this *Contentation* hath a respect both to *Prosperity* and *Adversity*; for in both of these there is required a due exercise of it; and it consists in the setting such Bounds to the Desires of our *Hearts* after these things, so as that we can Acquiese in them, whether it be *More* or *Less* of them, which falls to our share: If we have *Much* of this World, it doth not lift us up, and if we have but a *Little*, it doth not sink us down, but we Contentedly take all things as they come; not placing our *Happiness* in the Fruition, nor reckoning our selves *Miserable* in the Absence of them.

NOW this *Contentment* may be Considered,

[1.] *Negatively*, in *Three* particulars,

1. *IT doth not forbid us to entertain all Providences with suitable Resentments.* It is the Wise Man's Advice, Eccl. 7. 14. *In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider.* *Prosperous* Providences are suited to our Cravings, and we count them *Good*, and are glad of them; *Adversity* is a thing irksome to us, and is wont to Grieve us: Nay God useth these, either to *Encourage* or *Chasten* His People; and not to lay these things to Heart, is an Argument of *Stupidity*. Religion doth not require Men to be *Stoicks*, and to make no Difference between the *Smiles* and *Frowns* of Providence: He therefore Complains of them, Isa. 42. 25. *Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battel; and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.*

2. NOR

2. *NOR doth it make it Unlawful for us, to Apprecate Favour, and Deprecate Affliction.* God hath made *Prayer* to be a great Medium of Communion between Him and His People, in which they are to preſent their *Petitions* to Him, for all that they ſtand in need of; in which they are to lay their Reſentments before Him, and therein to teſtify their entire Dependance on Him for all Good: He therefore bids us to Ask of Him the Good things that we Need, *Zech.* 10. 1. And to call upon Him for help when we are in Trouble, *Pſal.* 50. 15. We cannot but Deſire theſe things; and we ought to Acknowledge that He only can Anſwer them, and accordingly to Supplicate Him for them.

3. NOR doth it prohibit us, *The uſing of proper Means for Obtaining the one, or Avoiding the other.* As He hath made it our Duty to Pray, becauſe all our Succeſs depends upon Him, ſo he hath appointed the Means, which He would have us to Attend, in order to ſpeeding; in which according to the ordinary Courſe of His Providence, He is wont to Communicate the Bleſſing. To uſe *Means* without *Prayer*, argues Atheiſm, and a Contempt of God; and to Pray and neglect Duty in uſe of theſe Means, is a token of Preſumption: Hence that Exhortation, Pſal. 37. 3. *Truſt in the Lord, and do good, ſo ſhalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou ſhalt be fed.*

[2.] *Affirmatively*, IT comprehends theſe things in it,

1. *A Chearful Acquieſcence in the Condition which God diſpoſeth for us.* It is a Duty lying on the Children of God, 1 Theſ. 5. 16. *Rejoyce evermore.* And therefore all Godly Ones are ſo Commanded, Pſal. 33. 1. *Rejoyce in the Lord, O ye righteous, for praiſe is comely for the upright.* And we find this to be a Duty lying upon us in the worſt and moſt diſmal Times that paſs over us, as the Prophet emphatically Expreſſeth himſelf, Hab 3. 17, 18. *Although the fig-tree ſhall not bloſſom, neither ſhall fruit be in the vines, the labour of the olive ſhall fail, and the fields ſhall yield no meat, the flock ſhall be cut off from the fold, and there ſhall be no herd in the ſtalls. Yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my ſalvation.* Our Condition may be Troubleſome to the Fleſh, and our Carnal Reſentments may diſturb our Tranquillity, and put us into Diſquietment; but we ought to reſiſt ſuch Motions in us, and endeavour to entertain all with a ſedate Mind, and chide down all ſuch moleſtful Regrets; Pſal. 42. 5. *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul? and why art thou diſquieted within me? hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God* It therefore is given as one of the Characteriſtical Notes of a Godly Man. Pſal. 112. 7, 8. *He ſhall not be afraid of evil tidings, his heart is fixed, truſting in the Lord. His heart is eſtabliſhed, he ſhall not be afraid.*

2. *A reſolving that our preſent Condition is now Beſt for us.* And this is a natural Reſultance from the former, and the proper Help to the practiſing of it: Nor can there be any true Satisfaction in the Providence, except we entertain ſuch an Apprehenſion of it; for Nature it ſelf reluctſ againſt *Evil*, and it cannot be compoſed, but by an Apprehenſion, that *Good* will come out of it: God therefore thus encourageth them, Jer. 24. 6. *For I will ſet mine eyes upon them for good.* We ought therefore to Believe, that there is *Good* in the bottom; and that tho' for the Preſent it be Grievous, and we lawfully ſeek a Riddance of it, in God's time, that yet it ſhall be Profitable for us, and it ſhall do us *Good* and not *Hurt* in the iſſue; tho' it is Bitter, yet it ſhall prove Wholeſome: Thus therefore he encourageth them in, Heb 12. 9, 10. *Furthermore, we have had fathers of our fleſh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: ſhall we not much rather be in ſubjection unto the father of ſpirits and live? For they verily for a few days chaſtened us after their own pleaſure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holineſs.*

3 THAT *we do entirely ſubmit all our Affairs to the Divine Diſpoſal.* We are to Believe that God Orders all the Affairs of this World, and of every particular Perſon in it; and that there is His holy Hand in all that comes to paſs: and that nothing can befall us without Him: He therefore expects of us an entire Reſignation to Him, of our Perſons and all our Concerns, and freely to leave every thing in His hand. It is He who diſpoſeth our Condition, and the Condition of others, as He ſees meet; and all is of Him, and this ought to pleaſe us: Thus we find him to reſign under a ſevere Commination, 1 Sam. 3. 18. *He ſaid, It is the Lord: let him do what ſeemeth him good.* Tho' we ſhould be glad if it might be otherwiſe, and we ſee Anger in the Diſpenſation, yet we are to give Him this Glory, to leave it with Him: Hence that, Pſal. 10. 14. *Thou haſt ſeen it, for thou beholdeſt miſchief and ſpite to requite it with thy hand: the poor committeth himſelf unto thee, thou art the helper of the fatherleſs.* What if I am in *Adverſity*, when my Neighbour flows in *Proſperity*, it is God's Pleaſure that it ſhould be ſo, and I am Content.

4. THAT *we duely Moderate our Affections both of Joy and Sorrow.* That there is a lawful Exerciſe of theſe, according to the face of Providence, we have already obſerved; and theſe Affections were put into us for ſuch an Uſe, and not to be eradicated; but ſtill there is a *Moderation* of them required, and neceſſary to be uſed, if we would maintain Chriſtian Contentment. There is an *over Rejoycing* which unfits us for the Entertainment of Adverſe Providences, that we have no Security againſt; which will therefore ſurprize us at unawares, and unfit us for entertaining them with a due compoſed frame of Spirit; as he confeſſeth, Pſal. 30. 6, 7. *And in my proſperity I ſaid, I ſhall never be moved. Lord, by thy favour thou haſt made my mountain to ſtand ſtrong: thou didſt hide thy face, and I was troubled.* And there is a *ſullen Sorrow* when Evil diſtreſſeth

us,

us, that we cannot ſee when Good comes, and thereupon we are not fit to entertain it with ſuitable Gratitude: We are therefore adviſed to carry it in reſpect of theſe Chequered Providences, with an Even Frame of Spirit, and due Temper of Mind; that tho' we do, we may not over-do, in any of theſe regards, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29, 30.

NOW to help us to, and in the Exerciſe of true *Contentation*, let me offer theſe Directions,

1. *LET us make ſure that God is our Father by a gracious Adoption.* There is no true *Contentment* without *Godlineſs*: It is therefore put as an inſeparable Concomitant of that, 1 Tim. 6. 6. *But godlineſs with contentment is great gain.* As long as we have God for our Enemy, we have no Quiet in our Minds, becauſe His Curſe is upon our Proſperity, and our Adverſity hath His Wrath written upon it: Hence that, Iſa. 57. 20, 21 *The wicked are like the troubled ſea, when it cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt up mire and dirt. There is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked.* But if we have this God for our God, we have therein good Security, for the Advantageous Iſſue of all things which befalls us in the preſent Life, Rom. 8. 28. *And, we know that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpoſe.* And certainly there cannot be a greater or more ſolid ground of Contentment afforded us, than this is; it ſaith, that we can be no leſs than *Happy*, let our Condition be what it will.

2. *LET us firmly Believe, that all which He doth to us, is the Product of His Wiſdom and Love.* God would have His Children to Believe, that when He afflicts them, it is becauſe He Loves them; Heb. 12. 6. *For whom the Lord loveth, he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth.* And ſurely what is done in Love, ought not to diſguſt us, but ſatisfy us. Much more then, when there is no Error or Miſtake in the Application; becauſe He who Loves us is infinitely Wiſe, and manageth all our Affairs according to the moſt mature Counſel, which cannot poſſibly miſtake; this compoſed the Pſalmiſts diſturbed Mind, and bro't him to a chearful Acquieſcence; Pſal. 73. 24. *Thou ſhalt guide me with thy counſel.* And with this God offers to quiet His People in the dark times of the Captivity, Jer. 29. 11. *For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, ſaith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.*

3. *LET us diligently obſerve, how Theſe things work to the furtherance of our Beſt Intereſt.* Our Diſcontents often flows from our Falſe reckoning; we eſteem of things according to Senſe, and the preſent Temporary Concerns before us, whence a Falſe Judgment neceſſarily follows. We are made for an Eternal Eſtate, and whatſoever is made ſerviceable to Advance that, is truly Good, and ſo is to be Valued; the *Proſperity* that hinders it, is *Evil*, the *Adverſity* that gives a lift to it, is *Good*; that which weans us from the Creature, engageth us in working out our own Salvation, helps us to more Diligence in laying up Treaſures in a better World, is certainly matter of Joy and Satisfaction: Hence that, 2 Cor 4. 17. *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*

4. *LET us therefore always Value our ſelves upon our Intereſt in another Life.* If we count our ſelves Happy or Miſerable according as our *Temporary* Affairs go, we can never enjoy any ſolid and unſhaken Contentment: But if we look upon our ſelves herein to be truly Happy, that the *Lord is our God*, that our Names are written in Heaven, that we are Heirs of the Kingdom, and look for a continuing City to come, and are only Pilgrims and Strangers here: This will be the way to poſſeſs our Souls, and be full of Inward Tranquillity in the moſt boiſterous Tempeſts; as knowing that our Life is hid with CHRIST in GOD; and that whatſoever we encounter in our Paſſage, ſhall moſt certainly turn to our Beſt Advantage.

[APRIL 30. 1706.]

SERMON CCXI.

II. WITH reſpect to *Others*; This Precept requires a *Right and Charitable Frame of Spirit*, &c. The Sum of this is, That we ought to Delight in our Neighbour's Proſperity, and by all ſuitable Expreſſions, Teſtify this Delight, as if it were our Own: And this is to be teſtified with reſpect to *All* his outward Concerns in this World, when we ſee the Bleſſing of God following him therein; and this ought to be, tho' we ſee that his Condition is *Better* than ours, tho' he hath a greater Affluence of theſe things than we have; tho' he is Rich and we Poor; tho' he is filled with outward Bleſſings, and we are in want of them; he dwells in a fair Houſe, and we in a poor Cottage; he hath his Wife, and Children, and Servants about him, and we are Bereaved.

HERE,

1. WE *ſhould be* Thankful *to God for it, and acknowledge His Kindneſs and Benignity therein, and teſtify our Joy in that regard.* This is the right Frame of a Godly Man: Hence the Pſalmiſt preſumes of this, Pſal. 119. 74. *They that fear thee will be glad when they ſee me: becauſe I have hoped in thy word.* And it is enjoyned on all Chriſtians as Duty, Rom. 12. 15. *Rejoyce with them that do Rejoyce.* And if our Spirits be Right, we ſhall eſteem that God is Kind to us, when we are ſo to *others*; if we do, as we ought, Love them as *our ſelves*. And if we are Glad with and for them, it is the way for us to reap the Good and Benefit of their Proſperity; for whatſoever we can truely Rejoice in, we are really Advantaged by. *Paul* could ſay, 2 Cor. 13. 9. *For we are glad when we are weak, and ye are ſtrong: and this*

alſo

also we wish, even your perfection. And this will hold as well in their *Temporal*, as *Spiritual* Good.

2. WE *should* Wish & Pray *for their Prosperity.* This also is one thing, in which our Love to them is to be expreſt; we ought not only to Pray for their Salvation, but their Welfare in this Life, and a Bleſſing from Heaven upon them, and all their Concerns: ſuch a wiſh we find the Apoſtle uſing concerning *Gaius*, 3 *Joh.* 2. And it was a Salutation approved of by God, with which His People ſhould entertain one another, not in Airy Complement, but with hearty wiſhes, *Peace be to you*, which comprehends all Temporal as well as Spiritual Bleſſings under it. Hence that direction given, Numb. 6. 23, 24. *Speak unto Aaron, and unto his ſons, ſaying, On this wiſe ye ſhall bleſs the children of Iſrael, ſaying unto them, The Lord bleſs thee, and keep thee.*

3. WE *ſhould alſo be* Grieved *for them, when they are brought into Adverſity.* When they meet with Frowns in God's Providence, Croſſes, Loſſes, Bereavements, we ought to ſhew them our Compaſſion and Mourn with and for them. Hence that, Rom. 12. 15. *Weep with them that weep.* And in this regard the Pſalmiſt Vindicateth himſelf, and aggravates the Guilt of his wicked Neighbours, Pſal. 35. 13, 14. *But as for me, when they were ſick, my clothing was ſackcloth: I humbled my ſoul with faſting, and my prayer returned into mine own boſom. I behaved my ſelf as tho' he had been my friend, or brother: I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.*

BUT it may here be objected; are theſe Duties Univerſal?

Queſt. MAY *we not Wiſh, Pray for & Rejoyce in the Adverſity of wicked Men, and thoſe that Hate us, and the Cauſe of Chriſt in the World?*

TO this let me briefly Anſwer,

Anſ THAT *Scripture Imprecations* are for the moſt part *Prophetical*, and are therefore generally uttered in the Future Tenſe, as Predictions: and ſometimes we find them uſed ſinfully, and therefore not for Imitation but Avoidance. And as to the matter it ſelf, it is obſervable, that Wicked Men are to be looked upon, either as being yet in a State of Nature, but carrying it Civilly among Men; or as they are our Perſonal Enemies, and treat us ſpiteſully and unworthily; or as the open Enemies, and Perſecutors of the Cauſe and Church of God in the World: and there is a diverſe reſpect to be had to theſe. As to Unregenerate Men in general, we are to Pray for them, and Long for their Converſion, and Rejoyce when we have hopes of it; and accordingly we ſhould be glad in their Welfare. As to our Perſonal Enemies, the Word of God is fully clear, that we ſhould reward them Good for Evil, and if they rejoyce in our hurt, we ſhould rejoyce in their good. Our Saviour hath given us a full clearing up of this Caſe, Matth. 5. 44. *But I ſay unto you, Love your enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which deſpitefully uſe you, and perſecute you*: And this in Oppoſition to the Phariſaical gloſs, in *v.* 43. *Ye have heard that it hath been ſaid, Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.* Finally, as to the Enemies of God & Godlineſs, who oppreſs the Church of God, and ſet themſelves with violence to ſuppreſs His Intereſt in the World: Doubtleſs we ought to pray God to Appear, and Plead His own Cauſe, and Check their Proſperity, or Succeſs in their Undertakings, and be glad when God breaks their Deſigns, and brings to nought their wicked purpoſes; and ſuch Imprecations are warranted in the Word of God. Nevertheleſs, as to their Perſons, we ought, as long as there is any hope, to reſerve ſuch a Love for them, as to Pray that they may be Converted, and ſo made to proſper. And we know that *Paul* whilſt a Phariſee was ſuch an one; and how glad were the People of God when he became another Man, Gal. 1. ult. *And they glorified God in me.* But as to others, we ought to Acquieſce in the Providence of God; and be well ſatisfied, as in His diſpenſations to us, ſo to them, tho' they abound when we are under the Hatches; tho' they have greater Gifts, Abilities, Favour among Men, Advancements to Offices, or whatever elſe of like nature, it ſhould pleaſe us well, becauſe the Sovereign, Wiſe, and Holy God, who hath all things at His diſpoſe, hath ſeen it meet that it ſhould be ſo; and becauſe it pleaſeth Him, we ſhould be well ſatisfied with it.

QUESTION LXXXI.

WHAT is forbidden in the Tenth Commandment?

ANSWER.

THE Tenth Commandment forbiddeth, all Diſcontentment with our own Eſtate, envying or grieving at the good of our Neighbour, and all inordinate motions and affections to any thing that is his.

WE obſerved in the Affirmative part of this Precept, that the Duties come under Two Comprehenſive Heads, *viz.* With reference to Our Selves, or to our Neighbours; accordingly the Sins Forbidden, are reduced in this Anſwer, and may be ſo taken up. Hence,

I. THE Sin with regard to *Our Selves*, is *all Diſcontentment with our own Condition.* By our Condition we are to underſtand, that Outward State which we are in with regard to the concerns of the Outward Man: and it is all manner of Diſcontent whatſoever, which undermines our Satisfaction in the wiſe diſpoſure of God; or makes our Neighbours better Condition an eye-ſore to us, that is Forbidden, as it carries a reflection on the Governing Providence of God, in the diſpoſal of Humane Affairs. Now we reduced the Outward Condition to Two Heads, *viz.* *Proſperity* and *Adverſity*, and in both regards this Diſcontent may be expreſſed.

1. THERE is a Diſcontent in *Proſperity*:

viz. When tho' our Condition be Proſperous, yet we cannot be ſatisfied with it, but are ſtill in diſreſt about it. There is not only a Craving after more, which refers to the *Eighth* Command, but we are Diſſatisfied and vexed at our Condition, as that which is not Good eno' for us, & find fault with it, as if we were Injured by it; either we think that we Deſerve better, and therefore cannot be thankful to God for what we have; or we ſee others in an higher Orb than we are, and we think we deſerve it as well as they do, and look on our ſelves as dealt *Partially* by; and thus God is tacitly impeached, as if He were a Reſpecter of Perſons; and we inſtead of Rejoycing in God's Goodneſs, are Leavened in our Minds, and loſe all the Good of what we do enjoy.

2. THERE is a Diſcontent in *Adverſity*: When, If we ſuffer any Croſs in outward Concerns, or are *Low* in the World, it ſo Diſquiets our Minds, as puts us beſides our ſelves, and from our Patience: We cannot bear our State, nor ſerve God with Chearfulneſs in it; but it diſturbs us in our Work, and we ſeek all irregular Courſes to get rid of it. Hence when we are in a Low Poſt, and we muſt and will Live Above it, and break any of the other Commands of God; rather than comply with God's Will manifeſted to us in His Providence, this is doubtleſs influenced with this Diſcontent: And indeed a want of Submiſſion to *this* Command, and a Rebellion in our Minds againſt it, is that which hath a powerful influence into our Tranſgreſſing of the *other*. And he that cannot reſolve, rather to ſuffer the greateſt Penury in the World, than Tranſgreſs any one of the Commands of God, is under the powerful influence of this ſinful Diſcontent. He that cannot ſay with *Paul*, Phil. 4.12. *I know both how to be abaſed, and I know how to abound: every where, and in all things I am inſtructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to ſuffer need*: hath not yet learned the Leſſon of Chriſtian Contentation. If we think, that if our Condition were otherwiſe, we could ſerve God cheerfully, but cannot do it in the preſent, we Cheat our ſelves. It was a ſaying of *Epicurus* himſelf, "He that thinks not "his own Eſtate, though ſmall, ſufficient for "him; tho' he ſhould be made Lord of the "whole World, would ſtill be Miſerable." And becauſe this *Diſcontent*, as it refers to *this* Command, ariſeth from our comparing our own Condition with others, tho' it leads us to Quarrel and Murmur againſt God's Government: It is therefore the Root of the Sins which refer to our *Neighbour*, and therefore is peculiarly to be regarded in our preſent Conſideration.

Hence,

II. THE Sins againſt this Command with reſpect to *Others*, are ranked under Two Heads, *viz.*

(1.) *ENVYING or Grieving at their Good.* By *Good* we are to underſtand their *Proſperity*; or their Enjoyment of any of the Good things of this Life; and that, whether *Abſolutely*, if they enjoy them at all; or *Comparitively*, if they have them with a greater Affluence than we have; they have more or better than we. *Envy* and *Grief* are here put together, as being the ſteps or degrees of the ſame Sin; or they may be conſidered as mutual Cauſes and Effects. If we *Envy* another his Condition, it will cauſe *Grief* in us at the Obſervation of it: and this *Grief* will naturally nouriſh *Envy*, and ſet it on Work to do ſome Evil thing in the venting of it. *Envy* therefore is forbidden in the Word of God as a miſchievous Evil, and that which is pernicious to Mankind; and we are told that it ariſeth from the Concupiſcence that is in the hearts of ſinful Men by Nature; Jam. 4.5. *The ſpirit that dwelleth in us luſteth to envy.* Of it we may take this Deſcription; *ENVY is, a Man's repining at his Neighbour's Proſperity, looking upon himſelf to be Hurt by it.*

And here we may obſerve,

1. THE *Object* of this Envy is *another's Good* or *Proſperity*: Men are not wont to Envy themſelves, nor yet the Miſery or Infelicity of their Neighbours; but it is ſome *Good* thing which they Enjoy; either their Wealth, or Health, or Honour, or any Gifts & Ornaments which God in His Providence beſtows upon them. Thus *Joſhua* Envied that *Eldad* and *Medad* ſhould Propheſy, *Numb.* 11. 29. Thus *Korah* and his Company Envyed *Moſes* and *Aaron* the Preferment which God had advanced them to, *Pſal.* 106. 16. And the Pſalmiſt confeſſeth, Pſal. 73. 3. *For I was envious at the fooliſh, when I ſaw the proſperity of the wicked.*

2. *IT is ſuch a Good of another, that doth not really Damnify us.* We indeed think it doth, but it is *Envy* that makes ſuch a Repreſentation of it to us. We are never the worſe in our ſelves, becauſe another enjoys a Proſperous Condition; it is of God that his State is ſuch, and it no way makes ours other than it is, but it is the ſame which God hath laid out to us, who is the Sovereign Diſpoſer of all His Gifts and Benefits. Nay, poſſibly we are really Benefited by it, we receive a great deal of Kindneſs and Charity from him; nevertheleſs we Envy him, becauſe he is able to do for us, and we muſt be beholden to him.

3. HENCE, *This Envy is, a Repining at his Proſperity.* If he is *Fat*, it makes us *Lean*, our Spirits are corroded by it, we are vexed by it, and our Minds are fill'd with inward Diſquietment, and cannot take reſt; and this produceth *Grief* in us, at the ſight and obſervation of it. The Word *Envy* ſignifies a *Looking into a thing*, and it ſuppoſeth an *Evil Eye.* Hence that, Matth. 20. 15. *Is thine eye evil, becauſe I am good.* He is always poring upon, and prying into his Neighbour's Comforts; and thereby he feeds his Malice againſt him, till he is ready to burſt with it. If our Neighbour Proſpers it makes us ſad; if

if he be Commended, we are Enraged; if he enjoys any thing Better than we do, we Hate him for it; if he do any worthy Action, we Malign him, as the wise Man observes, Eccl. 4. 4. *Again I considered all travel, and every right work, that for this a man is envied of his neighbour. This is also vanity, and vexation of spirit.*

4. THE Root of this Envy is, *We think our selves hurt by this Prosperity of our Neighbour.* Not that we are so, but we entertain such an Idea of it in our Minds, and thereupon think he stands in our way; and that we cannot bear. There is a Carnal Emulation in sinful Men, which moves them to Malign others, any thing which they have not, because they suppose that it Lessens them, and they stand in their way: This was the ground of *Joshua*'s Envy, *Numb.* 11. 29. This was the Reason of their Malice against *Daniel*, Dan. 6. 3, 4. And this ariseth from an Ambition of vain glory, which the proud hearts of sinful Men are possessed withal; he thinks therefore, that if any Good happen to another, there is a real Evil befallen him, and he Repines at it. Now the things wherein this Envy discovers it self, either in the Man, or to the World, are especially,

1. HE *inwardly Hates him for his Prosperity, and wisheth him all Mischiefs.* Envy & Malice are inseparable; and when a Man is Hated for any excellency he enjoys, either in the World's Goods and Preferments, or shining Gifts, Natural or Acquired, that is properly Envy, or the first born of it. This was *Cain's* hatred of his Brother, Envy at him, as, 1 Joh. 3. 12. *Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother: And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brothers righteous.* When that which is Good in another, makes him to be Maligned by us, it can proceed from nothing but Envy, which sucks Poyson out of the best Flowers: and that which is the first indication of this in the Man is, that he wisheth him Ill for this; instead of wishing his Prosperity, he longs for his Ruine; and nothing can better please him, than if he were out of the way: he cannot look upon him without Vexation of spirit, and often his very countenance betrays a Murderous heart; so did *Cain*, *Gen.* 4. 5. And if he should proceed no further, yet herein is he guilty of Transgressing this Command.

2. HE *Meditates his Mischief*: And this is a genuine Effect of the former. Where Hatred is entertained, it naturally and spontaneously studieth Revenge; and because the Envious Man thinks his Neighbour wrongs him, by being in a better Condition than he, he counts him to be a proper object of his Revenge: his inward workings on his heart are, how he may find out some way to Undermine his Prosperity, and bring him into a more obscure Condition, that he may no longer stand in his light. And in this he lays a foundation for Tragedies, and there wants nothing but a fair Opportunity for his bringing to pass his Devices, & giving being to his Plots; and no thank to him if he is prevented; and his Envy is acerbated, and made more intense, and virulent Heresy. Thus also *Cain* discovered his Malice against his Brother, in plotting his Death, and taking the Opportunity to prosecute it, *Gen.* 4. 8.

3. HE *pursues him with Destruction.* Possibly, he hath nothing else to revile him for, but his Prosperity; he therefore takes all Opportunities to undervalue it to others, by shewing jealousies & suspicions, which may tend to his reproach; and if he can find any thing, which he may fasten upon, that carries a discovery of an appearance of Evil, he husbands it to all advantage, and sets it forth with the blackest colours that he can put upon it. If he cannot deny his Neighbour's Excellency, he will put in something to allay it; if he commends him, 'tis always with an Exception, which shall take away all the Commendation; if another commends him, he hath something to throw in, which shall be a dead Fly in the Oyntment. Yea, he will for ever have some Fault to find with him, and after he hears any evil report of him, he spreads it, and if there be none, he will Forge it; and if he do not assert it, he will insinuate suspicions, to undermine him withal; and if he be observed, you shall hardly ever hear him speak any thing well of his Neighbour, without a sting in the Tail: And the too common practice of this among Men, is a clear discovery, how much this cancred Venome of Envy, lies wrankling in the breasts of Men.

4. HE *Rejoyceth in his Hurt*: And this follows by the Rule of Contraries. For he that Grieves at his Neighbours Welfare, he must needs be Glad at his faring Ill; he takes more Content in seeing Mischief befall another, than if he himself should prosper; nor can he take satisfaction in any thing, as long as he sees the other in Prosperity: His thoughts are as *Haman's* words declared, Esth. 5. 11, 13. *And Haman told them of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes & servants of the king. Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the kings gate.* If a loss befall him in his Estate, if he is crossed in any of his Comforts; if any Reproach befalls him, and he looseth the Favour of Men, and fall under any Obloquy, this is sport for him, and he can make himself Merry with it, as if he had found great Spoils. Of such as these the Psalmist complains, Psal 41. 8. *An evil disease, say they, cleaveth fast unto him: and now that he lieth, he shall rise up no more.* And, 35. 15. *But in mine adversity they rejoyced, and gathered themselves together: yea, the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and I knew it not; they did tear me, and ceased not.* *Job* therefore purgeth himself of this, in Vindication of himself, Job 31. 29 *If I rejoyced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lift up my self when evil found him.* Now they Insult, and Vaunt over them, as if they had obtained a triumph over them, and cry out, *Aha*, so would we have it. And doubtless, there is not a more detestable Vice to be found

in the World, and more carefully to be avoided & deteſted by us, being every way miſchievous: It is a thing moſt unreaſonable; to Envy Men the Proſperity which God beſtows upon them, is to Hate them without a Cauſe; or when they have offered us no real Affront or Provocation. It is an Affront offered to the Divine Sovereignty; it is God who lifts Men up, and puts them down; He is the Supream diſpoſer of all the Affairs of the Children of Men. It implies a fault found with His Government of the World, as if He dealt Unjuſtly, and did not diſtribute His Favours, either in Wiſdom or Righteouſneſs. It Envys God His Glory in the World, in that it is Angry if He be Glorified by another; becauſe he thinks that in ſo doing he out-ſhines him, and darkens his Light. It deſpiſeth and reflects upon the Gifts and Favours of God, as if they were Loſt, becauſe they are not Concentred in him. It endeavours to hinder Men from being Serviceable in their Capacities, who otherwiſe might do much Good in their Generation. It is far worſe and more harmful than Wrath or Anger, as, Prov. 27. 4. *Wrath is cruel, and anger is outragious; but who is able to ſtand before envy.* An *Angry* Man will let his Anger be ſeen, and ſo it may be avoided; but an *Envious* Man is like the Adder in the Path: An Angry Man will be appeaſed by a juſt Vindication; but the more Innocent the Party is, the more embittered is Envy. In a Word, *Envy* lays a foundation for all the Miſchiefs that are perpetrated in the World, and undermines the Peace and Tranquillity of Mankind. And let a Man ſtand in ſome Eminent Place, or do any thing to oblige Men to do him Honour, and teſtify their due Reſpects to him, *Envy* preſently is ſtirred by it; and it is the common Reward which Ungrateful Men do repay the greateſt Deſerts of Men withal. Surely then, it muſt be hateful to God, and ought to be ſo to all Good Men.

(2.) THE other Sin here obſerved is, *All inordinate Motions or Affections, to any thing that is our Neighbours.* And this ſeems to be the moſt expreſs in the letter of the Command, intimated in the Word *Covet*; which we obſerved, intimates an eager and unſatiable Deſire after a thing. But tho' this be rooted in him, and is chargable upon the Man by his own Conſcience, tho' there be no Overt Acts, by which he diſcovers it to others; yet it alſo hath its Outward Acts, which are the product of it, and do oftentimes break out as there is Opportunity offered for them; and this alſo doth foment and nouriſh ſuch Sins as in the perpetration of them, do prove to be the Tranſgreſſion of *other* Commands in the Law of God.

AND there are theſe things to be obſerved in this Sin;

1. THE *Object* of it is ſome *Good Thing* which another hath in his Poſſeſſion, and we have not. He is the true and proper *Owner* of it, by the wiſe Providence of God, in which He diſtributes to Men according to His holy Pleaſure, and hath given to them a Property in it, and it cannot become ours without a free Conſent of the Owner of it: And that there are ſuch things, we before obſerved, under the *Eighth* Command.

2. WE look upon it as a *Thing Deſireable*, and thereupon we are moved with an *Exorbitant Deſire* of obtaining it. Poſſibly, we think it is more fit for us, than them; and ſo it is attended with *Envy*; however we muſt have it if poſſible, and are carried forth with ſuch longing after it, that we cannot poſſibly be Content, except we have it from him, and become the Poſſeſſors of it. We think it is more Convenient for us, than for him, and would do us a greater Kindneſs, and this ſtimulates us towards it; and this was the incentive of *Ahab*, to Covet *Naboth*'s Vineyard, becauſe it was *Convenient* for him; 1 *Kings* 21. 1, 2.

3. Poſſibly, WE may to gratify our Deſires, be *willing to do that which is* Juſt, *for the obtaining of it.* We would have it, but we would come by it in an *Honeſt* way, and Pay more for it, than it's real Worth, rather than go without it; for if we ſeek to Cheat him of it, and gain it by Oppreſſion, and his real Damage, this is a Breach of the *Eighth* Command; but we are very fair in this, only we *muſt* have it: We therefore find that *Ahab* made the faireſt Offers to *Naboth* that could be, in Ver. 2. *And Ahab ſpake unto Naboth, ſaying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, becauſe it is near unto my houſe, and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it: or if it ſeem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money.* But ſtill he was guilty of the Breach of *This* Command, becauſe he could not be ſatisfyed without it.

4. *NOR is it a Sin to Offer and Ask ſuch a thing in way of Barter or Exchange.* Such Bargains are very Lawful, provided there be a free Conſent between the Parties, and there may be an Advantage both to the one, and the other in it. Nevertheleſs, to Urge, and Preſs, and purſue the Perſon with unwearied Urgency, when he hath told us once and again, that he will not forego it, but keep it for his own Uſe and Benefit; this ſhews the Inordinacy of the Affection towards it; and that is the *Covetouſneſs* which is here forbidden; becauſe we can never be Quiet ſo long as it is in his hands, or till we have gotten it into ours.

5. THIS *Covetouſneſs* manifeſts it ſelf, in the *Vexation* and *Diſquiet of Mind*, which we entertain, and ſometimes diſcover in our Carriages, at the Refuſal we meet withal. If we are ſatisfied, and well content, that our Neighbour ſhall Uſe his own, which he is unwilling to part withal, there is no Harm done; but if we Pine and Fret, and are put out of *good ſorts* upon it, we therein ſhew that we are Inordinately carried forth after it in our Deſires: And this alſo *Ahab* diſcovered in his Entertainment of *Naboth*'s Refuſal; Ver. 4. *And Ahab came into his houſe, heavy and diſpleaſed, becauſe of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had ſpoken to him: for he had ſaid, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers: and he laid him down*

down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread. Tho' he had given him a good reaſon, *It was his Inheritance from his Fathers*; and not only ſo, but it had been a Law of God, that Inheritances in Iſrael were not to be Sold, and he had ſinned if he had ſo foregon it; yet this contented him not.

6 THIS lay a foundation for the *Uſing of Unjuſt & Injurious Courſes for the Obtaining of the thing.* If he could have come by it in a right way, he would have been content; but if that cannot be, his ungovern'd cravings expoſe him to contrive and practice, ſuch as are moſt injurious; and rather than miſs of gratifying his Luſt, he will comply with the moſt Nefandous Crime in Proſecution of it: he will wait for an Advantage to Hurt his Neighbour, in Revenge, or to Force him to a Conſent againſt his Will, or to Ruine him, rather than be put by of his Deſires. This alſo was Notorious in *Ahab*; for tho' he did not immediately Act in that horrid Murder of *Naboth*, yet he Conſented to it; and as ſoon as it was done, he cheerfully went to take Poſſeſſion of the Vineyard: and therefore the Prophet is bidden to lay ſuch a Charge againſt him, Ver. 19. *And thou ſhalt ſpeak unto him, ſaying, Thus ſaith the Lord, Haſt thou killed, and alſo taken poſſeſſion?* And there are many beſides *Ahab*, who are guilty of this Covetouſneſs, tho' poſſibly they have not riſen unto ſuch an height as he did, in the proſecution of it.

USE. FROM the Conſideration of the Manner of the laying down of this Commandment, we may be inſtructed in *the Spiritual Nature of the Law of God*; in that it not only governs our External Actions, but our Inward Motions. For tho' this, as hath been obſerved, is included in every Precept, it is here peculiarly Pointed at, and it muſt needs be for our Admonition. And probably God ſhuts up the Decalogue, with a Precept delivered in this Form, to ſeal up all the Commands; and give us to Underſtand, that He requires the Heart, as well as the Life, in our ſincere Obedience to each of them: and the rather had we need to be careful to our ſelves on this account, becauſe of the Atheiſm, and Formality, which we are all of us too much addicted to. Let us therefore not content our ſelves, with an Out-ſide performance of Duty, but ſee that our Hearts be right in it; Conſidering, that as we have to do with a God who requires the Heart, ſo He ſearcheth it and is intimately acquainted with all the framings of it, and is not to be impoſed on. And be we hence quickned, to watch againſt the Firſt Motions, and Stirrings of Concupiſcence within us, and not to nouriſh inordinate Deſires and Luſtings, and dally with them ſecurely; for as we cannot hide them from God's Alſeeing Eye, and curious Obſervation, who will call our Thoughts, as well as our Words, and Actions, to account another day, and charge thoſe Sins upon us which we pleaſing our ſelves withal in ſpeculation, tho' they never appear on the Stage of Action; (*Eccl.* 11. 14.) So it is an awful Truth, that if we do not ſtifle Luſt in the Conception, it will Ripen for the Birth; and this little ſpark, as we accounted it, will break forth into a Flame if not prevented. And from *this* Command in ſpecial, as from every One of the *other*, if duly conſidered, and rightly underſtood in the extent thereof, we may and ought to learn this Leſſon; That we can never be Juſtified by the Deeds of the Law; but may in it, as a glaſs, ſee our Miſerable State, and abſolute need of Salvation by CHRIST, who only can ſtand between us and the Sentence of the Law, which condemns every the leaſt Failure or Defect with Death; that ſo we may be the more powerfully awakened, to purſue that which the Apoſtle tells us was the main thing which he was in Proſecution of, Phil. 3. 9. *And be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith.* And thus ſhall we find the Law to be a good Preparatory to our embracing of the Goſpel-Grace, which is the thing we are next to paſs over unto.

[MAY 28 1706.]

SERMON *CCXII.*

QUESTION LXXXII.

IS any man able perfectly to keep the Commandments of God?

ANSWER.

NO meer man ſince the Fall, is able in this Life perfectly to keep the Commandments of God, but daily doth break them in Thought, Word, and Deed.

WE have taken an account of the *Moral Law*, as it is ſummarily comprized in the *Decalogue*; in which we are told what was the Duty which God required of Man at the firſt, and which He revived again to his People on *Mount Sinai*. But it may here be Enquired, *To what purpoſe it is recited in the Doctrine of Fallen Man's Religion*; or, *to what end are the Rules of it taught us in the Goſpel?* Or, what is the uſe of it to Chriſtians who are called to live by *Faith*, which the Apoſtle ſets in Oppoſition to the *Law*; and tells us in Rom. 4. 13. *For the promiſe that he ſhould be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his ſeed through the law, but through the righteouſneſs of faith.* And doubtleſs a right Underſtanding of this is very neceſſary, if we would not deceive our ſelves, & loſe the benefit of the Goſpel, or New-Covenant. And that we may fortify our

our ſelves againſt the *Pelagian* and *Popiſh* Errors on the *one* hand, which ſome *Proteſtants* have too deeply imbibed, and the *Antinomian* and *Libertine* Frenzies on the *other*, which too ſadly prevail in this Licentious Age, let theſe things be obſerved;

[1.] THAT *the* Moral Law, *as it was given to Man at firſt, comes under a* double *Conſideration.* And without a right Conſideration of this, we ſhall never be able to paſs a right Judgment on this Affair.

1. IT is Conſidered as a *Rule of Obedience, ſuited to the Nature of Man, for his Direction, how to Live and Glorify God.* God *made all things for Himſelf* and His own Glory, which is the Laſt End of all Second Beings; and as He put ſeveral Natures into the Creatures, ſo He deſigned His Glory by them, ſuitably to thoſe Natures, or according as they were adapted. Man therefore being a reaſonable Creature, was fitted for active Obedience, in paying a reaſonable Service unto God. And there was a way in which God was to be Glorified by him, which muſt be made known to him, or in him; and this is that which is comprized in the *Law of Nature*, or the *Moral Law.* It was therefore at firſt engraven firmly on his Conſcience, which is therefore called the *Law of Nature*, becauſe his natural Conſcience, from the Nature of God, and his own Nature, and the Relation between God and him, told him, that *This* was *Holy*, & *Juſt* and *Good.* And becauſe the *Fall* had blotted the Original, God pleaſed to tranſcribe it in *Tables of Stone* for Perpetuity; Obedience whereto is declared to be Man's Wiſdom, Job 28. 28. *And unto man he ſaid, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wiſdom, and to depart from evil is underſtanding.* Now this Law, as a *Rule*, is of perpetual Force; it is an Everlaſting Rule, becauſe it ceaſeth not to be agreeable to Man's Nature, conſidered as under the *ſpecial Government* of God: So that tho' the Goſpel Adminiſtration removes and maketh Void the *Law of Ordinances*, or *Ceremonial* and *Typical Law*, becauſe it pointed to a CHRIST to come, in whom all that is prefigured is accompliſhed; yet the Law *Moral* abides, becauſe the Reaſon of it can never ceaſe, whilſt God is God, and Man is Man. And to diſcharge Men from this Obligation, as the *Libertines* do, is to his Hurt and not Benefit.

2. IT may be Conſidered as *perfect Obedience to it, was made the Condition on which Man was to enjoy Life and Happineſs.* When God had made Man, and every way furniſhed him for this Obedience, He treated with him about it in a *Covenant Way*, in which He required it of him under the moſt ſolemn Sanctions; the Subſtance of which is, *Do this, and Live*, Rom. 10. 5. Ezek. 18. 4. Now altho' this as a *Condition* is removed by the *New Covenant*, which hath brought in that of *Faith* in the room of it; and therefore we are told in, Gal. 2. 16. *A Man is not juſtified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jeſus Chriſt.* Yet there are theſe *Three* things which abide a Truth under the Goſpel Diſpenſation, *viz.*

1. THAT *all Mankind abide under the* Covenant of Works, *till they are effectually brought under the* Covenant of Grace. There is a *New-Covenant* of Grace opened unto Man ſince the Apoſtacy, in which *Life and Immortality are brought to Light*, 2 Tim. 1. 10. This is offered to Men upon Terms by the Goſpel, upon the cordial Compliance therewithal: But this Offer finds Men under the *Firſt Covenant*; and it is by their entertaining theſe Terms, that they paſs from under it, and are no longer under the *Law*, but under *Grace*; till when their *former* State remains, according to Joh. 3. 18, 36. *He that believeth on him, is not condemned: but he that believeth not, is condemned already, becauſe he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.* Which plainly infers it. And this was intimated by the Renovation of the Law at Mount *Sinai*, on God's Covenanting with *Iſrael*; Exod. 20.

2. THAT *Man was to ſtand or fall by that Covenant, on the trial of his Obedience.* It was a Perfect Perſonal Obedience which was Exacted of Man by it, in Caſe whereof he was ſecured by an inviolable Promiſe of a conſtant Life of Bleſſedneſs: But on the other hand, he was aſſured of ſuffering Death, in the Compleatneſs of it, on the leaſt Default in it. And on theſe Terms every one that abides under that Covenant, doth ſtand with God, till he is delivered from it; ſo the Threatning runs, Gen. 2. 17. *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou ſhalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die.* And ſo the Apoſtle tells us concerning every one who ſtands under the Relation to that Covenant; Gal 3. 10. *For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curſe: for it is written, Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.* So that the Law ſtands not only as a *Rule of Obedience*, but alſo a *Covenant*, (by which he muſt be tried,) to every Unregenerate Man, whatſoever outward Relation he bears to the Goſpel Covenant.

3. THAT *there is no hope for Man to be Juſtified before God, but by a Satisfactory Obedience offered to that Law or Covenant, which may be accounted* His, *and accepted on his Account.* This is too little regarded among Men, and is the occaſion of ſo many hurtful Miſtakes taken up about the *New Covenant*: Some think that the *New Covenant* only abates the Rigour of the *Old* one, and ſo diſcovers an eaſier way to obtain Bleſſedneſs. But it is certain that the Terms of the *Law-Covenant* muſt be fully anſwered for us, elſe we can never be Juſtify'd, and conſequently not Saved. Hence that plump Aſſertion of our Saviour, Matth. 5. 17, 18. *Think not that I am come to deſtroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to deſtroy, but to fulfil. For verily I*

ſay.

ſay unto you, Till heaven and earth paſs, one jot or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled. The New Covenant is built upon the Old One, and provides a remedy againſt the Miſery contracted by the breach of it. If fallen Man obtain Life & Salvation, it muſt be by a Righteouſneſs which gives compleat Satisfaction to the Law; for though it brings in Mercy, yet it Ratifies the Juſtice of God, Pſal.85.10. *Mercy & Truth are met together: Righteouſneſs & Peace have kiſſed each other.* Rom. 3. 26. *To declare, I ſay, at this time his righteouſneſs: that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him which believeth in Jeſus.* Only there is this difference, *that* demanded a *Perſonal Righteouſneſs*, but *this* hath made way for the Acceptance of a *Relative* one, by which our whole Obligation to the Law muſt be Anſwered, all our Debts diſcharged, and the *handwriting* that was *againſt us* be cancelled: So that 'till we have a good claim to ſuch a Righteouſneſs, we abide *under the Law.*

[2.] HENCE *the Law is revived, ſince the diſcovery of the New-Covenant, for gracious Ends.* The *Law* is to be Preached under the *Goſpel*, and that both as a *Covenant*, and a *Rule of Obedience*; and therefore we find it ſo inculcated, not only in the *Old Teſtament*, which yet was a diſpenſation of Grace, but in the *New Teſtament* too, both by Chriſt himſelf, and his Apoſtles. And there are more eſpecially theſe *Three things* aimed at in it, all of which do carry in them a diſcovery of the Grace of God; for which reaſon the Apoſtle tells us, Gal. 3. 19. *Wherefore then ſerveth the law? it was added becauſe of tranſgreſſions, till the ſeed ſhould come, to whom the promiſe was made.*

1. TO *convince fallen Man of his preſent Miſerable State.* Conſideration is the firſt ſtep to Converſion, Ezek. 18. 28. *He conſidereth, and turneth* ——. Without which *Converſion* there is no *Salvation* to be expected by Him, according to Matth. 18. 3. *Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye ſhall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven.* And the Law as a Covenant, is a proper help to this, becauſe it is a *Glaſs* in which the Man may ſee his own *Natural Face*, and read his preſent Condition. Hence we are told what is the proper uſe of the Law, in reſpect of all Mankind ſince the Apoſtaſy, Rom. 3. 20. *For by the law is the knowledge of ſin.* Now there is a *double* reſpect in which the Law offers to fallen Man this Conviction;

(1.) IN *regard of the Curſe that is upon him.* And this it doth by vertue of the *Sanctions* put to it as a Covenant; which diſcovers to the Sinner his true State. It tells him that he is a Man of Death, held under the Sentence of it; and that if he ſo abides he cannot eſcape the Vengeance of Hell. It lays open before him all thoſe *fearful Curſes*, that are written in the Book of God; and aſſures him, that they muſt all fall upon him in their Weight, if no deliverance be afforded him. It declares to him the Holineſs, and the Juſtice of God, which ſtand firmly engaged to proſecute the Sinner for his Sin, and ſo confirms to him the Truth of that, Heb. 10. 31. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* It alſo layeth open to him the *Terribleneſs* of theſe Penalties, and how intollerably Miſerable he muſt needs be, if he falls under the ſtroak of Divine Revenge; and beſpeaks him from God, as Ezek. 22.14. *Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be ſtrong in the days that I ſhall deal with thee? I the Lord have ſpoken it, and will do it.* And what more Potent Argument can there be to rouſe a ſecure Sinner to make ſolemn enquiry, whether there be no way to obtain a deliverance.

(2.) IN *regard of his own utter Impotency, by himſelf, to ſatisfy the Demands of Juſtice, and eſcape the Execution of the Sentence which is out againſt him.* And this is done by the Precept it ſelf, as it ſtands in the Covenant; and aſſures the Man what is Neceſſary in order to his Salvation, if ever he obtains it. It lays out the Law to him in it's Breadth, and a right Conſideration of it will potently Convince him that he is *altogether without Strength*: It tells him, thus the Law ſaith, and it will make no Abatement; but if in the leaſt Point he fails, he is gone: and his own natural Conſcience tells him, that if the Matter be ſo, there is nothing but Deſpair that lies before him, nothing but a *fearful expectation of fiery Indignation to devour him*: Hence he cries out, Pſal. 130. 3. *If thou, Lord, ſhouldſt mark iniquities: O Lord, who ſhall ſtand?* And, 143. 2. *And enter not into judgment with thy ſervant: for in thy ſight ſhall no man living be juſtified.* And till the Sinner comes to this, he reſts ſecure, and no ways concerned for himſelf; but now he is put in Fear: Hence that, Rom. 7. 9. *For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, ſin revived, and I died.*

2. TO *make way for his ready entertainment of the Goſpel Offer of* CHRIST, *and Salvation by Him.* And this is a proper and rational Reſultancy from the *former*; for Man hath a Natural craving after Happineſs, and reluctancy againſt Miſery. When therefore the Man is under ſuch a Reſentment, the News of Succour offered him, is a Cordial to him; it puts Hope into him, and ſets him on enquiring after it: It is a Rock riſing out of the Ocean to one ready to be Engulphed. Hence we read in, Zech. 9. 11. *As for thee alſo, by the blood of thy covenant, I have ſent forth thy priſoners out of the pit, wherein is no water.* The *Goſpel* is in it ſelf the *Glad Tidings of great Joy*; but it is ſo accounted by none but ſuch as are diſtreſt with the Apprehenſion of the Miſery lying upon them. Our Saviour tells us in, Matth. 9. 12. *They that be whole need not a phyſician, but they that are ſick.* And it is by this means that Sinners are made *Sick* unto Death, who before were *Well* in their own Opinion, and ſtood in need of nothing.

3. TO *direct the People of God in the Matter of their New-Obedience.* And this refers to

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the *Law* as it is a Rule of Living. The Law indeed doth not tell Fallen Man how he may so Obey it, as to Please God, and promote his Salvation thereby, that being proper to the *Gospel*: But the Matter of Moral Duty is contained in the *Law*, which tells us what is *Duty*, and what is *Sin*; and accordingly what is required of us, if we would Live and Please God: And tho' we must have Grace *from*, and Acceptance *thro'* Christ; yet the things by which we are to testify our Obedience, are pointed to in this; and therefore *David* declares, Psal 119. 105. *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.* And to Neglect these things, or to do contrary to them, is Sin in a *Believer*, as well as in an *Unregenrate* Man; tho' the Law requires them to be Perfect and without Flaw, whereas the Gospel accepts of *Sincerity*, and covers *Imperfections* under the Robe of CHRIST's Righteousness.

THESE things thus premised we may now proceed to consider the CASE it self, as it is here laid down; in which Man's hope on the Account of *Legal* Obedience is utterly Cashiered, and found wofully short of Happiness, by reason of this Insufficiency of his. To shew *that* he cannot, and the reason *why* he cannot be Saved by the *Law*, but must look somewhere else for it, if he hopes to obtain it;

THIS *Answer* contains one *fundamental Article* in the Christian Religion, necessary to be Believed by all those that would have a good Hope to obtain Salvation by Jesus Christ.

THE thing under Consideration, is, *Man's woful want of Ability to comport with the Terms of the First Covenant, by reason of his Moral Impotency.* And we may take a distinct Account of the *severals* contained in it, which may serve to humble us out of our own *Self-Sufficiency*, and make us to put a high Value upon the Redemption purchased for us by Christ.

I. WE may observe, the *Limitation* which is here put to the *Assertion*, in these words, *No meer Man since the Fall in this Life.* And there are these Distinctions contained in these Words, which must be warily observed, else we shall labour of Mistakes:

(1.) NO *meer Man*: This is put in to exempt our Lord Jesus Christ from this Charge. He was a *Man*, for so He is called; and we are told how He came to be so; and that if He had not so been, He could not have stood as our Surety, and answered the Demands of the Law for us: And therefore these *two* are put together, Gal. 4.4. *But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the Law.* But then He was not a *meer* Man; He had *another* Nature which was *Divine*, and in His Person He was the *Son of God*; into an *Union* with which Person of His, He assumed our *Human* Nature, which was swallowed up in it. Now though Christ in our Nature was *under the Law*, yet He was no *Law breaker*; and tho' He took on Him all our other Infirmities, yet that of *Sin* was excepted, Heb. 4. 15. *For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.* That the Guilt of Sin was so far Charged upon him, that He was made to suffer the Penalty due to it by the Law, is certain. Hence that, 2 Cor. 5. 21. *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* But this was by *Imputation*, and not by *Communication* of Sin to Him, from which He was pure; else He could not have made His Soul an Offering for our Sin. Hence we are told, Heb. 7. 26. *For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.* And His spotless Integrity is every where asserted in the Holy Writ; for which reason He is entituled the *Holy One of Israel.* And said to be, *a Lamb without Blemish.* He had neither the stain of *Original Sin* cleaving to Him; nor was He ever contaminated with any *actual* Breach of God's Holy Law. It was therefore meet that He should be thus excepted; but as for the Virgin *Mary*, or any other of the most Holy of the Saints, they had not this Privilege; and the ascribing it to them, is not only *Precarious*, but *blasphemous*.

(2.) *SINCE the Fall*: And herein our *First Parents* in their Primitive State of *Integrity* are exempted. And there was also need of inserting this, that so we may be led to the Contemplation of the proper blameable Cause of the Impotency that Fallen Man labours under; that it was not the Condition of Man's Nature, as he came first out of God's hand, but that it was brought upon him by the *Apostacy*: and therefore it not only points us to the *Time* when it began, *viz.* on the Apostasy; but also the *procuring Cause* of it, which was *Man's Fall*. Our First Parents therefore had at First a Power lodged in them, by which they might have perfectly Obeyed the Law of God: We are therefore assured in, Eccl. 7. 29. *God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions.* God therefore Created Man after His Image, which was a stamp of Original Sanctity on all His Powers, furnishing them for the Obedience which He demanded of them: And it must needs be so, because in the First Covenant, the Rule of Relative Justice between God and fallen Man was established, and Man by it was given to understand what he was to expect from a Righteous God. Now it is indisputable that when a Creature is brought under such Terms, it is Equity that the Creature have in it a power to Comport with them; how else shall he deserve Blame and Penalty upon his falling short in his Conformity to the Rule that was so prescribed to him? It cannot be supposed the Creature's Fault, and expose it to Punishment, if it would fain do it's Duty, but is necessitated to come behind it, because it never had the Power bestowed upon it to enable it thereunto. So that it is very certain, that whatsoever Insufficiency fallen Man now Labours of, yet it was not so from the Beginning; but is come in since that, and he is himself become Guilty

of

of it, which expoſeth him to ſuffer juſtly. And this ariſeth from the *Apoſtaſy*, in and by which Man put away this power from himſelf, and ſo loſt that Image that was concreated on him; ſo that tho' he is now *without Strength*, yet this cannot excuſe him from Guilt, or diſcharge him from Puniſhment, becauſe once he had this power, but loſt it by his own default, *Eccl.* 7. 29. And it is a great Truth, that as the whole *Species* of Mankind, was contained in our firſt Parents, who were the root of that kind; ſo when they loſt this power, they loſt it not only to themſelves, but to all their Poſterity, who derive from them by Natural Generation, as hath been already proved in the proper place. But ſtill, the *Law hath dominion over them*, and it is their Sin, as well as their Miſery, that they cannot ſerve God, with Univerſal and perfect Obedience.

(3.) IT is *in this Life*: And this exempts the *Glorified Saints*. It is a Title put upon the *Souls* of the Godly, when they are gotten free from their Mortal Bodies, Heb. 12. 23. --- *The ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.* And it is the Privilege of all ſuch as are arrived to the ſtate of Glory, that they ſhall *Sin no more*, but be *perfected* in Holineſs. Hence it is ſaid concerning all ſuch, Eph. 4. 13. *Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man* —. And it is certain, that a ſtate of perfect Glory is inconſiſtent with any of the remains of Sin in thoſe who are made to partake therein: for without perfect Holineſs, there can be no perfect Bleſſedneſs; and as long as they carry about with them the relicts of Sin, they will have occaſion to cry out of their wretchedneſs, Rom. 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death!* Tho' there is a freedom from Sin in point of Guilt & Condemnation, afforded to all thoſe who are gotten into the New Covenant, according to that in, Rom. 8. 1. *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Chriſt Jeſus.* On which account it is given to encourage true Believers here, Rom. 6. 14. *For ſin ſhall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.* And we have that wonderful & precious word declared of ſuch, Numb 23. 21. *He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he ſeen perverſeneſs in Iſrael.* Yet as to the preſence and *inbeing* of Sin, it is certain that that remains in all, whilſt they are in their Militant State; and the Beſt muſt needs confeſs themſelves to be ſinful men: And it is no ſmall part of the Exerciſe they are under, to be maintaining a warfare againſt it: For all this while, that is a Truth, Gal. 5. 17. *For the fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the fleſh: and theſe are contrary the one to the other; ſo that ye cannot do the things that ye would.* But *Jeruſalem above* is *free*, the glorious Inheritance admits not the leaſt *Defilement* into it, *Rev.* 21. 27. And doubtleſs this ſtands as a great encouragement to the faithful Servants of Chriſt: that tho' for the preſent they are exerciſed with *the law in their Members*, which too often is ſo hard upon them, that it *leads them into Captivity*; that it ſhall not be thus always; but there is a time coming when *all Sin ſhall be deſtroyed in them*, and they ſhall glorify God forever without any the leaſt reluctancy or default.

II. WE may in the next place obſerve, The *Comprehenſion*, or the *Extent* of this Aſſertion; *and that extends to all the reſt of Mankind, without any further exception.* It is the deſign of all genuine Limitation, to engroſs all elſe of the kind under them, elſe they cannot be true; and that it is ſo here, the *Word of God* will plentifully aſſure us, and that both with reſpect to *Perſons* & *Times*. And we may a little conſider the Evidence of this, before we come to clear up the thing it ſelf which is aſſerted: And for that end I ſhall only offer *ſome general Scripture Truths*, which will make it evident, that all Mankind, beſides thoſe excepted, are included, and make way for the Demonſtration of the Truth it ſelf. Here then,

1. THAT *all Mankind have their in-Being in* Adam *Originally*. If we would take a right ſcantling of this Affair, we muſt follow it up hither. God ſaw meet to *make all Men of one blood*, and therefore he did not, as he did by the Angels, make them all at *once*, and put them individually under the trial of their Obedience. But as he made *Adam* to be the firſt Father of all, ſo he conſtituted him their *Head* in the Covenant-tranſaction. And hence the Promiſe and Threatning equally included *him*, and *his Poſterity* with him; ſo that they were to ſtand or fall in him: and this is ſufficiently evident from the Word of God, which will appear if we conſider,

2. HENCE *all that were to derive from him by Natural Generation, did upon the firſt coming of Sin into the World by him, derive it from him.* And becauſe all Men, Chriſt only excepted, are born in this way, they muſt needs be included, becauſe they were in *his Covenant*. If there were any that could except themſelves from this way, they could not be concerned in it; but becauſe there are none, this muſt needs be their condition; hence if this be the condition of all ſuch, it ſaith that all were thus in him; and this we have full proof for: Nor can there be a more full & clear evidence of this, than what the Apoſtle lays down with the fulleſt comprehenſion under it, Rom. 5. 12. *Wherefore as by one man ſin entred into the world, and death by ſin; and ſo death paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned.* And for that reaſon he elſe-where ſaith, 1 Cor. 15. 22. *In Adam all die, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.* Whatſoever therefore is comprehended in the threatning of the firſt Covenant, in caſe of tranſgreſſion, was brought upon them by that tranſgreſſion of his, and equally belongs to *them*, as to *him*. This indeed belongs only to that firſt Sin of his, wherein he acted as a publick Perſon, and as all Mankind did tranſact in him, for it was by that Sin of his, that the trial of Mans Obedience was determined, and the *threatning of the Covenant* took place, and laid hold on them, and *bound them under Condemnation*. As to the Juſtice and Equity of this, we formerly took an

account of that, when we considered of Man's Apostacy: but that the thing is so, we are sure from the Word of Truth.

3. THAT *this Sin lost to Man the Image of God, and therewithal his power of Obedience.* It is true, the *Death* threatned, contained in it the *Condemnation* under which Man Fell; by which we are assured, Rom. 3. 19. *That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God.* But it also included in it the loss of the *Sanctification of his Nature*, which consisted in the *Image of God*; which we are assured comprehended in it, both *Righteousness and true holiness*, Eph. 4. 22, 24. And this Loss came in as a Penalty of the First Transgression, and is not the least part of that Misery which befell Man upon his Fall; and if *All* by that Sin, become Guilty, it clears God's Righteousness in inflicting it upon *All*; and it is in vain to pester our Minds about the enquiry, *How*, or *after what manner it deriveth unto us*? And that he hereby lost his *Power of Obedience* is certain, as will come to be proved in the Vindication of the Assertion: I here only assert, that this is is the Condition of *All* Mankind, and so is *Universal*

4. THIS *Sin also subjected him to be filled with cursed & crooked Principles of Rebellion against God and His holy Law.* That this also was a proper fruit of the Transgression, and came in as a Penalty, is no less evident than the *former*: *How or after what manner this was put into him*? is to be as soberly enquired into, as the *former*, lest we reflect Dishonour upon God; but that there are such Principles in all Men by Nature since the Fall, is fully asserted in the Word of God: Hence that, Gen. 6. 5. *Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* And that it was not so at First is equally true; and also it is verified by *Experience*; and there are none of the Children of Men, who do not discover this to be so, as soon as they come to have the use of their Moral Powers.

5. THAT *no Man during this Life, is freed from this sinful Estate, so as to be able perfectly to Obey the Law of God.* Why it is so, will come to be considered afterwards; but that it is so, is here to be observed, and well applied in our Thoughts. Here then let us observe, that there are *Two sorts* of Men, to one whereof every one in this Life doth belong, viz. the *Unregenerate*, and the *Regenerate*; those that are *under the Law*, and those that are *under Grace*: And the Assertion in our *Catechism* engrosseth both of them; as we shall in the next place take a particular Account of.

1. AS to the *Unregenerate*, they are under the Curse, Gal. 3. 10. *For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.* And this is one most dismal fruit of the Curse, that they are under the *Dominion of Sin*; and consequently they are Servants of Unrighteousness, and so are altogether *free from Righteousness*, as the Apostle intimates, in *Rom.* 6.20. The meaning whereof is, that they had no Principle of Holiness in them; and is Expounded in Chap. 7. 18. *For I know that in me, (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing.* Which must be true of them that are nothing but *Flesh*; which is the State of every Man before *Conversion*: And when we come to consider what is the Efficacy of indwelling and reigning Sin in the Children of Men, it will give us a full Demonstration of this Truth. Well might *Joshua* say when he treated with them, Josh. 24. 19. *Ye cannot serve the Lord.* And it is a plump Assertion concerning such, Rom. 8. 8. *They that are in the flesh cannot please God.*

2. AS to the *Regenerate*; It is not to be denied, but that they have a New Principle of Sanctifying Grace in them, whereby they are wrought to a Conformity to the Will of God: Sin is dethroned, and their Enmity and Rebellion is subdued, and they have a Party in them which sincerely Serves God: But still there are in them the woful *Remains* of *Original Sin*; being renewed but in *part*, Sanctification being for the present *Progressive* in them; and what influence this hath into the debasing and allaying their Best Services, will be made very Convictive in the sequel; and this is that we are next to pass over to: Only for the present, Let us entertain *This* as an awful Truth: And let it serve to humble us out of our *Self-sufficiency*, and drive us to seek and secure a Righteousness which will stand us in stead in that Day, when we must appear before the Judgment Seat of CHRIST.

[JUNE 25. 1706.]

SERMON CCXIII.

III. WE may now proceed to the *Assertion it self*, which summarily assures us of *Man's Incapacity of perfect Legal Obedience*: And this is a Truth which we had need to Study, because without a firm Belief of it, we shall never comply with the Gospel way of Salvation: And our *Natural Pride* is very loth to give it Entertainment.

NOW this is in the *Answer* laid down both *Negatively* and *Affirmatively*, which renders it very Emphatical; we may therefore consider them *severally*.

First. THEY *are not able Perfectly to keep the Commands of God.* There is no need here to revive the Distinction between the Law considered as a *Rule of Obedience*, and as a *Covenant of Works*; since the Difference consists meerly with respect to the *Sanctions*: And it is certain, that the Gospel Precept prescribes perfect Conformity to the Moral Law, as a Rule for Christians to aim at, and restlesly to pursue; Mat. 5. ult. *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

And

And it directs him in sense of his own Imperfection, to renounce his own, and place his sole reliance upon the Righteousness of CHRIST; Phil. 3. 9. *And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.*

BUT for the more distinct taking up the Truth before us, we must *observe*, that the Word of God points us to a double Perfection, *viz. Legal* & *Evangelical*. Touching the *latter* of these, *viz. Evangelical*, we often find the Scriptures to attribute *Perfection* to some Man; and that since the Fall, and in this Life. Thus we read concerning *Job*, Job 1.1. And of *them*, Luk. 1.6. Thus of *Noah*, Gen. 6. 9. But this is to be understood according to the *Tenour of the New-Covenant*, in which God hath provided a Cover for the Imperfections of Believers, by casting over them the Robe of CHRIST's Righteousness; and in Him accept of their Sincerity, according to that wonderful declaration, *Numb.* 23. 21. Nevertheless, the Best of these have been charged with their *Sinful Defects*; as is evident in the *History*, concerning every one of them. But as to the *former*, *viz. Legal Perfection*, it consists in *an intire & indeficient conformity to the whole revealed Will of God, and the whole duty which is therein prescribed unto man.* And this is the Perfection which is here *denied*, and now remains to be made evident from the Word of God. Now that no room may be left for any exception here, but the Universality of this Truth may appear, *Two* things may be *observed*,

1. THAT *there is a Twofold Subject to which this may be applied*, viz. The *Unregenerate*, and the *Regenerate*.

2. THAT *there is a Twofold Perfection*, viz. *Habitual* & *Actual*. Each whereof may be considered, with respect to each of these Subjects severally. Here then,

[1.] THERE *an is* Habitual *Perfection required in the Law, and is necessary to be found in the Man, who may be supposed able perfectly to keep the Commands of God.* Habitual Perfection is an Inherent Principle, or Native Power in the Man, fitting him to keep the Law of God in the breadth of it, and disposing him entirely there-unto. Now, not only is this necessary to the enabling of the Man actually to keep the Law, as will after be considered; but doth it self properly belong to the Man's conformity thereto: for this is the *Perfect & Upright State* in which Man was created at the first, *Eccl.* 7. 29. And it was Man's Duty to maintain and preserve it in him; and he could not lose it without his own default, it being a *Depositum* which God committed to him: And this consisted in the Moral Image of God, which consisted in the Sanctification of Man's Nature, and was his Furniture for his Obedience. And therefore, unless he never lost it, or hath totally recovered it again, he cannot answer the Rule, but is habitually defective in it: and that neither the one nor the other can thus answer the Rule, or plead this Perfection, may be considered in *respect of both*.

1. NO *Natural Man can plead this Perfection, in that they have lost this Image of God, and contracted a contrary Image which abides on them.* The loss of Original Righteousness & Holiness, and coming in of Unrighteousness & Impurity, is every where celebrated in the Word of God; and this depravation in all the *Faculties and Powers* is every where asserted; and that Universally without Exception, a particular account whereof is given, *Rom.* 3. 10. *&c.* And whatsoever distinction some use, to prove that there are some remains of this Image on fallen Man; which if granted, is yet far from proving Perfection, in that it pleads only for some Relicts, acknowledging that for the Substance it is gone: yet it is certain, if by the Image of God, we understand the Sanctification of Man's Nature, which they call the *Moral Image*, it is evident, that this is not only crazed, but ruined; not only wofully *impared*, but *utterly lost*. Hence that in, Rom. 7. 18. *In me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing.* And *Gen* 6. 5 And we are assured, that there is a Principle of Rebellion in the whole Man, and a Cursed *Impotency* and *Enmity* in it to that Obedience which is required in it, Rom. 8. 7. *The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* Two Things must be acknowleged concerning an Unregenerate Man. *viz.*

(1) THAT *he hath in him a Natural Conscience, which in many things, tells him, This is Duty, and that is Sin; and is made more or less to prompt him to Duty, and give him warning against Sin.* And of these we are told, Rom. 2. 14, 15. *For when the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another.* But tho' God reserves this Dominion over the Consciences of Men, and useth it for the common good of Mankind, in restraining Men's exorbitant Lusts, without which there would be no living: Yet the *Consciences* of Men are *defiled*, Tit. 1 15. And they are but some things in which they have resentments of the Law, whilst in others they bear no witness at all; and in these very things wherein they do bear witness, they take false measures, and *the light that is in them is darkness.*

(2) THAT *he hath a power in him, to do the Material Part of many Duties.* This also is evident by *Experience*; and we are acquainted that many Hypocrites do conform in several things; yea, so far as to obtain a Charitable Opinion of Men: And we have diverse instances of this, in *Jehu*, *Amaziah*, *Herod*, and many others; of whom it is yet said, That *their Hearts was not right.* Yea, *Reason* in the Man and *Observation*, put a fair face on many *Vertues*, and such an ugly Visage on some *Vices*, that they are in love with those, and conceive an indignation at these, which prompts them to practice accordingly. But as this proceeds, not

from Sanctification, and therefore both their *Plowing is Sin*, and their *Praying is an Abomination*; ſo this cannot amount to *Perfection*, in caſe it were ſincere, which it is not; nor is there any true Aim at God's Glory in all this; for we are aſſured, Rom. 3. 23. *All have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God.* In a word, they can neither know, nor love, nor chuſe the whole Will of God, having a rooted and reigning *Enmity* in them; from which that follows, Rom. 8. 8. *So then they that are in the fleſh, cannot pleaſe God.*

2. NO *Regenerate Man can challenge it, in that, altho' theſe are renewed in the Image of God, yet it is but in part.* The Apoſtle ſaith, 1 Cor. 13. 9. *For we know in part, and we propheſie in part.* And this is applicable to all the *Powers* in them: There is indeed a vaſt difference between theſe & thoſe; they have no good thing in them, but theſe have; they are wholly dead, but theſe are reſtored from *Death to Life*: Eph. 2. 1. *And you hath he quickned who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.* Theſe have a principle of ſincerity in them, from which their Obedience is influenced, they are under the law of Grace, but ſtill there is *another law in them*, Rom 7. 23. And the influence of it we are told of, v. 21. *I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is preſent with me.* And this is an *Habitual Imperfection* which cleaves to them; this defect is not in their *Actions*, tho' it influenceth them, but it is rooted in their *Powers.* It is certain that their Hearts are impure by the taint of *Original Sin*, which hath made them an unclean thing; and tho' they are waſhed & ſanctified, yet impurity remains on them, and they are not rid of all this Uncleanneſs at once. Hence that challenge, Prov. 20. 9. *Who can ſay, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my ſin?* As every Grace is Created and infuſed into them, ſo every Luſt of Concupiſcence remains in them, and theſe do allay one the other. Gal. 5. 17. *For the fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the fleſh: and theſe are contrary the one to the other; ſo that ye cannot do the things that ye would.* Theſe have in them a ſanctified Underſtanding; Matth. 13. 16. *But bleſſed are your eyes, for they ſee; and your ears, for they hear.* Yet there be Scales on their Eyes; they do truly & ſincerely Love God, and can appeal to Him for the confirmation of this, as he, Joh. 21. 17. *He ſaith unto him the third time, Simon ſon of Jonas, loveſt thou me? Peter was grieved, becauſe he ſaid unto him the third time, Loveſt thou me? And he ſaid unto him, Lord, thou knoweſt all things; thou knoweſt that I love thee.* But there are remaining prejudices in them: And this is that which every gracious Soul muſt needs ſubſcribe to the Truth of, on his own ſorrowful Experience, which maketh him to cry out as he, Rom. 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death!* And this is one principal reaſon of the Spiritual Warfare which every Child of God is engaged in, as long as he abides in this World.

[2.] THERE *is alſo an* Actual *Perfection which the Law requires of us, the want whereof declares us to be ſhort-coming & imperfect.* The Law requires, not only a *pure Heart*, but alſo *clean Hands*, Pſal 24. 4. And without the former, the latter cannot poſſibly be, becauſe the Heart muſt needs influence the Life. Now this Perfection conſiſts, *In a Compleat, Practical conformity of the whole Man to the Precept revealing God's Pleaſure in the Duty of Man.* Now this requires not only a conformity to *every Command* of the Law, (which we are told is *exceeding broad*, Pſal 119. 96.) but that the *whole Heart, Soul, and Mind* be in it, as Matth. 22. 37. *Jeſus ſaid unto him, Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all ſoul, and with all thy mind.* So that the leaſt gradual Deficiency in this regard, will declare the Action to be imperfect, and the Man to fall under the Cenſure of the Law. And that neither the Regenerate nor Unregenerate are in this Life herein Perfect, will be evident by the former; for if the *Power* it ſelf for Obedience be deficient, all the *Actions* which derive from this Power muſt needs be ſo. Hence the direction given by our Saviour on this account in, Matth. 12. 33. *Make the tree good, and his fruit good.* And this is a Truth,

1. WITH reſpect to the *Unregenerate*: If there be any Perfection in their Actions, it is perfect diſobedience or tranſgreſſion, becauſe they have no Seeds of Sanctification in them, from which every *Theologically* good Action muſt proceed: We are therefore told by Chriſt, what it is that only proceeds from the Hearts of all Men in their Natural State, Matth. 15. 19. *For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, theſts, falſe witneſs, blaſphemies.* So that their Actions are not only *Sinful*, (for that is alſo true of the Godly, as will anon appear,) but they are *truly Sins*: and this is declared not only of their groſs Abominations, but alſo of their *Civil* and *Religious Duties*, Prov. 21. 4. 28. 9. 15. 8. For altho' there may be the Matter of Duty in what they do, yet the *Principle* from which they proceed, and the *End* for which they are done, are *Carnal* and *Corrupt*; and this ſpoils all, in regard of the Holineſs of the Law, by which they are to be meaſured.

2. WITH reſpect to the *Regenerate.* For tho they have that which is gracious and good in them, yet they have an Allay in them, and a mixture of the contrary, which affords ſufficient and indiſputable Conviction of their Imperfection, which will be more particularly laid forth in the next thing. Hence,

Secondly, THEY *daily break theſe Commands in Thought, Word and Deed.* This is the *Affirmative* part of the Anſwer, and affords us further matter of Conſideration: It intimates, that there is not only *Imperfection*, but alſo that there is *Exorbitancy* in their whole Conduct of themſelves; and this is a proper and neceſſary Conſequent upon their Impotency: and this may be conſidered with reſpect to the *Godly* themſelves; for as to all others, the Caſe hath

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been already sufficiently laid forth under the former. And we may take up a right State of this Affair in the following *Conclusions.*

1. THAT *the Law as it is a Rule, is prescribed unto the whole Man.* Man consists of Two Constituent Parts, a *Soul* and a *Body*, both of which go in to the Constitution of Man, as to that kind or order of Being which he is of. It was not to this or that *Power* in the Man, but to the *Man himself*, that the Command was given: Hence that, in Job 28. 28. *And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.* It is the *whole Man* which is purchased by the Redemption of Christ, which stands as a potent Obligation to him to devote the whole to His Service, 1 Cor. 6. 20. *For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.* The Sanctification of the Spirit, by which we are furnished for New-Obedience, is of the *whole Man*, 1 Thes. 5. 23. And we find that the glorious Reward which God hath promised to bestow upon those who are found Obedient to His Precept, is engaged to the *whole* Man: *Soul* and *Body* are made the Subjects of Glory.

2. HENCE *this Rule comprehend the Tho'ts, Words, and External Actions under it's Government.* The *Thoughts* properly refer to the *Soul*, and are elicited by it, as its *Internal Actions*; whereas the *Words* & *Deeds* are exerted by the *Body*, or outward Man, which is the Instrument by which the Soul performs it's *Imperate Actions.* This is the Prerogative of the *Divine* Law, that it not only governs the *outward Actions*, (which is the furthest that *Human* Laws can reach to,) but it prescribes the very *motions* & *stirrings* of the *Heart* within it. This is therefore attributed to the *Word of God*, as it contains Man's Rule under which he is, Heb. 4. 12. *The word of God is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* And this is comprehended under those *secret things*, Eccl. 12. *ult.* God is therefore said to take Cognizance of the *Thoughts*, Psal. 94. 11. *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.* And for this reason Expostulates with them, Jer. 4. 14. *How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?* And of Men's *Words* we are assured, that they are to be accounted for, every one of them in the Day of Reckoning, Matth. 12. 36, 37. *I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.* And it is noted as a Mark of horrid Impudence for Men to challenge an Immunity of their Words from the Divine Government, Psal. 12. 4. *Who have said, With our tongue we will prevail, our lips are our own: who is lord over us?* And as to Men's *Works*, we are assured, that they shall receive according to all of them, when Christ shall come to Judgment; 2 Cor. 5 10. —— *That every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

3. HENCE it follows, *That any Deficiency, in any one of these, is to be accounted a Breach upon this Holy Law.* It was the Vanity of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* in their glosses upon the Law of God, that they only broke the Law, when they practised according to their *inward Thoughts*; which our Saviour Corrects in *Matth.* 5. They supposed, that if a Man dallied in his Heart with sinful Objects, yet if they did not do the Act with their outward Man, they did not make themselves Obnoxious to the Law, but kept it well eno': But herein they grosly mistook themselves. If a Man have but a *Thought* of Sin, altho' it end in the Thought, and he *Do not* the thing which he Thought of, yet in this very *Tho't* he violates the Law which is *Spiritual*: Hence that, Matth. 5. 28. *I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.* And it is the Wise Man's Observation, Prov. 24. 9 *The thought of foolishness is Sin. Words* also, tho' Men count them but Wind, and little to be regarded by them; yet they will be found Transgressions, and will be charged another Day with Severity, Jude 15. *To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.* Hence that, *Matth.* 5. 22. For this reason the Psalmist Prays to God for a right Regulation both of his *Words* and *Thoughts*, Psal. 19 14. *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord my strength and my redeemer.* And it was a solemn Advice given him by the Apostle, Acts 8. 22. *Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.* And as to *Deeds*, there is no Question about these, for every Man's Natural Conscience will Charge these upon him, as Sins which are not only *conceived*, but *finished*: Hence that, Rom. 1. 32. *Who knowing the judgment of God, that they who do such things are worthy of death.* And herein are we acquainted with the vast Latitude of the Law of God, and how many ways it may be broken.

4. THAT *this Law requires* Constancy, *or indefectible* Perseverance, *in all these things.* It is not enough that the Man doth this or that particular Act in conformity to the Precept; but the Man is ever under the Government of the Law, and owes the Regulation of his whole Life to it, in every Action that he doth.

AND there are *Two things* here to be remarked;

(1.) HE *must be* Constant *in this*; *he must pursue it to the end.* Hence that, Rev 2. 10. *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of Life.* It is not enough to *Begin*, but

but he must *Hold on* without fainting; it is the Apostle's Objurgation of those, Gal. 5.7. *Ye did run well, who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth?* If in his whole course, from the beginning to the end, he takes but one wry step; if he entertains but one vain and foolish thought as long as he lives, he is therein a Law-breaker, and exposed: And we are told, Jam. 2. 10. *For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.* One Passionate Word lays the Man under guilt; and if he do not continue in all that is required, he is exposed to the Curse of the Law, if he be under it as a Covenant, Gal. 3. 10. *For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.* And that saith, that the thing it self is a Sin, and that nothing but the Blood of CHRIST can wash away the guilt of it.

(2.) HE *must be* Indefectible *in this Perseverance of his.* He must not only do the thing, but he must so do it, as that no failing in it may be charged upon him; he may do the Duty sincerely, and so be accepted according to the Grace of the New-Covenant; but if he doth it not *entirely*, it will not bear the tryal of the Law: *One wandring Thought* in a Duty, the least short coming as to the intenseness of the Soul in the Duty, renders it maimed, and claims a Sacrifice to Atone God on account of it; and if there be any such defect in any one Duty that ever he doth, the Man is imperfect; and tho' his Duty is not reckoned a Sin, yet must be confessed Sinful, as is intimated in the fore-cited, *Gal.* 3. 10.

5. THAT *this Law is broken, either by Omission or Commission.* We formerly observed that there is an Affirmative and Negative in every Precept; something Commanded, and something Forbidden, and the Law hath an equal respect to both; so that if the Man do not the thing Forbidden, yet if he neglects to do the thing Commanded, he is still a transgressour, and so comes under the righteous imputation of Sin. And indeed, Active Obedience to the Law, is the great thing required of us. And tho' in a *Theological* sense, *avoiding* the things Prohibited, belongs to Active Obedience; yet the *doing* of the things Commanded, is more peculiarly so, in that it refers to the *Affirmative* part of Duty, tho' that cannot be done without a due regard to the *Negative*. And we find that the *Pharisee's* Religion is set forth in his *Negatives*, Luk 18. 11. And it is certain, that there can be no *Omission*, but there must also be a *Commission*; for if the Man do abstain from such Actions *forbidden*, yet if he do also withdraw from the doing of such as are *required*, he therein refuseth the Obedience demanded of him: *Happiness* therefore is promised to the *doing*, Joh. 18. 17. And therefore our Saviour gives a reason of the Condemnation of the great Day, because of the *Omissions of Duty*, Matth. 25. 45

6. THAT *there is no Saint on Earth, but who doth too frequently come short* Actually, *in regard of each of these Two, as to the Matter.* In the consideration of the Rule of Obedience, there are Two things to be observed, if we would judge of Men's Perfection or Imperfection with regard to the Law: There is the *Matter*, or the thing *it self* which is required of us by the Precept; and there is the *Manner* which is prescribed to us in the doing of it. Now if the Man fall short in the *First* of these, he must needs do so in the *Latter*; for tho' he may do the thing, yet not so do it as is requisite. But as to the *Matter* itself, it is undeniable, that the Best of Men upon Record, have had their manifold Defects in this regard, of which we have *manifold Instance* in the Word of God, in respect of those that are there most Celebrated for their Holiness: A *Sinless Perfection* is there denied to all of *Adam*'s natural Progeny: It is therefore asserted, Eccl. 7. 20. *There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good, and sinneth not.* And for a Man to presume and brag of his being *without Sin*, is there declared to be a sure Note of one that is void of true Grace, 1 Joh. 1. 8. *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us.* A *Quaker* cannot be a *Christian.* It is an Assertion laid down by the Apostle in, Jam. 3. 2. *In many things we offend all.* And the *Psalmist* declares it as an Universal Truth, that none can stand a Legal Trial, Psal. 130. 3. *If thou Lord shouldst mark iniquities: O Lord, who shall stand?* And for that reason he deprecates it, Psal. 143. 2. *And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.* How many observable *Omissions* must we needs be acquainted with in our selves, if we lay our selves by the Rule in our Recognition of our Lives. Sometimes thro' Fear, sometimes by reason of the Reluctances of some Lust in us, we break the Command; and this and that is left undone, and we must be excused. How do Worldly encumbrances shut out Duties of Worship, and Pleas of Inability make us excuse our selves from that which we know is required? And as to *Transgressions*; how many foolish Thoughts, vain Words, impertinent Actions? Nay, how often are we drawn into bold Sins? For what reason are *Noah*'s Drunkenness, *Abraham*'s Denying his Wife, *Lot*'s Incest, *Elies* fond Indulgence, *David*'s Murder & Adultery, *Solomon*'s Idolatry, and many other left upon Record? but to let us know that a pretence of *sinful Perfection* is a *vain Brag.* And if good Men discover so much to the World, what then may we suppose there is within their *Thoughts*, which are equally obvious to the All-seeing God, with those that are done in the clearest Light?

7. THAT *there is no one Action done by the most Holy Man here, that can bear the exact Scrutiny of this Rule.* If there were but now and then an Error, a Failure in them, yet that were enough to establish the Truth in hand; but this gives abundance more of Light to it, *viz.* That there is not one Duty that can be called out among all which the Believer ever did

did from his Converſion till his Diſſolution, that will bear the tryal of the Rule, ſo as to be found without defect: and ſure, if he never did one thing Perfect, it muſt be a contradiction to ſuppoſe that he can perfectly keep all the Commands: and this more peculiarly reſpects the *Manner* of the doing it, tho' it doth not exclude the *Matter* about which he may in ſomething be miſtaken. The Action may in the ſubſtance be right, as to the Matter, and yet fail in ſome Circumſtance of it; and as to the Manner, if it be not exactly ſquared to the *time* or *ſeaſon*, the *entireneſs* of the Grace in exerciſe, the *degree* of *intenſeneſs*, the *ſingleneſs* of the *end*, or aim in it, in each of theſe there is a fault: his heart may be right with God, as to ſincerity, and he do it by the influence of Grace receiv'd, and the Aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit and with a real aim at the Glory of God: and this will render it acceptable to God, thro' Chriſt, according to the *Covenant of Grace*. But we muſt remember, that as long as we are in the Body, we carry in us a *Body of Death*, which will not be wholly put off, till this *Corruptible, ſhall put on Incorruptibility*: and this remaining Concupiſcence in us, will put in to ſtop, impede, and defile the moſt holy Action, that we do; and the effect of it will be, *that we cannot do the things that we would*, Gal. 5. 17. And this is the very thing which *Paul* makes ſuch a *Moan* about, *Rom.* 7. Not as if he led a wicked Life, but that he could not do what he aſpired after, ſo as he aſpired to; ſo that he is fain in the up-ſhot, to reduce his beſt to that Concluſion, v. 25. *So then with the mind I my ſelf ſerve the law of God; but with the fleſh the law of ſin.* Let the beſt Chriſtian reſolve his beſt Duty, and he will find it muſt come to this in the reſult. In ſuch a *Prayer*, he was carried forth with a holy fervour, but how many wandring thoughts, how much unbelief, what ſiniſter aims, what ignorance, what miſtakes, what flatneſs of mind, *&c.* muſt his own heart condemn him of? How much more may God, whoſe Alſeeing Eye penetrates much further, 1. Joh. 3. 20. *For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.* Let him examine his *Hearing*; he found his heart raiſed, and carried forth abundantly towards God; but how many aliene thoughts darted in, what unbelief, what prejudices, *&c.* And if it be ſo with the Beſt, what then muſt it be, when he was indiſpoſed, as very often he finds and complains of: Certainly he is but little acquainted at home, who doth not readily ſubſcribe upon his ſorrowful Experience to the truth of this.

USE, *I.* THIS *ſhews us how impoſſible it is, that our own Perſonal Obedience, ſhould be the Matter of our Juſtification before God.* How much this Opinion is defended at this day, is well known, and is no ſmall diſcovery of the Apoſtacy of the Times. The falſehood whereof is herein detected; for, the Juſtice of God requires that there be a *Perfect Righteouſneſs*, every way adequate to the Law, which was given as a Rule of Relative Juſtice. For theſe two muſt go together, Rom. 3. 26. *To declare, I ſay, at this time his righteouſneſs: that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him which believeth in Jeſus.* Now if fallen Man had been capable of offering ſuch a Righteouſneſs of his own, Perſonal, that of CHRIST had been ſuperfluous: but the Truth before us makes it evident, that there is no ſuch to be found among meer Men in this Life; whereas the Trial is to paſs according to what is *done here*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. This being the Time of Probation, and afterwards is the Time of Recompence. For tho' CHRIST's Righteouſneſs be imputed to us of meer Grace, yet ſuch an one there muſt be, elſe the Law muſt not be *fulfilled*, but annulled; contrary to, *Matth.* 5. 18. Well therefore did the Apoſtle reach after the obtaining of this as his Sheet-Anchor, Phil. 3 9. *And be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by faith.*

USE, *II.* THIS *then may direct us how to make a right & proper uſe of the Law.* That it is revived to us under the Goſpel, we are aſſured; but we muſt beware how we apply and improve it, leaſt we get hurt inſtead of benefit by it. It is true, it ſtands as a Rule according to which we ought to level our thoughts, words, and actions: but one main uſe that we ſhould make of it is to convince us of our Imperfection, and ſo to drive us out of all our proud expectation of obtaining Happineſs by our exacteſt conformity to it; and to ſhew us the worth of a Saviour, and drive us to ſee after the ſecuring of a true intereſt in Him: To make us utterly to deſpair of obtaining Bleſſedneſs in any other way, but by a ſaving Faith in Him, who alone muſt be our *Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs*, &c. if ever we be ſaved. Let us then *be much in ſtudying the Law*, and ſearching after the *Spiritual* Nature, and the *vaſt Latitude* of it; and withal impartially *comparing of our ſelves* with it as to our thoughts, words, and deeds, and that as to the Matter, Manner, End of our performing them; that ſo we may find that our help is not in our own hands, but that we are to find it in Him: And let this make Him precious to us, and the diſcoveries which are made to us in and by the Goſpel, of a CHRIST, and the way of Salvation by Him, to be *Faithful ſayings, and worthy of all Acceptation*; that ſo, waiting upon Him alone for, we may *ſee his Salvation.*

JULY, 23. 1706.

SER-

SERMON *CCXIV.*

QUESTION, LXXXIII.

ARE all the Tranſgreſſions of the Law equally heinous?

ANSWER.

SOME Sins in themſelves, and by reaſon of ſeveral aggravations, are more heinous in the ſight of God than others.

THE great deſign of the diſpenſation of the *Covenant* to fallen Man, is to direct him how to obtain Salvation by CHRIST, and excite him to repair to CHRIST alone for it. And there are *Two Things* comprehenſively required for his help in this Affair. 1. *That he be perſwaded of his Neceſſity, of thus repairing to Chriſt, in order to his obtaining Eternal Life.* 2. *That he be Inſtructed in the way of the New-Covenant, in which alone he may come to be Intituled to Chriſt, and all His ſaving Benefits.* The *former* of theſe may be reduced to *Three Articles.*

1. MANS *Impotency contracted by the Fall, rendring him utterly unable of himſelf to Anſwer the demands of the Law, that ſo he may be driven from his own Righteouſneſs.* Of which we conſidered under the former.

2. THE *Heinouſneſs of Sin in its Aggravations*: By Conviction whereof the Man may be rouſed from his carnal Security, and put upon ſeeking deliverance from it; and this is that which now lies before us.

3. THE *juſt Demerit of Sin*; by the perſwaſion whereof, the Sinner may be diſreſted in his preſent Natural State, by the ſight of his doleful Miſery, and give himſelf no reſt till he is gotten into Chriſt; which follows in the *next.* The Matter then of our preſent diſquiſition, is, *To conſider, Sin in its Aggravations*; that by the vileneſs of it, we may be awakened to get from under its Dominion, and be led to the more kindly Repentance. A bare Conviction of Sin, as it is a Tranſgreſſion of the holy Law of God, tho' it be enough to ſhew us the evil and danger of it, yet it is not enough for Sinners who Naturally entertain low thoughts of it, and look upon it as no great Matter; and are apt rather to be prejudiced at the Law, which denounceth ſo ſevere threatnings againſt it, and at God Himſelf, who is the Author of the Law: but the more of evil that we diſcover in it, the more concernedneſs will it raiſe in us to eſcape the efficacy of it, and to make the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the only Deliverer, the more precious to us. Now there are *Two Topicks* to which this may be reduced, viz. *The vileneſs or ſinfulneſs of Sin it ſelf.* And *the terribleneſs of it in its fearful Conſequents*: And tho' the *latter* of theſe is more apt to move upon the Affections of ſinful Men, and God is pleaſed to make uſe of it to ſhake Men out of their carnal Security; yet the *former* is in it ſelf the more pungent, and the Spirit of God is wont to apply it home to the Souls of Sinners in the great work of Converſion. This therefore may be accounted for in our *preſent Contemplation.*

NOW that we may take a more diſtinct account of this Matter, it will be proper to introduce the things contained in the *Anſwer*; and *Two Things* may be *Premiſed*, as worthy of our Conſideration, and to prevent our eaſy & ſlight Conceptions of any Sin; and the rather becauſe we are told, Prov. 14. 9. *Fools make a mock at ſin*, viz.

1. THAT *there is no Sin that can be, on a true account, called Little.* Tho' ſpeaking comparatively, this is a leſs Sin than that; yet poſitively to ſay this is a *little* Sin, is contrary to to the reſentments of the *Holy Scriptures.* It is therefore counted falſe Divinity, to call any Sin *little*, ſimply, and without compariſon: and for Men to indulge themſelves in any Sin, under a pretence that it is a *little* one, will be found a *great* one, when God ſhall enter into Judgment with them. But this will further appear under the next thing, *viz.*

2. THAT *there are diverſe reſpects in which all Sins agree, and in that regard are Equal.* And the right conſideration of this will ſufficiently confirm the foregoing Concluſion: for the Sin to which theſe things agree, cannot be truly voted *ſmall.* The *Stoicks* indeed accounted all Sins to be *equal*; but becauſe they diſtinguiſhed not, but laid down their Doctrine Univerſally, they therein miſt it: But in theſe things they are truly alike, *viz.*

1. IN *reſpect of the Ultimate Object againſt whom they are Committed.* That which properly defines Sin, is, that it is againſt GOD; and hence the *Pſalmiſt* hath that Expreſſion, Pſal. 41. 4. *Heal my ſoul, for I have ſinned againſt thee.* Which he looks upon as chiefly to be taken notice of in it: and more emphatically in, Pſal. 51. 4. *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned, and done this evil in thy ſight: that thou mighteſt be juſtified when thou ſpeakeſt, and be clear when thou judgeſt.* *David* knew that by that Sin of his, he had wronged his own Soul, injured *Bathſheba*, and offered wrong to *Uriah*; but this ſwallowing up all, that it was *againſt* GOD. We therefore have the worſt of Sin ſet forth by the Apoſtle, Rom. 3. 23. *For all have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God.* And that ſets forth its vileneſs enough. Man's laſt End to which he was bound by the Rule of ſpecial Government, was to Glorify God actively, and this would have been his happineſs. Now, tho' Man cannot by Sin touch the *Eſſential* Glory of God, yet in it he ſets himſelf againſt his *Declarative* Glory: And there is this Malignity in every Sin, even that which may be accounted the leaſt; and the reaſon of this will be evident, if we conſider,

2. IN

2. IN *respect of the Rule which is violated thereby.* Herein the special Nature of Sin consists, that it is *Anomy*; it is therefore so defined, 1 Joh. 3. 4. *Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the Law: for sin is the transgression of the law.* Sin doth not properly consist in any Action *as such*, but it comes purely under a *Moral* Consideration; and that which denominates *Sin*, ariseth from the *Relation* the Man bears to the *Law of God*, which requires his Conformity to the Commanding Will of God. Man owes Obedience to God; and God hath declared to him what is the Obedience that He requires of him; and therein tells him both what He will have him to *Do*, and what to *Avoid*: If therefore he neglects to do the thing commanded, or perpetrates the thing forbidden, he is in both of these regards chargable with Sin; because he either comes short of, or transgresseth the Law, both of which are included in the word *Anomy*; so that if he were not under a Law, he were incapable of being charged with Sin; for, Rom. 4. 15. *Where there is no law, there is no transgression.* Now it is the *same* Law which is violated, by the *least* and the *greatest* Sin; for which reason the *least* is a Rebellion against God, a rising up against His Government, and that cannot be *little*, for He is a *great King*. And to break God's Law, must needs carry *Emphasis* in it from the Author of it, who is by every such Sin despised, and His Authority trampled upon.

3. IN *that they do all proceed from one and the same fountain of Corruption in the Man.* All Sin is *Original* or *Actual*: *Original* Sin is the root or spring from which all that is *Actual* derives; of which it is said, Jer. 6. 7. *As a fountain casteth out her waters, so she casteth out her wickedness.* And what else is *Original* Sin, but that Depravation which hath Poisoned the whole Man, and thereby rendred his Actions, as they flow from such a Principle, to be Poisonous and Mortiferous. All *Actual* Sins are the spawn or progeny of *Original* Sin upon which Stock they do grow, and must therefore be of it's Nature. So that every Sin, of what size or degree soever, comes out of the same Womb; and to this our Saviour refers both the *smaller* and *greater*, Matth. 15. 19. And therefore one and the same Name belongs to them all, i. e. Sin. Nor is *Murder* or *Adultery* any more a *Sin*, than an *idle Word*, or a *vain Thought*: Prov. 24. 9. *The thought of foolishness is sin.*

4. THE *same Punishment for Kind, is denounced in the Law of God against every Sin.* Among Men indeed there is a difference between *Criminals* and *Capitals*, from which there are diverse Kinds of Penalties allotted to Offenders. But in God's Law of special Government, there is one Statute for *All* Sin whatsoever, Ezek. 18. 4. *The soul that sinneth it shall die.* And thus it was Enacted from the Beginning, Gen. 2. 17. *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* The Guilt of a *sinful Thought*, if it cleaves to the Man, holds him fast bound to suffer Eternal Vengeance; and except it be forgiven to him, he must unavoidably Dye for it: Hence that Advice given to him, Acts 8. 22. *Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.* And surely that Sin must be *great*, that hath such a deadly Malignity in it, that nothing less than the Life of the Soul can satisfy the demands of Justice upon the Sinner: for the holy Law of God is Righteous, and there can be no Unrighteousness in it.

5. *NOTHING less than the Blood of Christ, could be sufficient to expiate the Guilt of the least Sin.* The Justice of the Law demands Satisfaction for Sin, in order to the Sinners escaping the Wrath of God, and Vengence of Hell: We are therefore assured in, Heb. 9. 22. *Without shedding of blood there is no remission.* And tho' the Blood of Christ hath a sufficiency in it, to remove the Guilt of the greatest Sin, and to appease the Wrath of God against the most profligate Sinner; as 1 Joh. 1. 7. *The blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin.* Yet, if He had not Died for us, there is no Sin so *little*, but it would have destroyed us forever: Hence that, Gal. 3. 10. *For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.* And, *Jam.* 2. 10. The *Popish* Distinction of Sin into *Venial* and *Mortal*, as they apply it, is a meer Delusion; for God stands upon every *Apex* of His Law, *Matth.* 5. 18. And if it be so, it is in vain for any to put any dimunitive Epithets upon Sin, thereby to indulge our selves in it. There is no better Glass for us to make a true Prospect of any Sin by, than that which represents to us what it Cost the SON of GOD for us, when He stood in our room to Answer the demands of Justice for us. And surely, if the *least* Sin would Crucify the Son of God, it is a madness to call it *little*.

THESE things being thus premised, we may now proceed to a more *distinct* Consideration of the things that ly before us in the *Answer*. And here, that we may have a clear Discovery of this matter, let us observe;

1. THE *Thing* in general asserted is, *That there are* Degrees *of sinning*; or that there are *those Respects in which some Sins are to be accounted* greater *than others*, and that in *God's sight*, who Judgeth righteous Judgment. The Truth of this will be more fully cleared, when we come to take an Account of the things wherein this Difference consists. But that it is so, may be gathered from the Word of God; and I shall only mention *Two Evidences* of it:

(1.) GOD *Himself puts such a Note of Distinction in His Word*; and for this many Scripture Testimonies might be alledged: Sometimes the Epithet *Great*, is singly mentioned; which tho' it doth not intimate that any Sin is Positively *Little*, the contrary to which is already proved; yet it serves to put an *Emphasis* upon that Sin to which it is joyned; And thus

we have *Moſes* gloſſing upon the Sin of the *Golden Calf*, Exod. 32. 31. *This people have ſinned a great ſin, and have made them gods of gold.* And thus *David* reflects upon his Sin, when he requeſts Forgiveneſs for it; Pſal. 25. 11. *For thy names ſake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.* Sometimes this is ſet forth by the Rule of *Compariſon*, which directly & plumply aſſerts the thing: Among others, we have ſuch Remarks, 1 *Kings* 16 35. 2 *Chron.* 33. 9. Jer. 7. 26. *They did worſe than their Fathers.* Joh. 19. 11. *He that delivered me unto thee hath the greater ſin.* 2 Tim. 3. 13. *Evil men and ſeducers ſhall wax worſe & worſe.*

(2.) *THE Word of God alſo threatens ſorer Judgments againſt ſome, than others, on the Account of their Sins.* And that, not only *temporal*, but *ſpiritual* and *eternal Plagues.* And this muſt needs bear a reſpect to the *greatneſs* of the Sins for which they are ſo threatned: For though God uſeth much of His Sovereignty, in His diſpenſing of His Judgments in this World, it being a Place wherein His *Mercy* moderates His *Wrath*, in the Executions of it; yet, in the Life to come, He diſtributes *to every one according to their Works*, 2 Cor. 5. 10. And tho' the *leaſt* Sin deſerves as much of Wrath as the Creature is capable of ſuſtaining, yet where the *greater* meaſures of Wrath are inflicted in the Day of Recompence, it ſaith that the Sins of ſuch were Aggravated here: Nor need we look any further to clear up this, than with what our Saviour once and again expreſſed in this Caſe, Matth. 10. 15. *Verily I ſay unto you, It ſhall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha, in the day of judgment, than for that city.* And, 11. 22. Wherein this difference in Puniſhment conſiſts, doth not come under our preſent Diſquiſition, and may probably be too curious an enquiry to be made.

2. BUT as to the *Aggravations of Sin*, by which they become more heinous and provoking unto God; we have conſidered it *Negatively* under the *Preliminaries*; and we are to proceed to the *Poſitive* part of it: And this our *Catechiſm* reduced to *Two Heads*, which may be ſpoken to apart.

I. *SOME Sins are in themſelves greater and more heinous than others.* This is to be warily conſidered, elſe we ſhall Contradict what hath been already ſaid. When therefore it is ſaid that they are ſo in *themſelves*, we are not to underſtand it, *as they are Sins*, for ſo they are *Equal*; for Sin as to its *general* Nature is, *a Tranſgreſſion of the Law*; which Definition equally belongs to every Sin, of what Denomination ſoever: And here we are to obſerve, that tho' all the *Precepts* of God are of *Equal Authority*, as they proceed from One Lawgiver, who requires Obedience to them; yet there are *ſome Reſpects* in which they do *Morally* differ; and that with reſpect to the *Matter* enjoyned in them, or the *Object* to which they nextly direct our Service. It is true, all our Obedience is to be directed to God Ultimately; but then there are the things themſelves, in which this Obedience is to be performed, and to which it is nextly and immediately directed: And in this regard Sins will admit of Aggravation from the conſideration that there is a difference between theſe. And here a *few things* may be obſerved for our help in a right Apprehenſion of this:

1. *THO' the Law is one, yet the things Commanded or Forbidden in the Law are diverſe.* The Law bears a reſpect to the whole Concerns of Man, as he was made for the Service of God, to whom he is to conſecrate his whole Life; and hath, for that end, Precepts given referring to the whole and every part of it, in every Station, Relation, Occaſion; and therefore we have that Rule given us, 1 Cor. 10. 31. *Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatſoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.* Nor is there ſo much as a Thought, Word or Deed, but comes under the Regulation of the Command, and ought to be ſquared according to it. All theſe therefore are to be accounted for, to God, as He is our *Judge*: Hence that, Heb. 4. 12. *The word of God is a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* And, Matth. 12. 36. *I ſay unto you, That every idle word that men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give account thereof in the day of judgment.* For which reaſon the Pſalmiſt hath that requeſt, Pſal. 19. 14. *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy ſight, O Lord my ſtrength and my redeemer.*

2. THAT *the Law it ſelf is reduced to* Two Heads, *with reſpect to the next Immediate Object which we are pointed to.* We may obſerve that God, when He revived the Law on Mount *Sinai*, wrote the ſeveral Precepts of it upon *Two Tables*, which carries Matter of Inſtruction in it. And tho' we are not told in the Hiſtory, how it was divided in them; yet our Saviour Chriſt gives us a ſufficient intimation about it, in that He reduceth all to *Two* comprehenſive Commands; the one reſpecting *God*, the other in regard of *our Neighbour*, Matth. 22. 37, 38, 39. And on this Account *Paul* when he aſſerts his Uprightneſs, reduceth it to theſe *Two* Heads; Acts 24. 16. *And herein do I exerciſe my ſelf to have always a conſcience void of offence toward God, and toward men.* Intimating that he had Conſcientiouſly done his Duty towards *Both*.

3. THAT *in reſpect of Both theſe, there are the Degrees of Sinning, in regard of the Matter which they are nextly applied unto.* My meaning is, that the *thing it ſelf* puts a difference in the *Atrociouſneſs* of the Sin, with reſpect to the things Commanded, notwithſtanding the Obligation of the Law is the ſame. For tho' God gives us no Diſpenſation to allow our ſelves in any Sin; yet ſome Sins are more Vile than others, becauſe they are in things which in their *own Nature* are *greater* and *more abominable*: And the reaſon is, becauſe there are the *great things* of the Law, which infers that there are *leſſer*, as is evident from that of our Saviour in, Matth. 23. 23. *And*

have

have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith. Hence God ſo greatens the Sins of His People in that, Hoſ. 8. 12 *I have written to him the great things of my law.* And on this account we have that to the Prophet, Ezek 8. 6. *The great abominations that the houſe of Iſrael committeth.* 13. *Turn thee yet again, and thou ſhalt ſee greater abominations that they do.*

HERE then we may more *particularly* obſerve theſe things ;

1. SINS *againſt the* Firſt *Table are more heinous than ſuch as are againſt the* Second. And the reaſon of this is, becauſe they are more directly Committed againſt *GOD*, whereas the next Object of the other is our *Neighbour* ; and as God is greater than Man, ſo the Affront that is offered to Him, muſt needs be more daring, and more unreaſonable : This is intimated in that, 1 Sam. 2. 25. *If one man ſin againſt another, the judge ſhall judge him : but if a man ſin againſt the Lord, who ſhall intreat for him ?* In this regard it is more horrid for Men to *Deny God*, to *Worſhip Idols*, to *Blaſpbame God's Name*, and to *trample upon His Honour*, than to *Wrong* or *Injure* a Man like our ſelves. And altho' there are more ſevere Puniſhments inflicted upon Men for ſome Breaches of the *Second Table*, than Affronts offered to ſome of the *Firſt* : This is not becauſe theſe are *greater* in themſelves ; but becauſe either Men are more concerned for themſelves than for the Glory of God ; or becauſe *human Laws* do nextly reſpect the Good of *human Society*, which cannot conſiſt without a more ſevere Teſtimony born againſt them ; and yet the Neglect of the other, brings more awful Judgments upon Men ; and if Men will not, God will vindicate His own Glory. But in this thing it ſelf we find that to be uſed as an Aggravation of their Guilt : Hence that, 1 Theſ. 4. 8. *He therefore that deſpiſeth, deſpiſeth not man, but God.* 1 *Sam.* 8. 7. But this muſt be conſidered with ſome Diſtinctions.

Hence,

2. THERE *are the Degrees of Guilt with reſpect to the ſeveral Commands of each Table* : For we obſerved, that we muſt conſider not only the *Object* againſt which, but alſo the *Matter* about which the Sin is concerned. And here there is an obſervable *Difference* to be made between one Sin and another. And that,

(1.) IN reſpect of Sins againſt the *Firſt* Table : Theſe are all of them directly againſt GOD ; but in ſome there is a greater Diſhonour caſt upon Him, than in others : Doubtleſs, *Atheiſm*, *Idolatry*, *Blaſphemy*, do carry a more horrid Aſpect on them, than *Superſtition* ; and it is a greater Sin, in reſpect of the Sin it ſelf, to *Curſe God*, than to *Omit* a Duty of *Poſitive Worſhip*, becauſe it carrieth higher open Contempt in it.

(2.) IN reſpect of Sins againſt the *Second* Table. Tho' every Command of it be alike Authorized by God ; yet Reaſon it ſelf tells us, that it is a greater Injury that is done to our Neighbour by *Murder* and *Adultery*, than by *Theft* and *Obloquy* ; yea and by *Murder* than *Adultery*, becauſe the Man's *Life*, which is the moſt precious thing to him in this World, is hereby cut off ; and all Opportunities of glorifying God in this World, are put to an end.

3. THERE *are ſome Sins againſt the* Second *Table, which may be more heinous than ſome Sins againſt the* Firſt. For tho' in general, it is a Truth with reſpect to the Object, that *Love to God*, required in the Firſt Table, is the great Command, and *Love to our Neighbour* is like to it, but is required *ſecondarily* ; yet as God hath required us to teſtify our Love to Him, by our Love to our Neighbour, according to, 1 Joh 4. 20. *For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God whom he hath not ſeen.* So he counts it a Sin in us, to omit the neceſſary Duties of the *Second*, under a pretence of the *Firſt* ; and for this reaſon we have that Remark, Hoſ 6 6. *For I deſired mercy and not ſacrifice, and the knowlege of God, more than burnt offerings.* God therefore requires that we omit for the Seaſon, thoſe Religious Duties of Worſhip which are required in the *Firſt Table*, when there is a preſſing Neceſſity to attend thoſe of the *Second* And indeed, God needs not our Service, to do Him any Benefit, whereas our Neighbours need it, and we ſerve God in doing it : And doubtleſs, where one Duty muſt give place to another, the Neglect of this muſt be a greater Sin in it ſelf.

4. *THE more of the* Love of God *that appears in the Command, the more Heinous muſt be the Tranſgreſſion of it.* Love carries the greateſt Obligation in it ; and the Contempt of it comes under the brand of *Ingratitude*, which is as black a Mark as can be ſet upon a Sin : The more that God hath done for Men to engage them, is an Aggravation of the Fault ; but that will come to be conſidered afterwards. That which is now before us, is the Conſideration of that *Love* that appears in the Command *it ſelf* ; when the very Deſign of it is to direct us to that, in our Compliance wherewithal, we ſhall be rendered Happy ; and if He had not given us ſuch a Command, we muſt needs have been Miſerable forever. On this account, Sins againſt the *Goſpel* muſt needs be more Heinous than Sins againſt the *Law*, becauſe in it the great Love and good Will of God to Men, is made to appear. Now the great Command where the Goſpel comes, is to *Believe in Chriſt for Salvation*, 1 Joh. 3. 23 *This is his commandment, that we ſhould believe on the name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt.* And for this reaſon we ſhall find the moſt fearful Menaces out againſt *Unbelief* ; Chriſt therefore tells us in Joh. 3. 18. *He that believeth not, is condemned already.* And when He would ſet forth the moſt dreadful Puniſhments that can be inflicted on Men, He expreſſeth it by that which ſhall befall theſe, Luk. 12. 46. *And will appoint him his portion with unbelievers.* And it is on this account, that the greater intollerableneſs of the Penalty of ſuch is denounced : Hence that in, Heb. 10. 28, 29. *He that deſpiſed Moſes law, died without mercy, under two or three witneſſes : Of how much ſorer puniſhment, ſuppoſe ye, ſhall he be thought wor-*

thy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was ſanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done deſpite unto the Spirit of grace?

5. *THE more of Sins there are comprehended in One Sin, the more heinous it muſt be.* And the reaſon of this is manifeſt and indiſputable, inaſmuch as every Sin carries heinouſneſs in it; and therefore when *many* do meet in one, there is a *Compound* of Man's Malignant Ingredients, which muſt needs intend the *Virulency* of it: And in this regard, as well as others, the *Firſt Sin* of our *Firſt Parents*, was very great, and is called the *Tranſgreſſion*; for, as Divines have well obſerved, there was in it a direct Violation of all the Commands of the Moral Law, in both the Firſt and Second Table; tho' it was alſo Aggravated by many other Circumſtances; there was the greateſt *Diſhonour* done to *GOD*, and all manner of *Injury* done to *Men* in it. Thus alſo was *David*'s Sin in the matter of *Uriah*, a very great Sin, in that it had not only greateſt *Ingratitude*, but was a multiplied *Accumulation* of many grievous Sins. And on this account *Original Sin*, which is the depravation of our Nature, is called *that Sin*, and *ſinful Sin*; and the Notes of peculiar Infamy are put upon it, becauſe it is the Womb in which all Sins are bred, which are but the Spawn of it; being contained in it. There is no one Sin that we can poſſibly name, but what hath it's in-being in this Sin of Nature: And hence every particular Sin that Men Contract the Guilt of to themſelves, is but *little* to what *this* is, that contains *all* in it. And if one of theſe be ſo horribly Vile, what muſt the Source and Fountain of Sin be? Well then might he cry out, Rom. 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?*

II. THE *ſame Sins for* Kind, *may be greater or leſſer, by the* Circumſtances *attending them.* We are therefore told, that they may be made more *Heinous*, by *ſeveral Aggravations*; and for this alſo there is ſufficient footing in the Word of God, as may be taken account of when we come to the *particulars*; and for this reaſon, when God would lay Men under humbling Apprehenſions of the Vileneſs of their Sin, he lays before them ſuch amplifying Conſiderations, as may render them moſt Vile; an Emphatical Inſtance whereof we have in, 2 Sam. 12. *beg.*

AND here in *general*, we may take theſe *Two Rules*;

1. THE *more of the* Malignity of the Heart *appears in the Commiſſion of a Sin, the greater is the Guilt that is contracted thereby.* For as Sin is rooted in the Heart, and God both knows and judgeth of the Heart; ſo, the more engaged the Heart is in it, the more violently doth the Malignity of it break forth; and ſo much the more doth the Man diſplay the eagerneſs that is in him in the Proſecution of it. And indeed herein the heighth of Contempt of God's Holy Law is expreſſed, and thereby the Man is rendred the more inexcuſable. And how many ways this is done, may be more particularly glanced at in the ſequel.

2. HENCE it follows, That *a Sin leſſer in* it ſelf, *may by the* Circumſtances *accompanying it, be* greatly Aggravated; *and a Sin* greater *in it ſelf, may be* leſſened *by them.* Men are apt to Judge of things by the Conſideration of the things themſelves; and therefore if they can pleaſe themſelves, that the Matter is but *ſmall*, their Conſciences have little or no touches with Regret at them; they can the eaſier admit of the Temptation, and ſilence all Remorſes on the Reflection, judging the Matter to be but a Trifle, and not to be regarded. But the Word of God gives us ſufficient diſcovery of their grand Miſtake on this Account; and the very *littleneſs* of the thing, may be an *aggravating Circumſtance* of the Fault, as will afterwards be Conſidered: And we find that God many times is pleaſed to Try Men with ſuch things in His *Poſitive* Precepts, thereby to diſcover either their *Sincerity*, or the *Naughtineſs* of their Hearts. It is certain, that the *firſt Trial* which God gave to Man, in his *State of Integrity*, was a thing in it ſelf *ſmall*: The *Eating of the Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge* was therefore a Sin, becauſe God reſerved it by a *Poſitive* Precept from Man's uſing it as *Food*, which had otherwiſe been as lawful as any other. And yet how *Heinous* this Sin was, and how much God was Provoked by it, is abundantly manifeſt, in that it brought, not only on our *Firſt Parents*, but all their *Poſterity*, that Curſe, which involved in it all the Miſeries of Time and Eternity. But theſe things may be further purſued, in the particular Contemplation of them.

[SEPTEMBER 17. 1706.]

SERMON *CCXV.*

WE are upon the Enquiry into the *Circumſtances* by which Sin may be Aggravated, and the Guilt thereof encreaſed And it would be endleſs to go about, to enumerate all the ſeveral particulars wherein this might be inſtanced from the Word of God. Nevertheleſs, becauſe it is needful, that we be acquainted with this Matter, that we may be helped the more to loath our ſelves for our Sins, by the Conſideration of the *Heinouſneſs* of them, we may take an Account of the more *Conſiderable* and *Comprehenſive* of them. And there are ſeveral Heads that Divines reduce theſe unto, which I ſhall endeavour to gather up in theſe that follow, *viz.*

I. SINS are to be counted *greater* or *leſſer* from the *Degree* or *Progreſs*, that Men have made in the Commiſſion of them. A Sin may grow *worſe* and *worſe* by Degrees; and every ſtep that is taken in it Augments it.

HERE theſe things may be conſidered,

1. THERE are the firſt *Motions* or *Startings* of Sin in the Mind, Antecedaneous to the Conſent, or Deliberation. Theſe are by ſome denied to be Sins; but without reaſon; for tho' the

the bare *Knowledge* of Sin, is not Sin; yet the *Motions* of it in the Heart, tho reſiſted by Grace, are from a contrary Principle, which is nothing elſe but *Original Concupiſcence*; and whatſoever derives from that, is Sin: And the truth is, the Temptation of Sin begins here, and it defiles the Soul, and calls us to be humbled: It belongs to the *luſtings of the fleſh*, Gal. 5. 17.

2. THERE are the *Inward Deliberations* upon the Motion thus made. Theſe alſo may be ſuppoſed to preoccupy the Reſolution; and the Man is as yet in ſuſpenſe, and undetermined; but yet he ponders whether he ſhall or no, and ſo is off and on, this alſo is Sin; for it is our duty, to reject the firſt Movings with abhorrence, as, *Job* 2. 10. *Acts* 8. 20.

3. THERE is the *Conſent* that is gained to the *Motion*, with a purpoſe to comply with it. And when this is arrived at, now *Sin hath conceived*: there is a perfect *Embrio* of it in the heart, and it waits but for a fit Opportunity for the production of it: And this is in God's Account as if the Man had already committed the Sin, for it hath gotten a rooting in his Superiour Faculties: this is the *thought of fooliſhneſs* which is ſaid to *be Sin*, Prov. 24. 9. Hence we have our *Saviour's* remark upon this very thing, Matth. 5. 28. *But I ſay unto you, That whoſoever looketh on a woman to luſt after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*

4. THERE follow the *Conſultations* or *Contrivances* how to Commit the Sin thus conſented to and propoſed. The Man waits for a fit ſeaſon, makes all things ready for the Execution of his purpoſe, and is in travail till he can bring it forth. Hence that in Job 15 35. *They conceive miſchief, and bring forth vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit.* Pſal 7. 11. And how reſtleſs they are in it, we are told, Prov. 4. 16. *For they ſleep not except they have done miſchief: and their ſleep is taken away, unleſs they cauſe ſome to fall.* They make every thing ready, and endeavour to put every thing out of the way, which might offer to prevent them; and if diſappointed, it puts them to a great deal of pain and ſorrow; and like *Amnon*, they are *lean from day to day.*

5. THERE is the *Actual Commiſſion* of the Sin. This is the *bringing forth of it*, and the Sin is accompliſhed; before this, it was but incompleat as to the finiſhing of it, altho' in every of theſe ſteps, there was ſin really committed: and *all theſe ſteps* may be taken notice of in the *Tranſgreſſion of our firſt Parents*, as appears from the *Hiſtory*; and are implyed in every Actual Sin, tho' in ſome they proceed with more Precipitancy than in others.

6. THIS often proceeds from the *Act*, to the *Cuſtom*, in practice of it. Sometimes the Conſcience is ſmitten upon the *Act*, and the Man Repents; but ſometimes he is ſo well pleaſed with it, that he falls into a Courſe of it, and it grows to a rooted *Habit*, and he drives a *Trade* of it, and it becomes his way. Hence we read of the *way of Sinners*, Prov. 12. 26. 13. 15. *The way of tranſgreſſors is hard.* Now tho' there be ſin in every of theſe, the more is the progreſs, the worſe it is: and the Man is then arrived to a great height of Iniquity, when he proceeds from *Deliberation* to *Execution*, & from the *Act* to the *Practice*; and this is the way wherein Sinners do gradually arrive to the top of Wickedneſs, and do thereby ripen apace for Ruin.

II. SINS are aggravated by the *Scandal* that ariſeth from them. The more ſcandal is given by them, the more miſchievous are they; and there is a *Twofold Scandal* here to be conſidered: *viz. The Reproach which is caſt upon Religion by it*, and, *The hurt that is done to the Souls of Men thereby.* It was a brand put upon the *fall of David*, that he had given occaſion for God's Name to ſuffer, 2 *Sam.* 12. 14. And it is a reflection made upon *Peter's Diſſimulation*, Gal. 2. 13. Now that which I peculiarly aim at here, is the Conſideration of *the Perſon by whom the Sin is committed*; when he is one, from whom, for ſpecial reaſon, Better was juſtly expected; and for that reaſon his Sin is more influential, and others are thereupon more apt to reflect upon God, or to take Example from, to indulge themſelves in their wickedneſs, and juſtify themſelves in it; and this refers to,

1. PERSONS of Eminent *Place & Authority*: Such as are in a *Publick Poſt*, who ſtand as Lights upon an hill, whoſe duty it is to be Leaders, in that which is holy, juſt & good. Thus a Sin is aggravated when done by a *Magiſtrate*, who ought to bear witneſs againſt, and puniſh Sin in others; if he commit the ſame, he pulls down with one hand, what he pretends to build with the other. Hence we have that remark, 2 *Sam.* 11 *ult.* Thus a Sin in a *Miniſter*, is more Scandalous than in Ordinary Chriſtians, becauſe it is his Duty to Preach in his Life, as well as in his Doctrine. Hence that, Matth. 5. 16. *Let your light ſo ſhine before men, that they may ſee your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.* And that reprimand, Rom. 2. 21. *Thou therefore which teacheſt another, teacheſt thou not thy ſelf? thou that preacheſt a man ſhould not ſteal, doſt thou ſteal?* And it was *John's* commendation, Joh. 5. 35. *He was a burning and a ſhining light.* And this may be applied to *Parents*, and *Family-Governours*, &c.

2. PERSONS of great *Influence & Reputation* for Godlineſs. Such as make an Eminent Profeſſion, and the Eyes of many are upon them, they are eſteemed Men of Wiſdom, Diſcretion, and Men are apt to put Confidence in them; their Sayings are Oracles, and their *Examples* are taken for a Commentary on the Rule: for theſe to indulge themſelves in any Sin, and ſo draw others to imitate them; God's Name greatly ſuffers hereby, and Apoſtaſy grows apace upon a People. When the *famous Men* in the Congregation roſe againſt *Moſes & Aaron*, what a Miſchief followed upon it? *Numb* 16. *beg.*

3. PERSONS that have been very *Zealous* and *Forward* in bearing Witneſs againſt ſuch Sins in others. They condemn their Neighbours, and declaim againſt theſe & thoſe things as vile, and brand ſuch as do them, with Notes of Infamy: if theſe fall into the like Sins, it

opens

opens all Mens Mouths, and ungodly Men are apt to say, Sure y Religion is but a Cheat, and Zeal in it is nothing but Hypocrisy. Hence *Paul* speaks heavily to such, Rom. 2. 1. *Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thy self; for thou that judgest, doest the same things.* Those things would but little be taken notice of in others, but in these they make a great noise.

III. SINS are aggravated from the *Ingratitude* which they discover in the Commission of them. The greater Obligations of Kindness, that God hath laid upon Men to serve Him faithfully, and avoid provoking Him by their Iniquities, the more unworthily do they carry themselves hereby: The more God hath done for Men, the stronger Bonds hath He laid upon them to glorify Him; for this is the Design, and He expects it, Psal. 105. ult. *That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws.* And therefore this was one Article that He brought against them, Hos. 11. 4. *I drew them with the cords of a man, with bands of love, and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them.* And it is all that we can do, to testify our acknowledgement of His Beneficence, to do the things that Please Him, and avoid those that do Offend Him; and the more of this Kindness He hath shewn to us, the more unreasonable is our Sinning against Him: Could *David* make that complaint against *Achitophel* in *Psal.* 55. 22, *&c.* much more may God against Sinners that have lived upon His Bounty. Hence we have such an Expostulation, Deut. 32. 6. *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people & unwise? Is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, & established thee?* And this may be considered,

1. WITH respect to the *common Goodness* of God, in which He makes Men to partake. The Apostle hath that, Rom. 2. 4. *Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?* Not to Improve Temporary Mercies to Repentance, but harden our selves in Sin by them, is to *Despise* it, and God Himself, who is the Author of it. They therefore that have the greatest share in this Benevolence, run deepest into Arrears with God, if they indulge themselves in Sin thereby, instead of rousing themselves up to Holiness: We therefore find that this is urged by the Prophet upon *David*, to set forth the foulness of his Sin, 2 Sam. 12. 7. *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul.* And thus God complains of His Vineyard, Isa. 5 4. *What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?* And Chap. 1. 2, 3. *Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his masters crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.* And the very light of Nature condemns this as a thing most unreasonable.

2. WITH respect to the more *peculiar displays* of His *Grace & Favour* to them. To some He only affords his common Goodness, but to others He makes the discovery of his special Kindness: It was that which rendred the *Gentiles* inexcusable, that they had the *former*, Acts 14. 17. *Nevertheless, he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food & gladness* How much more then are they guilty to whom He affords his *Gospel*, and the displays of his Grace to them herein? *David* puts that remark upon it, Psal. 147. 19, 20. *He shewed his word unto Jacob, his statutes & his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for his judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye the Lord.* And God Himself makes that improvement of it, Amos 3. 2. *You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.* And it still riseth higher, when He hath bestowed his *Saving Grace* upon Men, and hath thereby put the greatest difference between them and others, in that he hath thereby freed them from the *Wrath to come*, and entituled them to *Eternal Glory.* Sins therefore that are committed by such, must needs carry a *peculiar aggravation* upon them, and call for the most soaking Repentance: There is therefore an *Emphasis* in that Expression, Deut. 32. 29. *O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!* 1 King. 11. 9. *And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice.*

IV. SIN is aggravated by the consideration of the *Season* wherein it is Committed. It is not only to be observed *what* the Sin is, but also *when* it was done: and that, whether in regard of the *Time it self*, or *something in Providence*, which makes the *Time* more remarkable: And therefore we shall find that the Word of God takes a particular Notice of the Time when such a thing was done, and puts an *Asterism* up it. And here,

1. IT is more heinous to commit the same Sin on the *Sabbath*, than upon another day. There is an holy Sabbath which God hath Sanctified, and required us to keep it holy; and as He hath made it a Sin on that Day to do the things, which are lawful in Common Time, so it puts a *Note of Impudence* upon the Sins which are then perpetrated. Hence that, Ezek. 22. 8. *Thou hast despised mine holy things, and hast profaned my sabbaths.* And 23. 38. *Moreover, this they have done unto me, they have defiled my sanctuary in the same day, and have profaned my sabbaths.* And it must needs be so, because to the Sin it self, which carries guilt with it, there is added a despising and *profaning the Sabbath* it self, which accumulates the guilt.

2. IT

2. IT magnifies the Tranſgreſſion, when it is done after ſome *Signal Mercies*, that we have received at the hands of God. We before obſerved, that to Sin againſt Goodneſs is moſt unreaſonable; but ſometimes there are peculiar and eminent Favours which God beſtows upon Men; and for Men preſently upon the Receipt of them to fall into Sin, puts a Note of reproach upon it, and argues *forgetfulneſs & contempt*. Sometimes there are wonderful deliverances out of trouble, which God affords Men, beyond their expectation; and for them preſently, practically to ſay as they, Jer. 7. 10. *We are delivered to do all theſe abominations*? is an horrible thing. For this reaſon we have that good Man making ſuch a reflection, Ezra 9.13, 14. *After all that is come upon us — ſhould we again break thy Commandments*? &c. What is this but to imitate wicked *Pharaoh*, upon whom that brand is ſet, to denote his moſt egregious Impiety, Exod. 8. 15. *But when Pharaoh ſaw that there was reſpit, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had ſaid.* And how frequent remarks are made upon *Iſrael* in this regard, in the *Book* of the *Judges*?

3. IT is alſo augmented, when it is under the *grievous Judgments of God*. The deſign of Judgments is to call Men to Repentance, and make them afraid to ſin: when therefore inſtead of that, they become irritatious to it, it diſcovers the great power that Corruption hath in them. To dare to ſin under the threatnings and tokens of Anger, is very grievous; but to perſiſt & grow more reſolute when the rod is upon us, and we feel the ſmart of it, is ſuperlative Wickedneſs. Hence we have that brand ſet upon him, 2 Chron. 28. 22. *And in the time of his diſtreſs did he treſpaſs yet more againſt the Lord: this is that king Ahaz.* And this alſo is laid to the charge of that People, Iſai 42. 25. *Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the ſtrength of battel: and it hath ſet him on fire round about, yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.* God therefore looks upon it as a token that ſuch are beyond Ordinary hopes of Reformation, Iſai. 1. 5. *Why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more? ye will revolt more and more.* God expects that his Judgments upon others ſhould be Inſtructive; how much more then, when they themſelves feel the ſmart of them. Hence that, Iſai. 26. 9. Zeph. 3. 7. *I ſaid, Surely thou wilt fear me: thou wilt receive inſtruction.*

4. IT is aggravated, when it is committed *after an Ordinance* which Men have been waiting upon. When Men go to the Houſe of God, and there pretend the Worſhip of God, and are counſelled from his Word, and told of Sin and Duty, to run away from thence to their lewd practices, herein *they caſt contempt upon the word of God*, and put an affront upon the Counſels of God; this renders them like the impudent Woman, Prov. 7. 14. *I have peace-offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows.* And when Men after a *Faſt* ſolemniz'd, run preſently to their former Courſes, as if they Faſted on purpoſe; Iſai. 58. 4. *Behold, ye faſt for ſtrife & debate, and to ſmite with the fiſt of wickedneſs.* And doubtleſs, the *diſorders & revels* that are ſo frequent in the *Night following the Sabbath*, are grievous to an holy God, and a Scandal to the holy Religion that Men profeſs.

V. IT adds to the Vileneſs of Sin, when it is againſt the *Obligations* which a Man hath brought himſelf under to the contrary. Sometimes Men, under conviction, do voluntarily do ſomething, by which of their own accord, they bind themſelves ſome way, to avoid ſuch things for the future: And by the violation of theſe, and returning to their Sins again, they do much *greaten* it, and make themſelves more vile by it. And this is done, *when it is after*,

1. PENITENT *Confeſſions* made of it to God, and poſſibly to Men. They have been aſhamed, of, and ſorry for, what they have done; and have with much ſeeming affection, taken the Blame to themſelves, laid themſelves low, acknowledged their Guilt & Demerit, and ſought for forgiveneſs, and yet they Sin again: They *Sin & Confeſs*, and Sin again, and Confeſs; and they go in a *round*. Thus did *Pharaoh*, as the *Hiſtory* acquaints us.

2. PROMISES made of *Reformation*. And theſe are frequently the concomitants of *Confeſſions*, and uſher in their *Petitions* for forgiveneſs: They engage, and poſſibly make *Vows*, that they will do ſo no more; if God *will ſpare them but this once, they will amend their ways*, and be more heedful to themſelves, for the time to come; and now God ſpares them, and puts them upon a further Trial; but as ſoon as His Hand is off them, they forget their Vows and Engagements, and to it again: Thus alſo did *Pharaoh*. And this increaſeth their Guilt by the addition of the *Breach of Promiſe*, which muſt needs be very provoking to God, becauſe herein they Lye to him.

3. FIRM *Covenants* which they have entred into to forſake ſuch Courſes. And this is ſomething more than a bare Promiſe: They bind themſelves after a moſt *ſolemn manner*, poſſibly *Write & Subſcribe, and Seal a Covenant* between God and them; and yet when they are eaſed of their trouble, they break all ſuch Bonds, and return again to their Sins, with as much eagerneſs as if there had been no ſuch thing. This was the Sin of thoſe *Jews*, againſt whom for their ſo doing, God denounceth ſuch a fearful threatning, *Jer.* 34. 17, *&c.*

4. REPENTANCES. They not only thus engage themſelves to do, but they Practice upon it: *They turn from their evil ways*, and take up a Reformation, very ſemblable, and make a *fair ſhew* as if they were in good earneſt; but they ſoon grow weary of their Repentance, and repent of it, & now they break over all bounds, and grow worſe than ever: This alſo is charged upon them, *Jer.* 34. And we have all this exemplifyed in them, *Judg.* 10. 15, 16. And yet we find, *Chap.* 13. 1.

VI. SIN is aggravated, by the Conſideration of the *Means* of *Prevention*, which they Sin againſt. All are not alike advantaged on this account, and therefore do not Sin at ſo high a

Rate

Rate as these do. And here there are diverse things that come under Observation; Especially,

1. WHEN it is against *the light afforded Men by the Word of God.* All do not enjoy this, and so they labour of unavoidable Ignorance in many things: We therefore have that Remark, Acts 17.30. *And the times of this Ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent.* And we have that observable Speech of our Saviour, Joh. 15. 22. *If I had not come, and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.* And if Men are Ignorant under Gospel Light, it will not Excuse them; it being their own Default, who shut their Eyes against the Light that shone before them: This therefore our Saviour assures is a main Article against such as these, Joh. 3. 19. *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

2. WHEN it is against *the Light & Conviction of Conscience.* There are the Remains of *Natural Light* in Men's Consciences, and they may be enlightned by the Word of God: And there may be the Activity of Conscience telling them this is a Sin, and ought not to be done; and if for all this, Men will adventure to do it, it shews a great degree of Wickedness: Hence that, Rom. 2. 14, 15. *For when the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while, accusing, or else excusing one another.* And this is supposed to be included in that Job 24. 13. *They are of those that rebel against the light, they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof.* *viz.* Either the Light of *Conscience*, or the Light of *Revelation*: And this is a Rule of very great Contumacy, because Conscience is put into Man to Check him.

3. WHEN it is against the *Promises and Threatnings of the Word of God*, which are laid before them. When God's Messengers give them *Warning*, tell them that if they do such things they will certainly stir up His Anger, and pull His Wrath on their Heads: We therefore have that Aggravation intimated, Jer. 44. 4. *Howbeit, I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, saying, Oh do not this abominable thing that I hate.* And Exemplified in those, Ver. 16. *As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee.* They also offer *gracious Invitations* to forsake their Sin, and turn to God with all their Hearts; but they will not be perswaded, but pursue their way of Unholiness, *Jonah* 2. 8.

4. WHEN they have the *Holy Examples* of Pious Men set before them, and they will not *imitate* them; but *follow* the *Lewd Examples* of Wicked Men. Tho' they see their *Rulers*, their *Ministers*, their *Parents*, and good *Neighbours* set them a Pattern of good Conversation, they hear them all: This therefore is noted as a daring Wickedness, Isa. 26. 10. *In the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly.* And is laid to the Charge of that ungodly Prince, Jer 22. 15, &c. *Shalt thou reign, because thou closest thy self in cedar? did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice, and then it was well with him? He judged the cause of the poor and needy, then it was well with him: was not this to know me, saith the Lord. But thine eyes and thine heart are not, but for thy covetousness,* &c.

VII. SIN is aggravated by the *Manner* of Men's Committing of them. Men may Commit the same Sins, and yet discover a great difference in the Mode of them; and this also the word of God takes notice of, and Animadverts upon: and here also several things may be taken notice of,

1. SINS committed on *Deliberation*, are worse than such as are done on a *sudden Temptation*: For, tho' Circumspection is a Duty, and *Rashness* is it self a Sin, yet there is more of Malignity discovered by premeditated Sinning, than by doing it on a surprize. Hence, *Mat.* 2. 1. And good Men too often do that in their hast, which had they not been suddenly surprized, but took time to reflect, they would have rejected with detestation.

2. SINS committed with *Greediness*, are worse than if they were done with *Reluctancy* or *Regret*. This latter argues Infirmity, and that the Temptation is too hard for them, but that there is a better Principle stirring in the Man: whereas the former intimates that his wickedness is impetuous, and that he hath sold himself to do wickedly. This therefore is another Observation made in the word of God concerning some persons, Eph. 4. 19. *Who being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.* It argues a brawny Conscience, that is overgrown with a *Callus*, or one that is *Seared*, 1. Tim. 4. 2.

3. SINS committed with *Delight* & *Pleasure*, are worse than such as are done in *Fear*. Men are sometimes frighted into a Sin by threats, and apprehended danger, if they do it not; but they do not approve of the thing that they do; this ought not to be: But when he is highly gratifyed, and takes content in his Villany, this is a sign that his heart is in it. This therefore is taken notice of, Prov. 2. 14. *Who rejoyce to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked.*

4. SHAMELESSNESS or *Impudence* in Sinning, is an aggravating Circumstance of it. When Men are ashamed and blush upon the Commission of Sin, it argues that they are under some check upon their Minds; but when they have no shame left in them, but do it with a brasen Face, and audaceous Countenance, as if there were no blame at all in what they have done, it bespeaks them hardned in Iniquity. We have therefore such a remark made, Jer. 6. 15. *Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all*

all aſhamed neither could they bluſh. And we have that Obſervation made of the Harlot, Prov. 30. 20. *She eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and ſaith, I have done no wickedneſs.*

5. THE ſame Sin Committed *Openly*, is worſe than if it were Committed *Secretly*. Indeed for Men to dare to Sin in *Secret* in hope that it ſhall not be known, argues horrid *Atheiſm*; of which they are Charged, Ezek. 8. 12. *Then ſaid he unto me, Son of man, haſt thou ſeen what the ancients of the houſe of Iſrael do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they ſay, The Lord ſeeth us not, the Lord hath forſaken the earth.* But it ſaith that Men are grown paſt hope of Recovery, when once they ſhew that they are not afraid to let the World ſee them, but do their Abominations in the ſight of the Sun: And in nothing more do Men diſcover their Impudence, than when they ſeek no Corners to perpetrate their Wickedneſs in: Beſides, Open Wickedneſs carries in it great Scandal, and becomes a ſhame to others, and renders Men Examples to others. This therefore is brought in as an Aggravation againſt them, Iſa. 3. 9. *They declare their ſin as Sodom, they hide it not.*

6. IT adds to the grievouſneſs of Sin, when Men remain *Impenitent* under it. Sometimes upon the Commiſſion of a Sin which carries Atrociouſneſs in it, Men's Hearts ſmite them, and they are ſorry for it, and wiſh they had not done it; and thereupon they Repent, and turn from it, and do not add to it; but when inſtead of this, they are inconvincible, unperſwadable, are not diſturbed in their Minds, but remain ſecure; yea, if Reproved for it, they ſcorn to receive it, yea are enraged at their Reprovers, this is a black Mark ſet upon it. This therefore is in the Word of God, obſerved as a great Aggravation, that Men not only Sin, but after it they Repent not, but go on in their way: Hence that of our Saviour, Mat. 11. 20. *Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein moſt of his mighty works were done, becauſe they repented not.* And God Himſelf takes Notice of ſuch, Jer. 8. 6. *I hearkened and heard, but they ſpake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedneſs, ſaying, What have I done? Every one turned to his courſe, as the horſe ruſheth into the battle.*

7. FOR Men to *Boaſt* of their Wickedneſs, is an horrid aggravation. And this alſo is another Note of Impudence, and a Sign that Men are carried away in the virulent Stream of their Luſts: When Men love to be telling of their lewd Pranks, as if they were their Commendation, and they were things for which they deſerve Praiſe and Applauſe; as if they had done ſomething Excellent, and worthy of a Monument: Of ſuch the Apoſtle ſpeaks, Phil. 3. 19. *Whoſe glory is their ſhame.* And this is that which the Pſalmiſt upbraids *Doeg* for, Pſal. 52. 1. *Why boaſteſt thou thy ſelf in miſchief, O mighty man?* And how much more then, when Men love to *Romance* on their Exploits, and Charge themſelves with things they never did, as if it were their Glory to have done them. Theſe are the *Prodigies* of Vileneſs, and Perſons juſtly Odious both to God and Man.

THESE are ſome of the *Aggravations*, and whatſoever elſe might be named, will fall under one or other of theſe Heads.

USE. BE we then adviſed, to make uſe of theſe Conſiderations, to *render our ſelves Vile in our own Eyes*, in our reflections upon the Sins that we are at any time convinced of. God expects it of us, and He will certainly Charge theſe upon us another Day, if we ſtand Guilty before His Tribunal: This is the beſt Courſe to help us to a kindly and ſoaking Repentance; to make Sin loathſome to us, and cauſe us to ſee and acknowledge it to be Evil and Bitter. This will ſerve to ſhew us our Infinite need of a CHRIST to Redeem us, and ſo make Him *exceeding Precious*, and cauſe us to uſe our utmoſt Diligence to ſecure an Intereſt in His Salvation: And the *Worſe* we find our Sins to be, the more will it ſerve to make us wonder at the rich Grace of God, that ſhould provide and offer Salvation to ſuch wretched Creatures as we are. We naturally entertain dimunitive thoughts of Sin, and that makes us ſecure in it, and regardleſs of ſeeking after a Deliverance from it; whereas a right ſight of Sin, in it's true Colours, would make our preſent State too hot for us. This alſo is the way to be made to juſtify God in all His Judgments which we undergo; and make us ſo far from Murmuring at His Severity, as to put us upon wondering at His Lenity; and Confeſſing that He hath viſited us *leſs than our Iniquities deſerve.* And let us remember, that there are but few Places in the World, where there are ſo many aggravating Charges to be laid upon the Sins of Men, as in *this Land*, where there hath been ſo much Light, and ſo many Obligations laid upon Men to Repent, and turn from their Sins. If therefore we do not ſuitably Improve it to Repentance, our Condemnation will be the greater; and for our Admonition, let us well conſider what is ſaid, Prov. 29 1. *He that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that without remedy.*

[NOVEMBER 12. 1706]

SERMON *CCXVI.*

QUESTION LXXXIV.

WHAT doth every Sin deſerve?

ANSWER.

EVERY Sin deſerveth God's Wrath and Curſe, both in this Life, and that which is to come.

WE are now come to the *Third* & laſt great *Medium* of Conviction, whereby Sinners

may be perſwaded to entertain the Goſpel of Salvation by CHRIST, *viz.* The *Miſery* which fallen Man is expoſed to by his Sin, and whereof he goes in danger, during his abode in his Natural State, and that by a juſt *Demerit*. And this hath a peculiar reſpect to the *Puniſhment* deriving to Man for Sin: For tho' it is a Truth, that *Sin it ſelf* is a great *Miſery* and a *Penalty*, in that it renders the Man impotent to that which is *Good*, and eagerly enclined to that which is *Evil*; whereby he comes ſhort of his great End of glorifying God, (*Rom.* 3. 12.) and conſequently is running into New Arrears with God, every Day, many ways aggravates his Guilt, and *treaſureth up Wrath* againſt himſelf; yet the *Puniſhment it ſelf* comes under a *diſtinct* Conſideration, and carries with it, matter of Awakening; and by putting the Sinner in Fear, may ſtimulate him the more earneſtly to enquire after a Recovery; and ſo make the offers of a CHRIST, and Salvation by Him ſeaſonable and welcome, inaſmuch as he hath a natural *averſeneſs* to *Miſery*, and inſatiable *craving* after *Bleſſedneſs*.

THE Caſe before us comes very ſeaſonably to be offered, after the enquiry into the Aggravations of Sin: for when we hear that all Sins are not equally Heinous in God's account, but that ſome do far *Exceed* others in regard to Guilt: Vain Men, who are naturally in love with their Sins, and think there is no great matter of hurt in them, will be apt to grow ſecure, and *make a Mock of Sin*, and pleaſe themſelves with an Opinion that theirs are of the *ſmalleſt* ſize, and next to none; and accordingly to be the leſs ſollicitous in ſeeking to make their Peace with God, and obtain a diſcharge from the Condemnation which they are under, till ſet at Liberty by CHRIST, the great Deliverer.

THE *greatneſs* of the *Miſery* to which fallen Man is ſubjected by reaſon of Sin, under the Imputation whereof he ſtands, as he derives from Apoſtate *Adam*, we have *long ſince* taken a diſtinct Account of, when we conſidered the *Nature* and *Extent* of that Death, which was contained in the Threatning of the Firſt Covenant; and it needs not to be here called over again.

THAT therefore which *here* properly lies before us for our *preſent Enquiry*, is, to offer matter of Conviction of the *Righteouſneſs* of the Sentence, and the due *Demerit* of Sin; that not only doth Man ly open to this by vertue of the *Sanction* of the Law, but that the *Law* by which he ſo ſtands Condemned is *Holy*, *Juſt* and *Good*; and that there is no fault to be found with it, in regard of the *ſeeming Severity* of it, but that Sin doth really *deſerve* all this: And by this it will appear, that there is no Sin which is really *little*, when we are given to underſtand, that this Penalty is no other, but the due ſtipend of it, as we are told in, Rom. 6. 23. *The wages of ſin is death.* And till this be ſet home on the Conſcience with power, the Threatning will be ſo far from melting the Heart into a kindly Sorrow, that it will but irritate the Corruption that is in Man, and enflame the Heart with Indignation at the holy and righteous Law, by which he is bound over to Dy

THERE are *Three things* contained in the *Anſwer*, 1. The thing that *Merits*, viz. *Every Sin*. 2. The thing *Merited*, *God's Wrath and Curſe*, &c. 3. The thing *aſſerted* concerning this, *viz.* That it doth *Merit* all this. A few words will ſuffice to be ſpoken to the *two* former, and ſomething more will be requiſite to clear up the latter. Here then,

I THE thing that *Merits*; this is, *Every Sin*. And there are *Two* Aſſertions contained in this, *viz.*

1. THAT *One* Sin deſerves it. The Sinner doth not arrive at this Deſert, or make his Guilt to grow up to ſuch Demerit, by ſuch a *Courſe* and *Progreſs* in Sinning; as if to Sin *once* and *away*, had no ſuch danger in it; but as ſoon as ever the Perſon Commits any Sin, he is immediately brought by it under this Guilt, and the Threatning falls upon him: Thus therefore the Sanction was ſtated, Gen. 2. 17. *In the day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die.* And it is interpreted ſo, Ezek. 18. 4. *The ſoul that ſinneth it ſhall die.* It doth not ſay, that if he lives and lies in ſin, but if he *Sin*; ſo that if a Man do but *once* Tranſgreſs the Command, he thereby brings himſelf under the Guilt of *breaking the Law*, Jam. 2. 10. And no ſooner had our Firſt Parents eaten the forbidden Fruit; but they were ſeized with Horror of Conſcience, and ſought to *hide themſelves*, Gen. 3. 7, 8.

2. THAT the *leaſt* Sin hath this deſerving in it. Every Sin contains it under it, every individual, every ſort, every degree whatſoever. We have been told, that all Sins are not alike in reſpect of *Heinouſneſs*; and leaſt we deceive our ſelves, and think that ſome may be *Venial*, or may procure only a temporal Evil, and ſome eaſier Penalty, we are here given to underſtand, that there is but *one kind* of Puniſhment aſſigned by the *Law* to Sin, of whatſoever colour or ſize it be: God ſaw good in the Conſtitution of the Firſt Covenant, to make *every Sin Capital*, and that is enough to terrify the Sinner: And if at any time he thinks his Guilt is not ſo great as others Guilt is, yet this is enough to make him afraid, that let it be no more than a *Vain Thought*, he muſt *Dye for it*, and that with ſuch a Death in every part of it, as is contained in the Sanction. *Papiſts* talk of ſome Sins *Venial*, and other Sins *Mortal*; but as it is certain, that there is no Sin, (one only excepted,) but is *Venial*, under the Diſpenſation of the *Goſpel-Covenant*, ſo there are none but are *Mortal*, by the Sentence of the *Law-Covenant*. Men may think, that an *Idle*, *trifling Word* is little; but we are told, Matth. 12. 36. *That every idle word that men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give account thereof in the day of judgment.* And that a *Vain Thought* is leſs; but

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we are told, Gen. 6. 5. *And God ſaw that the wickedneſs of man was great on the earth, & that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* And if *one* and the *leaſt* ſin, hath ſo much Guilt in it, what then muſt be in the *uncountable* and *ſcarlet Sins*, which Men are Chargable withal?

II. THE thing *Merited*, viz. *God's Wrath and Curſe, both in this Life and that which is to come.* And here we may obſerve,

[1.] THE *Kind* or *Quality* of this Puniſhment; it is *God's Wrath & Curſe.* By the *Wrath* of God we are to underſtand His holy Diſpleaſure at the Sinner, whereby He is become his Enemy, on account of his Sin: God and Man were before Friends, till Sin made the Breach; but Sin arms revenging Juſtice againſt the Sinner: for we are aſſured concerning God, Hab. 1. 13. *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canſt not look on iniquity.* And by His *Curſe* we are to underſtand all that Evil which is contained in the *Threatning*; all thoſe *Arrows* which are bound up in the *Quiver* of the Law; all thoſe Miſchiefs which Death is big of: A Man is then ſaid to be a *Curſe*, when he is devoted to ſuffer all Miſeries; and therefore the Curſe of God is that Threatning which is out againſt the Sinner, and binds him over to ſuffer the things therein menaced.

[2.] THE *Quantity* of this Puniſhment, comprized in thoſe words, *both in this Life, & that which is to come.* And here are three things,

1. THE *Kinds* of it, viz. *Temporal & Spiritual Miſeries*; thoſe of the *Body* & *Soul*; the *whole Man* is made liable to theſe Sufferings: Hence we have that Diſtribution; Matth. 10. 28. *Which is able to deſtroy both ſoul and body in hell.* As both of theſe are concerned in the Sin, ſo they are both doomed to undergo the Penalty which is comprehended in the Threatning.

2. THE *Degrees* of the Puniſhment; which are either *Inchoate* or *Conſummate.* There are the Beginnings of theſe Sorrows in *this* Life, in which there is a mixture of Mercy, and all God's Wrath is not poured out upon the Sinner, but he partakes in a great deal of God's Patience and Goodneſs; but in the *other* Life, the Flood-gates of God's Indignation are pulled up, and whole Cateracts of His Anger are poured out upon Him, and Wrath without Mercy becomes his Portion: Hence that in, Iſa. 27. 11. *He that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them, will ſhew them no favour.* Jam. 2. 10. *For he ſhall have judgment without mercy, that hath ſhewed no mercy.*

3. THE *Duration* of the Puniſhment. It contains in it both the *Continuance* and the *Endleſsleſs* of thoſe Sufferings. Hence that Expreſſion, Matth. 12. 32. *It ſhall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come*; ſignifies *Never.* It is true, this Penalty becomes *Eternal* not of it's own Nature, but by reaſon of the Deficiency of the Creature undergoing it, to make Satisfaction for his Offence, in a ſhorter Duration; for our Saviour Chriſt hath an Expreſſion, in Matth. 5. 26. *Verily I ſay unto thee, thou ſhall by no means come out thence, till thou haſt paid the uttermoſt farthing*: But a *finite Creature*, cannot ſuffer *infinite Wrath* in a ſhorter ſpace. Theſe things have been more diſtinctly Commorated on formerly; I here only recite them, to ſtate the Caſe between God and the Sinner, on account of the *leaſt* Sin, to make it appear what is the thing which now follows to be demonſtrated, *viz.*

III. THAT every Sin *deſerves* this Penalty. When our *Divines* ſay, that it *deſerves* it, this is warily to be underſtood; and it doth not only intend, that it is *worthy* of it, which is true, Rom. 1. 32. *They which commit ſuch things are worthy of death.* And this is enough to Juſtify the Threatning, and clear up the Righteouſneſs of God, when He executes it upon the Sinner. But that there are theſe things ſuppoſed in this manner of Speech:

1. THAT *there is a poſſibility for the Sinner to eſcape it.* It is not ſo determined in the Counſel of God, that he muſt needs ſuffer it in his *own Perſon*; it doth not ſay that God can Pardon it without Satisfaction, and be Juſt, as matters now ſtand; but yet He may conſiſtent with His Righteouſneſs, accept of a *vicarious Satisfaction*, and ſo Pardon the Sinner himſelf: But ſtill it abides a Truth forever, that for Sin, he deſerved to Dy; and that it is an Act of undeſerved Grace to him, that he Dies not for it: Hence his Confeſſion, Dan 9. 8. *To us belongs confuſion of face, becauſe we have ſinned againſt thee.*

2. THAT *the Sinner is doomed by the Law of God to Dy.* That there is ſuch a Sentence paſt upon him, and ſtands out upon Record againſt him, it not only intimates that it would be ſo if he had his deſert, but that he is Judged and Condemned, and that the *Veracity* of God ſtands engaged to deal with him according to this Sentence, except there be Atonement made and applied to him: It is therefore plumply aſſerted in, Joh. 3. 18. *He that believeth not, is condemned already.*

3. THAT *this Sentence is Juſt and Righteous:* and that there is all *Equity* in it, and that God will for ever ſtand clear from any juſt imputation of Cruelty, if He makes it to take place upon the Sinner, to the full extent of it. This is a Truth which Men in their Natural State are ready to call an *hard ſaying*, and caſt all manner of bitter Reflections upon it, but without any good reaſon. *David* was of another Mind, when he ſaid, Pſal. 51. 4. *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned, and done this evil in thy ſight: that thou mighteſt be juſtified when thou ſpeakeſt, and be clear when thou judgeſt.*

GIVE me leave then to offer at the *clearing up* of this Caſe, and vindicate the Honour of God's Juſtice in this regard. Now that *Sin, every Sin*, deſerves all this Penalty, may be argued from *Two Topicks.*

[1.] FROM the *Covenant* which God made with Man upon his Creation. That there was ſuch a Covenant, we have a Warrant from the

Word of God to believe. There was a Law given to Man, and Obedience to it required of him, and Terms offered to him on which he was to stand; and which were to be fulfilled on him, according as he demeaned himself: and that Man consented to this is not to be doubted, & was confessed by her, *Gen.* 3. 2, 3. From hence we may infer the truth in hand, as will appear, if we consider,

1. THAT *God is the Author of the Law given to Man at first.* It is therefore every where called, *The Law of the Lord:* And as He had a Sovereign Right to prescribe a Rule of Government to the reasonable Creature, which He gave being to, and made for His own Glory, so He adapted that Law to the Nature of the Creature, in which He displayed both His Holiness, and Goodness, and Wisdom. Hence we have that great *Encomium* put upon it, Rom. 7. 12. *Wherefore the law is holy; and the commandment holy, and just, and good.* Nor indeed can any thing but what is *good* proceed from that God who is *Goodness it self*; besides that, His holy Will is the Measure of all Created Goodness; and therefore this is declared concerning the whole Law, Psal. 19. 9. *The judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether.*

2. THAT *it was God who made this to be one Sanction of the Covenant.* That *Sanctions* were added to the Law, by which it *past into a Covenant*, is evident, for as He required Obedience, and prohibited Disobedience, so He added a Promise of Life to that of Obedience, Rom. 10. 5. *For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things, shall live by them.* And a Threatning of Death to Disobedience, Gen. 2. 17. *And of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* Now under this threatning was comprehended all that is contained in the *Wrath & Curse*, of which we have taken the account: And this He had a right to do, as He was the Sovereign of the whole Creation.

3. THAT *He put into Man a power of paying this Obedience to Him.* This power was contained in that *Image* which was Concreated in Man, *Gen.* 1. 26. consisting of *Knowledge*, Col. 3. 10. *And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.* And Righteousness and true Holiness, Eph. 4. 24. *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness, and true holiness.* Man had a perfect knowledge of his whole Duty, & did fully approve of it as that which was good for him, and of his Obligation to conform to it, Rom. 7. 16. *I consent unto the law, that it is good.* And the Sanctification of his Nature, enclined & enabled him to pay a perfect Obedience to it; and this is comprehended in that, Eccl. 7. 29. *God hath made man upright.*

4. THAT *this God who did all this, is in Himself Holy & Just, and consequently all His Dispensations to the Creature, must needs be so.* And hence we have that Universal Assertion, Psal. 145. 17. *The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.* He cannot but *aim at his own Glory* in all that He doth, which is His *Holiness*; & His Justice is one of these Perfections of His, the glory whereof He is concerned for, in His transactions with all Causes by Counsel: It is therefore impossible that any unjust thing should proceed from such a God; & to assert such a thing of Him, is to deny Him to be God, and to remove Him from His Throne; so he, Gen. 16. 25. *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* And this is asserted of Him as a manifest Truth, Psal. 92. 15. *To shew that the Lord is upright; he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him.*

5. HENCE *the righteousness of this Sanction, is put altogether beyond dispute.* If God annexed it to the Command, it must be right; and it would be injurious to his glory, so much as to doubt of it in the least. Suppose that we are not able to give a distinct account of this affair, yet this is sufficient to convince us that it must needs be right, because it is enacted by that God, who cannot possibly do any thing amiss: This therefore every gracious Soul will subscribe, Psal. 119. 128. *I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right.* God knows the Merit of Sin better than we do; and if He saith, That he who commits any Sin shall dye for it, it must needs deserve it.

[2.] FROM the *Nature of Sin*, compared with the *Nature of the Punishment* denounced against it. This consideration will not only prove that it must be so, but also give the evidence, whereby it will appear convincingly to be so. Here then let these things be observed,

1. THAT *it is a known Rule, that if the Punishment do not exceed the Merit of the work, it can be no wrong to the sufferer.* Punishment belongs to *distributive Justice*, and the Equity of it consists in the *Proportioning the Penalty of it to the Offence*: It is therefore compared to work & wages, Rom. 6. 23. *The wages of sin is death.* If therefore this doth not exceed that, it cannot be charged of Cruelty, but must be acknowledged Righteous. A great Punishment for a small fault, is among Men reputed barbarous; but when the fault is heinous, if the Penalty be heavy, no man of Reason will impute wrong doing for it; and every degree wherein it comes short of this Severity, is to be confessed to be so much Mercy: For which cause the Jews made that *humble declaration*, in regard of all the terrible Calamities which had befallen their Nation, Ezra 9. 13. *Thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve.* So that there can be no true Judgment past upon the suffering in point of Righteousness, till we weigh the cause for which it is inflicted, & that will determine it.

2. THAT *there is more of Evil in the least Sin, than there is in the greatest Punishment.* Both of these are wont to be ranked under the consideration of *Evil*, because they are the Objects

Objects of the *ſeparating Affections*; whereas that which is Good refers to the *cloſing*; but then they differ *ſpecifically*, and come under two ſeveral Kinds, the one is denominated the *evil* of *Fault*, the other the evil of *Suffering* or *Penalty*. The one comes under the Title of a *Moral*, the other of a *Phyſical* Evil; between which there is hardly any Compariſon to be made. Now the leaſt Sin belongs to the *former* of theſe, whereas all Puniſhment, as it is Puniſhment, comes under the *latter*; and by this Rule are the meaſures to be taken.

HERE then obſerve,

1. THAT all Sin is againſt *God Himſelf*, whereas the Penalty terminates on the *Creature*. And this muſt needs make an unconceivable Difference, there being no Proportion between God and a Creature. It is true, there are Sins againſt the *Firſt* Table, which are directly and immediately againſt *God*, and againſt the *Second* Table, which nextly terminate upon the *Creature*; but ſtill they *ultimately*, and as they *are Sin*, are againſt *God*; and this *David* in his Confeſſion takes a peculiar Notice of, Pſal. 51. 4. *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned.* And remarkable is that of him, 1 Sam. 2. 25. *If one man ſin againſt another, the judge ſhall judge him: but if a man ſin againſt the Lord, who ſhall intreat for him?*

2. THAT every Sin is *a Violation of the holy Law of God.* This we obſerved belongs to the *Definition* of Sin, 1 *Joh.* 3. 4. And therefore the Apoſtle hath that Obſervation, Rom. 4. 15. *For where no law is, there is no tranſgreſſion.* The Law is that which gives the meaſures both to Sin and Duty; except therefore that be broken, there is no Sin can be Charged. Now a *Vain Thought* is as much a Violation of God's Law, as *Murder* or *Blaſphemy*; for that Law which forbids the one, forbids the other, both proceed from God; Jam. 2. 11. *For he that ſaid, Do not commit adultery, ſaid alſo, Do not kill.* There is therefore the *Authority* of the Law-giver deſpiſed by one, as well as by the other.

3. THAT every Sin is committed by a *Creature* which owes it ſelf entirely to the *Fear* and *Service of God.* This follows from it's being a *Creature*, and having it's *Original* from Him: And therefore that is an Argument, which the natural Conſcience cannot deny the force of, Pſal. 100. 2, 3. *Serve the Lord with gladneſs: come before his preſence with ſinging. Know ye that the Lord he is God, it is he that made us, and not we our ſelves.* And uſed by the Prophet to convince that proud Rogation of the Righteouſneſs of the Menace, Dan. 5. 23. *The God in whoſe hand thy breath is, and whoſe are all thy ways, haſt thou not glorified.* God made all things for Himſelf, and every Creature to ſerve Him in it's Order; in every Sin therefore it contradicts the end of it's Being, which muſt needs carry a deſperate Malignity in it; and he is Condemned by all other inferiour Beings, which in their order do glorify God.

4. EVERY Sin carries in it, a *manifeſt Contempt of God's Authority* over the Creature. Reaſon it ſelf tells the Man, that if there be a God, and he owes his Being to Him, his Authority is a ſufficient Obligation; and therefore for him, notwithſtanding the Command, to neglect his Duty, and break His Law, is a *trampling upon the Divine Sovereignty*: God in Commanding, ſaith, *I am the Lord*; the Sinner by every Sin ſaith, *I will not Obey him*, as *effectually*, tho' not as *preſumptuouſly* as *they* did, Jer. 44. 16. *As for the word that thou haſt ſpoken unto us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee. Saul's* very Act therefore, notwithſtanding his Excuſe, hath that brand ſet upon it, 1 Sam. 15. 23. *Rebellion & Stubbornneſs.* And can it be thought a light matter to *Deſpiſe the great God?*

5. EVERY Sin is a *trampling on God's Love*, and a *ſcorning of His Anger.* There are potent Obligations laid upon Men to Fear God; He gave them their Being, He furniſhed them with their noble Faculties and Powers, He promiſed them a conſtant Life of Happineſs upon their Obedience, He threatned them with Death, in caſe of Diſobedience; and all this laid potent Obligations on them; theſe were the *Cords of a Man*, and *bands of Love*: But now the language of every Sin is, that we regard not His Love and good Will, and that we Fear not His Diſpleaſure, nor are concerned about it. Sin therefore is ſaid to be a running upon *all* the *Divine Attributes* or *Perfections* of God, Job 15. 26. *He runneth upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick boſſes of his bucklers.*

6. IT's natural tendency is, *to ſeek to dethrone God*, and *deſtroy His Being.* It is true, The Sinner cannot come at it; God is out of his reach, and will *ſit King for ever*, after all the vain Attempts of the Sinner, Job 35. 6, 8. *If thou ſinneſt, what doeſt thou againſt him? or if thy tranſgreſſions be multiplied, what doeſt thou unto him. Thy wickedneſs may hurt a man as thou art, and thy righteouſneſs may profit the ſon of man.* Nevertheleſs, this is the daring *Eſſay* of the Sinner, and every Sin gives a ſtroke to this; it ſaith, that *he will not have God to reign over him*: It is a riſing up, and rebelling againſt His Government; and could he have his deſire, there *ſhould be no God*; and that is included in Pſal. 14. 1. *The fool hath ſaid in his heart, There is no God.* He doth but utter his Wiſh, and he would fain Believe it to be true.

7. HENCE the *Puniſhment* allotted to Sin, *viz. Death*, is but a *Retaliation*: When he hath ſuffered the full of the Miſery contained in the Threatning, God hath done no more to him, than if he had been able, he *would have done to God*: And there is a mixture of this Malignity in every the *leaſt* Sin that is Committed, becauſe it is againſt God; it is an Undermining of His *declarative Glory*, and that ſaith, that if he could come at Him, He ſhould ceaſe to be God: The Sinner by Sin offers the *higheſt Affront* to God that he is capable of doing; certainly then, it is but Juſt, that he ſhould ſuffer from the hand of God, the *ſoreſt Miſery* that his Nature is capable of ſuſtaining.

And

And there is no *other way* for God to recover His Glory upon *Impenitent Sinners.*

8. EVERY Sin is an *Implicite* chusing this *Misery.* It is true, Humane Nature relucts against the evil of Suffering, and seeks to avoid it: but when God sets Life and Death before Men, and puts it to their Election, and lays out the way before them, and the greatest assurances both of the Promise & Threatning; & after all this they do spontaneously *forsake the way of Life*, and *chuse those things* to which *Death is annexed*; they therein in a true account *chuse Death*, and so God accounts of it, Prov. 1. 29, 30, 31. *For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord. They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.*

THE main *Objection* that is urged against the Truth in hand, is taken *from Mens Impotency to keep the Command perfectly*: And hereupon the World is filled with clamours on this account; and this Doctrine is attacked with *horrible Charges*, as if it rendred God barbarous, cruel, and horribly injurious. And we find that the slothful Servant thought to have acquitted himself by such an impeachment, Mat. 25. 24. *Then he which had received the one talent, came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathered where thou hast not strawed.* But alas all this noise is but a *noise*, & all these clamours will be silenced *one day.* I shall here only make these *Four Remarks* on this Objection, which will shew the *Unreasonableness* of it.

1. IT *is certain God made Man Upright.* Eccl. 7. 29. I confess to have made a Creature for, and enjoyned on it a Service whereof it was not capable, would have reflected on both the Wisdom & Justice of God; and to have punished it in a forinsecal way for such defect, would have been unrighteous; but there was no such thing, nor was it agreeable to the holy Nature of God: It is therefore evident by the Renewal of it, that the *Image of God* which was conferred on Man at First, had in it all that is requisite to furnish him for his Obedience. It was therefore very Just to require it of him under Sanctions.

2. THAT *God laid Man under the most potent Moral Obligations to Maintain his Uprightness.* He gave him a good Law, it was suited to *God's Glory*, and Man's *own Nature*; it was that which is by sanctified Reason approved; he secured to him entire and endless Blessedness upon his Obedience, and acquainted him with the danger of Disobeying, and the dreadful Misery which would ensue; and what could possibly have greater Force in it upon a reasonable Creature, that had the resentments of Happiness and Misery on it?

3. THAT *Man lost his power by his own Default.* That we all stood in our First Father, and accordingly fell with him, we have formerly observed, and the Equity of it hath been vindicated. Now Man's *Natural Conscience* must witness to the Justice of this, That *if sinful Man hath disabled himself*, he cannot thereby make *God to lose His Right*, and cease to be Glorified by such a Creature; this is an Unreasonable way to acquit a Man from Guilt, and discharge him from Punishment: It should put him upon it to seek the Remedy; but to excuse himself from Punishment on this Score, is ridiculous, *Matth.* 25. 26, *&c.*

4. THAT *the Natural Man Sins upon Choice.* If he were forced to it by an irresistible Power, entirely *against his Will*, there would be some Pretence; the *ravished Virgin* was acquitted by the Law: But Sinners Act *spontaneously*; their own Lusts do hurry them, Jam. 1. 14. *Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.* But neither Satan, nor Men, nor the Objects of Sense can compell them; and that they do Consent, is their own Blame; and they are justly Charged for it, Acts 5. 3. *Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the holy Ghost?* Yea, How frequently do Sinners resist the Spirit of God, and quench His Motions, and stifle their own Consciences? So that they are *Inexcusable.*

USE 1. LET this be a solemn Watchword to us against the *Temptations* of Sin. It is none of the least Pleas urged upon us, *Is it not a* Little *One*? But reflect upon the Truth in hand, and now say, *How* Little *is it*? It will expose you to the *Wrath & Curse of God* in Time and thro' Eternity; and if you can for all count that *Little*, certainly you are Crazed in your Minds, and madness is in your Hearts: Ask then your Souls, Ezek. 22. 14. *Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong in the days that I shall deal with thee?*

USE. 2. LET then the Guilt of the *least Sin* drive you to CHRIST, to take away the *Curse* from us. We may think we are not such Sinners as others, and please our selves with that: But did we never Sin in a *Thought*? Have we never omitted a Duty, or transgressed a Command? Let it tell us, That the least Sin gives us a *deadly Wound*, and none but CHRIST the great *Physician* can heal us of it. Let it then make us account Him *Precious*, and make haste to Him, and Cry as he, Psal. 41. 4 *Lord, be merciful unto me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee.* And rest not till we have his Sanative Balm poured into our Wound.

[DECEMBER 10. 1706.]

SER-

SERMON CCXVII.

QUESTION LXXXV.

WHAT doth God require of us, that we may eſcape his Wrath and Curſe due unto us for Sin?

ANSWER.

TO eſcape the Wrath & Curſe of God due to us for Sin, God requireth of us Faith in Jeſus Chriſt, Repentance unto Life, with the diligent uſe of all Outward Means whereby Chriſt communicateth to us the benefits of Redemption.

WE have taken a brief account of the *right & proper uſe of the Law*, conſidered as a *Covenant of Works*, with regard to fallen Man; and wherein it is made ſerviceable to the *Goſpel Deſign*, which is to advance the Rich and free Grace of God in the Salvation of Sinners; and ſo to make the *Moral Law* with it's Sanctions, become a proper *School-maſter to lead us to* CHRIST; which is, 1. To ſhew to Man his *utter Incapacity of being made Happy by it*; and that by reaſon of his *Impotence* to Obey it, through the Depravation of his Moral Powers. And for this reaſon the Law is to be Preached in it's full Latitude, and the ſtrictneſs of it's Demands; thereby to beat the Man off from all his fond Conceits of a remaining Power in him, and make him utterly deſpair of being Saved in this way; and bring him to ſubſcribe that in Rom. 3. 20. *Therefore by the deeds of the law there ſhall no fleſh be juſtified in his ſight.* For till he is brought to this, he will never go out of himſelf, to ſeek his Relief any where elſe, by reaſon of the remaining *Pride* that is in him. 2. To ſhew him the *Aggravations* of his Sins, in the *Kinds* and *Circumſtances* of them, thereby to convince him of his own *Vileneſs* by reaſon of it; and this to make Sin to appear *exceeding ſinful*, to fill him with Hatred of it, and ſelf-loathing by reaſon of it: This therefore is noted to be one uſe of the Law, Rom. 7. 13. *But ſin that it might appear ſin, working death in me by that which is good; that ſin by the commandment might become exceeding ſinful.* 3. To ſet before him his *dangerous & miſerable Eſtate*, by reaſon of the *Demerit of his Sin*, which renders him Obnoxious to God's Wrath & Curſe, which is out againſt him in the Threatning; which hath the Holineſs, Juſtice and Veracity of God engaged to the Execution of it upon him, except there be ſome way diſcovered to him, by which he may eſcape it; which may make his preſent State too hot for him, and make him reſtleſs in his earneſt enquiry, *What he ſhall do to be ſaved?* And to Preach CHRIST to Sinners before they are acquainted with this, is to offer a Remedy to one who knows not his Malady or Neceſſity, who will thereupon entertain the Offer with Scorn and Contempt: Hence that of our Saviour, Matth. 9. 12, 13. *They that be whole need not a phyſician, but they that are ſick. I am not come to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance.* But we are to remember, that in the Diſpenſation of God to Man in the *New Covenant*, the Law is given in the *hand of a Mediator*; and tho' it be revived to drive Men utterly to Deſpair in themſelves and their own Righteouſneſs, and ſo bring them to an utter Loſs in that regard; yet the deſign of it is to humble them out of *ſelf-ſufficiency*, that they may look to the fullneſs of ſufficiency in Chriſt, and not to precipitate them into *utter Deſperation*, but to ſet an *Hope before them* that ſhall not deceive or make them aſhamed: And herein mainly conſiſts the difference between a *Legal* and *Evangelical* Preaching of the Law.

HAVING therefore ſhewn Man what he is in his *Natural* State, our *Catechiſm* proceeds to ſhew him that there is *Hope in Iſrael concerning this thing*; and diſcover where Salvation is to be had, and in what way it is to be obtained, and that by the diſplay of *another* and *better* Covenant, in which there is made known a ſuitable and ſufficient Remedy againſt all this *Miſery*.

IN this *Anſwer* there are theſe things to be obſerved,

I. THAT *there is a Way found out by God, and diſcovered to Man, by which the Sinner may eſcape the ſuffering of this Wrath & Curſe.* And this is ſuppoſed in the *Queſtion* propounded; for it would be in vain to enquire how a thing may be done, till we are firſt ſatisfied that the thing it ſelf is fiezable: And this is further evident by the *Anſwer* that acquaints us how that may be done; which preſumes a poſſiblity of it: And it is very neceſſary that this be revealed and believed, inaſmuch as a legal Conviction of Sin and Miſery, doth of its own Nature lead the Sinner to reſolve that his Caſe is deſperate; in that the *Law Covenant* determines him a Man of Death, and affords not one glimmering beam of Hope; and there muſt be a diſcovery of this made to him, by God; it being a thing Arbitrary with Him, and could never have been known but by *Revelation*: Hence that, 2 Tim. 1. 10. *But is now made manifeſt by the appearing of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who hath aboliſhed death, and hath brought life and immortality to light thro' the goſpel.* It is a great Queſtion, *How the Juſtice of the* Firſt Covenant *may conſiſt with the Grace of the* New-Covenant? Which *Queſtion* all the *Angels* of Light could never have reſolved, if it had been offered them; and the *fallen Angels* doubtleſs concluded, that they had made Man's Ruin *irreperable*; elſe they would never have adventured their own Deſtruction for the compaſſing of it. Now that God hath deviſed and made known ſuch a way, is evident if we Conſider,

1. *THERE*

1. *THERE are Multitudes that have escaped this Misery, and have obtained true Blessedness.* This the Word of God is full for; and it is certain that all *Adam's* Natural Progeny were involved in this Guilt and Curse: We are assured of this, Rom. 5. 12. *Wherefore as by one man sin entred into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.* And the Apostle puts himself with the rest, in that general Assertion, *Eph.* 3. 2, 3. And yet he had a good Assurance of his own safe Estate, 2 Cor. 5. 1. *For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* And we are told of a *general Assembly* of these, *Heb.* 12. 23. And an *innumerable Company*, Rev. 7. 9. And it is certain, that if there had not been a way made for their Escape, they had all likewise Perished.

2. HEREBY *God's Suffering Man to Fall, was subordinated to His great Design, of the Manifestation of His special Grace.* That Man's Apostacy was by God's purposed Permission, is manifest, inasmuch as He both foresaw it, and could have prevented it; He must therefore have some *worthy Reason* of His so doing, which could be no other than the *gaining of Glory to Himself hereby.* And one thing that He resolved in this, was the *manifestation of His Grace* to some, as we are told in, Eph. 1. 6. *To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.* And He made choice of *Mankind* to be the Monuments in which this Grace should be rendred Illustrious, whilst He passed by the *fallen Angels*; Heb. 2. 16. *For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.* And this was by substituting His *own Son* to be a *Mediating Surety*, that by satisfying the Justice of the Law, He might open a way for the Salvation of Sinners, and so became a *Second Adam* for the Reparation of the Ruin brought in by the *First*, 1 Cor. 15. 22. *For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.* And what was this for, but to rescue Sinners from Misery, and bring them to Glory, which was the Province laid upon Him, and He was to go thro'; Heb. 2. 10. *For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect thro' sufferings.* If therefore none of this unhappy Race should be eventually Delivered, this whole Purpose of Grace must have fallen to the ground.

3. THIS is the *Foundation on which the Gospel Religion is built*, and the *great Encouragement of sinful Men to embrace it.* The Gospel is called, the *Gospel of Salvation*, Eph. 1. 13. Doubtless the opening of the Gospel to Sinners was to set a *good Hope* before them, by giving them Assurance that they might obtain Salvation by Jesus Christ, whom it reveals to us for that end: Hence that, 1 Thes. 5. 9. *For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.* And tho' God's Glory be the *last End* of it, yet the Restauration of Man from Misery to Felicity, was the *Medium* of it: God would never have done this, only to render Man's Infelicity the *greater*, tho' it eventually proves so to many, not without God's fore-sight and Purpose, (1 *Cor.* 2. 15, 16.) but the direct End of it was, that His Chosen might be brought back to Him, and be *made meet to partake of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.* And hence this is the great Foundation that is used in the *Evangelical* Dispensation, to perswade Men to close in with the *New Covenant*, viz. *That they may be Saved.* And were it not for this, Sinners would Despond, as looking upon all to be Unprofitable to them, if after all they must unavoidably Perish.

4. ALL the *Invitations*, *Promises*, *Threatnings used in the Gospel*, give a clear Demonstration of this. That the Gospel Dispensation is proposed in the *Treaty* of a *Covenant*, is very evident to all those that Read it with Understanding: Tho' in it is also declared the holy Purpose of God to confer this Grace upon those whom He hath *Chosen in Christ*: Nevertheless, He treats with Men after their *own Nature* & *Manner*, by exhibiting these things to them in a *rational Way*: Hence, in it there is an Offer made to Sinners; and they are with great earnestness invited to Accept of it; and what is this but that they would be *reconciled*; as in 2 Cor. 5. 20. *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as tho' God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.* And to what other purposes are the *Promises* annexed to the *Invitations*, but to give us Assurance that if we do cordially embrace these Offers, we shall partake in these Advantages thereby? And tho' the Promises, as *generally* proposed, do not declare God's *special Purpose* concerning these or those *Individuals*, yet they give us to be assured that God hath a purpose to Save some, and accordingly that there is a way in which they may obtain it, else the *Promises* would be in *Vain.* The *Threatnings* also in the Gospel confirm this: Why are those that receive not the Offers but refuse them, menaced with *Damnation* and aggravated *Misery* for that very reason, but that there was a *Salvation* which they put away from them? Why else doth our Saviour denounce, as, *Matth.* 11. 10, *&c.* & Mark 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.* And the Apostle, 2 Thes. 1. 8, 9. *In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*

5. THE *great Design of Christ's coming into the World, and going thro' His great Work, had otherwise been lost.* We are told in, 1 Tim. 1. 15. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, That Christ Jesus came into the world*

world to ſave ſinners. For this was the Son of God *Incarnate*; for this He was made a Man, & *under the Law*; for this He *fulfilled all Righteouſneſs*, and underwent all the Penalties that were due to ſinners by the firſt Covenant; for this He *aroſe*, and *aſcended to Heaven*, and *ſet down on the right hand of the Majeſty on High*; all of which the word of God fully confirms. Surely then, He hath opened a *New and Living way*, by which Men may be brought up from the pit of Miſery, and made to poſſeſs a Throne of endleſs Glory. If therefore there were not ſuch a way, muſt we not ſay, That CHRIST *died in vain*? So that herein it appears that there is ſuch a thing. Here then let miſerable Sinners *take encouragement*, conſidering, that tho' your condition be dreadful, yet it is not hopeleſs: But alas, why do no more ſeek after this way, and ſet themſelves to get a title to this Salvation, whilſt they are under the Merciful Treaty, that is opened with them about it?

II. THE next thing intimated, is, *That there is ſomething to be done by us in order to our obtaining of this Deliverance.* The *Inquiry* therefore is, *What God requires of us that we may thus eſcape?* And this preſumes that there is *ſomething*, elſe the Queſtion were frivolous, as we obſerved concerning the former: but it is neceſſary that this be *rightly ſtated*, elſe we ſhall be miſled into pernicious error, which will hazard our miſſing of the great Salvation: and truly the miſtakes in this are great and many, and are the occaſions of the greateſt part of the *Controverſies* among profeſſed Chriſtians at this day. I ſhall therefore tender a *brief account* of this matter in a *few Concluſions*.

1. THAT *in the ſaving of Sinners there are Two things to be conſidered*, viz. A *Redemption* to be wrought, and this Redemption to be *applied*. Of the Nature & Neceſſity of both theſe, we have formerly taken a diſtinct account, which need not here to be again inſiſted on: The purchaſe was to be made by another, even the Son of God, in our Nature, ſtanding in the place of our Surety & Surrogate; and tho' this purchaſe was made by Him for us, whom He repreſented in that Affair, yet there muſt be a *way of Conveyance*, by which it may become ours; and we be able to plead it, as fully as if we our ſelves had *paid the price*: for the Righteouſneſs by which we are delivered from the Curſe of the law, is not ours *Perſonally*, being performed by another, even CHRIST, but muſt be ours *Relatively*; and therefore there muſt be a *way* in which we come to be thus related to it: we are Strangers to it in our own Natural State, it muſt therefore be made over to us by Him who hath power & authority to make ſuch an exchange. Hence that, 2 Cor. 5. 21. *For he hath made him to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin; that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him.* Gal. 3. 13. *Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us.*

2. THAT *in the application of this Redemption, the Spirit, who is the author of it, treats with us as Reaſonable Creatures.* That the work of *Application* is a Divine work, and is aſcribed peculiarly to the *holy Spirit* in the *Œconomy* of the *Sacred Perſons*, is obſervable: and that it is a work *beyond our own Power* to do for our ſelves, as well as the ſatisfaction to the Juſtice of the Law, we are aſſured, Eph. 2. 8. *For by grace are ye ſaved, through faith; and that not of your ſelves: It is the gift of God.* We are therefore told, Joh. 1. 13. *Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* But it is certain, that in order to this work, He treats us as *Cauſes by Counſel*; He doth not deal with us as *meer Machines*, which have no conception of things, but as ſuch who can *conſider* and deliberate, and *chuſe* or *refuſe*. For, tho' in the firſt *infuſion* of Converting Grace into us, we are *meerly Paſſive*, which work is for that reaſon called a *New-Creation*, 2 Cor. 5. 17. *Therefore if any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature: old things are paſt away, behold, all things are become new.* And *quickned*, Eph. 2. 1. *And you hath he quickned who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.* Yet in Active Converſion, we are not meerly Paſſive but Active, and are drawn with the *Cords of a Man.* Hence that, Joh. 6. 44. *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath ſent me, draw him: and I will raiſe him up at the laſt day.* And that of the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 119. 59. *I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy teſtimonies.* And on this account it is that *the Goſpel Miniſters* are ſent to Men to open or purſue this treaty with them.

3. THAT *hence the Spirit in the Goſpel, propoſeth the Benefits of Redemption, to be made ours on gracious Terms.* They who would make this *one difference* between the *Covenant of works*, & that *of Grace*, that the former was *Conditionate*, or upon terms, but this is *Inconditionate*, or without terms, labour of a great miſtake; and do indeed make the opening of the Goſpel needleſs, in which the way is laid open to us, to perſwade and direct us in it, that ſo we may be won to a compliance: but they differ in the *terms themſelves*; the former required *Works* of us as the condition on which we were to be made happy; whereas this latter only *offers* to us the terms on which the already purchaſed Salvation may be made ours, *upon our accepting of them.* In the former we were to *do & live*, Rom. 10. 5. but in this we are to *receive* at God's hand, that which He hath graciouſly provided for us; in which there is no derogation to the free Grace of God, but on the contrary, a practical acknowledgement of it; and a putting away of theſe Impediments in us, which would otherwiſe unavoidably hinder our ſo receiving of it. Hence that, Joh. 1. 12. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God; even to them that believe on his name.* And that it is ſo propoſed to us in the Goſpel, is therein evident, becauſe the Promiſes of it are exhibited to us *Hypothetically*, as is every where evident.

4. THAT *theſe terms are ſo Stated in the offer, that our Happineſs or Miſery turns upon their being or not being wrought in us.* This is not only included in the *Hypothetical* propoſing of them,

intimating that we can in no other way claim a Perſonal right in them; but alſo in that there is not only a *Promiſe* made to us, in Caſe theſe Conditions be found in us; but a *Threatning* of Loſs and Suffering in caſe of the failure of theſe: Hence we find ſuch Expreſſions as thoſe recorded in the Goſpel, Joh. 3. 16. *For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* 1 Joh. 5. 12. *He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life.* And many more of a like Import: And hence it follows, that whatſoever Intereſt we may have in theſe things by vertue of God's Purpoſe, and Chriſt's Purchaſe, yet we are actual Strangers to theſe Promiſes, and in a State of Wrath and Condemnation, till ſuch time as this Renovation paſſeth upon us: Hence that, Eph. 2. 3. *And were by nature children of wrath.* And, Ver. 12. *At that time ye were without Chriſt, being aliens from the common-wealth of Iſrael, & ſtrangers from the covenants of promiſe, having no hope, and without God in the world.* And we are aſſured, Rom. 8. 29, 30. *For whom he did foreknow, he alſo did predeſtinate to be conformed to the Image of his Son, that he might be the firſt-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predeſtinate, them he alſo called; and whom he called, them he alſo juſtified; and whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified.*

5. THAT *tho' help & ſtrength to perform them, muſt come from the Spirit of God, yet the things themſelves muſt be performed by us.* It is true, that we know not the *Manner* of the Divine Operation in *Infants* & *Naturals*, who is able to put the ſeeds and habits of ſaving Grace into them; and ſo we have grounds of a good Hope concerning them; yet in the *Ordinary way* of Diſpenſation towards Men under the Goſpel Treaty, we are aſſured, that as the Spirit is wont to come in together with the Treaty offered, and produce the great inward Change, by which we paſs from Death to Life; and therefore we are told in, Rom. 10. 17. *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* So in the actual Turning of us, and the drawing out of the Graces required into Exerciſe, there is ſuch an Impreſſion made upon the Soul, as cauſeth us to turn, and put forth the Acts of Faith and Repentance, and New-Obedience; & theſe are done by us, or our renewed Powers, tho' He be the ſupream Efficient of them. Hence that, Cant. 1. 4. *Draw me, we will run after thee.* And for this reaſon it is that the Goſpel Command requires theſe things of us, tho' we cannot do them without this Co-operation: Hence that in, 1 Joh. 3. 23. *And this is his commandment, that we ſhould believe on the name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt.* And this tells us that they do in vain expect Salvation from God, who neglect to comply with the Duties required of them in order thereunto.

III. WE have an *Account* given us of the things that are to be *done* by us, if we would *eſcape this Curſe*, and *obtain* the contrary *Bleſſing*. And theſe are, *Faith in Jeſus Chriſt*, &c. There are *Three* things mentioned, but they may be reduced to *Two* Heads; of which we have a diſtinct Account given us in the remaining part of the *Catechiſm*: We therefore here only take a brief and ſummary Account of them.

(1.) WE have account given us, of the *Terms* or *Conditions* themſelves, that are required of all thoſe that would obtain this great Benefit, and theſe are Two, *Faith in Jeſus Chriſt*, & *Repentance to Life*. There are ſome who altogether deny all *Conditions* in the Goſpel Covenant, but it ariſeth from a miſtaken Conception of the meaning of the word *Condition*; and thoſe that are Sober among theſe, acknowledge the thing it ſelf, that God, according to His Purpoſe, doth work Faith and Repentance in all thoſe whom He brings to Salvation; and ſo we only differ in *Terms*; for we alſo Confeſs, that God alone is the Author of this great Work in us; only we conſider the *Manner* of God's treating with us in order to this, or the manner of His propoſing the Covenant to us in the Goſpel. Others there be, who will yield only *Faith* to be the *Condition* of the Goſpel Covenant, and bring *Repentance* within the Graſp of the *Promiſe* made to Believers; but here alſo is only a *Logomachy*, and the want of a diſtinct forming their Conceptions of things, whilſt they yield the Neceſſity of Repentance: And becauſe *Faith* alone is the Condition of *Juſtification*, they ſuppoſe that the whole Covenant is reduced to it; whereas it is evident, as will afterwards be made to appear, that Faith and Repentance are inſeparably connected; and that tho' *Faith* alone embraceth a Title to *Juſtification*, yet *Repentance* and New Obedience are indiſpenſibly requiſite to *Salvation*; ſo that it hath ſuch a Title put upon it, Acts 11. 18. *Repentance unto Life.* Now the Neceſſity of both of theſe, may be a little glanced at:

1. *FAITH in Jeſus Chriſt.* The Neceſſity of this is evident from the Conſideration of the State of fallen Man; and may be inferred from what hath been already diſcourſed under the foregoing Heads; and it amounts to thus much, *viz.* That Sin hath brought all Mankind under a Curſe of Death, which hath taken faſt hold of them, and ſhuts them up in Guilt, as in a Priſon: The Juſtice of God revealed in the Firſt Covenant, ſtands bound to execute this Sentence, and ſo to purſue the Sinner to Death, except there be an acceptable Satisfaction offered, by which the Sanction of the Law may be lawfully anſwered; ſo that it hence neceſſarily follows, that till ſuch a Compenſation be made for the Sinner, it is impoſſible that God ſhould be *Juſt*, and yet *Juſtify the Sinner*, for there is nothing upon which ſuch a Sentence can Righteouſly proceed. Now there is ſuch a Satisfaction made by Jeſus Chriſt on this account, and for this very end, that He might bring in *ſuch a Righteouſneſs* as may ſalve this Difficulty, and God hath accepted it of Him for this very purpoſe; which Righteouſneſs muſt become *Ours*, if ever we have the Benefit of it to our Juſtification: And the

only

only constituted way for us to have this Title, is by *Believing on Him*; for this *Faith* is the necessary Preceptive *Medium* of our being Justified: so that the matter stands on this foot, That except we be *Justified*, we cannot be *Saved*; That it is only by the *Righteousness of Christ* imputed to us, that we can be *Justified*; and that it is impossible that we should have any Claim to His Righteousness, but by *Faith*: Hence we have that in Heb. 11. 6. *Without faith it is impossible to please him.*

2. *REPENTANCE unto Life.* It is not any slighty, formal *Legal* Repentance will do, but it must be *Evangelical*; the Nature whereof will be considered in it's Place. And by *Life* we are here principally to understand, the Life of *Sanctification* here, and the Life of *Glory* hereafter; including also the *Inchoations* of it here. Now we can have no Communion with God here without it; for tho' God can, thro' Christ, have Fellowship with sinful Men, yet none with Sin; Hab. 1. 13 *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity.* And we are assured that Christ did not only come to save us from *Hell*, but also from *Sin*, from which we are turned by Repentance; Matth. 1. 21. *He shall save his people from their sins.* The way of Sin is the way of Death, Rom. 3. 16. *Destruction & Misery are in their ways.* And it is by Repentance that we turn away from Sin to Holiness; it is that by which we forsake our Evil ways, loath Sin and our selves for it, devote our selves to Newness of Life: it is comprized in that, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. Repentance therefore is the *foundation* that is laid in us, to render us capable of enjoying Eternal Blessedness; for we are told, Heb. 12 14. *Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.* The Heavenly Inheritance cannot admit of a polluted Creature; we are on this account assured in Rev. 21.27. *There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie.* Yea, It is impossible for us to be actually Happy without it; the State of Blessedness requires it; and all the things wherein the Gloryfied State of God's Children is described, suppose a Subject that is delivered from Sin: The Glories of that Blessed Place will never gratify an Impenitent Sinner; they would be irksome to him, and he would reckon them to be his Misery, and not his Felicity, because he would be *out of his Element.* Finally, without Repentance, there can be no Faith, and consequently no Remission. Faith is a going out of our selves to Christ for Life; and it is sinful *Self* that must be so forsaken; for no Man can chuse his *Sins* and *Christ* too; nor is there any Pardon to be expected without this: There is therefore a Connexion made between these, Acts 5.31. *To give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins.* Surely then, It is not a thing *indifferent*, whether we Repent or no; for our Saviour Christ hath laid it down as an unexceptionable Rule in Luk. 13 3. *Except ye Repent, ye shall all likewise perish.* And this discovers the foolish Presumption of Impenitent Sinners, who boast themselves of a strong Faith on which they rely, whilst in the mean time, they hold on their old Course, and are therefore certainly going in the way to Destruction.

(2.) THE *Course that we are to take* in order to our getting of these, viz. *A diligent Use of all the outward Means*, &c. The Necessity of this Attendance will appear, from that they are Means appointed by God for this end.

HERE particularly observe,

1. THAT Man in his *Natural Estate* is altogether a *Stranger* to Faith and saving Repentance. It is said, Rom. 3.11, 12. *There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doeth good, no not one.* Faith in Christ, and Repentance to Life, were not discovered in the *First* Covenant; nor was there any room for them during Man's Integrity; nor could fallen Man ever have known it, but by *Revelation*; for the Light of Nature had no such Principles in it, from whence it could be educed.

2. THAT the *Revelation* of these things belonged to *God alone.* As it was He who opened the Terms of the First Covenant, so it is His Prerogative to make and appoint the Terms of the *New* Covenant: He was the Offended Party; it was at His Pleasure whether He would be reconciled, and must therefore be *Abitrary* in signifying how, or in what way He would so be.

3. THAT the *saving Application* of these to Men, depends on *Him* also. There must be an Illumination of the Mind, and a subduing of the Heart to these Terms, which requires a Divine Operation: Hence we are told of the *mighty Power* that appears in this, *Eph.* 1. 19. The opening of the Understanding, and changing of the Heart, are above the Power of all Means and Instruments, 1 Cor. 3. 6. *I have planted, Apollos watered: but God gave the increase.*

4. THESE are the *Means* which He hath appointed to be waited on, for the *Communication of His Grace to Sinners* in and by. If all Means depend on His Blessing of them, then certainly we have no reason to expect it in any *other* way, but what is of *His* Appointment. Now His *Word & Ordinances* are the Constituted way; and to a Diligent and right Attendance upon these, He hath annexed a Promise of the Blessing: He hath not only designed to work His Grace in Men, in the Concomitancy of these, but He hath encouraged Men to Attend upon them, by engaging His Presence with them, Exod. 20. 24. *In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.* Prov. 8. 34. *Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.* And hath told us, that there is no Faith to be expected without them, Rom. 10. 14. *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?*

Yea, the Misery of the Gentiles is declared on account of their being *without* them, *Eph.* 2. 12. And it is declared to be the distinguishing Favour shewn to *Israel*, in that they were favoured with them, Psal. 147. 19, 20. *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation.*

USE. WE may here learn, *That all such as put a slight on the Means of Grace, are Enemies to their own Salvation.* Without *Faith* and *Repentance* there is nothing but Misery to be expected by fallen Man; and without the *outward Means* appointed by God, they are not to be hoped for; Prov. 29. 18. *Where there is no vision, the people perish.* Nor is the bare Enjoyment of these sufficient for the obtaining the End, but it is by a *diligent Improvement* of them. Surely then, As they that have them not, are very Miserable; so those who have, or may have them, and despise them, and neglect the great Salvation offered in them, do surely *hate their own Souls.*

LET us then be Thankful for them, and apply our selves to them as Means with Care, & apply our selves to God the Author of them, for the Blessing of His Spirit to make them powerful to Salvation in us.

[JANUARY 7. 1706]

SERMON *CCXVIII.*

QUESTION LXXXVI.

WHAT is Faith in Jesus Christ?

ANSWER.

FAITH in Jesus Christ is a saving Grace, whereby we receive and rest upon Him alone for Salvation, as He is offered to us in the Gospel.

UNDER the former we have taken an Account of the things that are prescribed in the Gospel, as the *Media* for our obtaining of Deliverance from Misery, and obtaining of Salvation: In which we considered, 1. The *Terms* of the New Covenant; shewing us what is necessary on our part, in order to our being invested with a Right to this great Benefit; and these are *Faith* & *Repentance.* 2. What is *required of us* in order to our *obtaining* of this, viz. *A diligent Use of all outward Means* appointed to this end.

NOW before I come to treat of these particularly, it may not be amiss to offer some *general Rules* for our better understanding of this Affair, and preventing of the Mistakes which too many labour of in these respects.

1. THAT *Faith & Repentance* are the *Gifts of God*, and do *exceed* the Powers of the *Natural Man.* This is one difference between the Covenant of *Works* and of *Grace*, that the *former* required no more of Man than he was furnished with a Power of performing, whereas in the *latter*, the things required are more than he hath Ability to do of himself; for this the Word of God is clear. Man hath not only lost the Power of *Legal* Obedience, but is equally unable to that which is *Evangelical*: Hence it is said of *Faith*, Eph. 2 8. *For by grace are ye saved thro' faith; and that not of your selves: it is the gift of God.* And of Repentance, Acts 11. 18. *Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted Repentance unto life.* The *Acts* of Faith and Repentance require a *Principle* in the Man, from whence they must flow, & that must be a *vital* Principle; whereas it is said of all such, Eph. 2. 1. They are *dead in trespasses and sins.* The Equity of this on God's part, hath been formerly proved, and may further appear in the sequel presently: And that God doth not illude Men by offering them Terms, which they cannot of themselves come up to, will also be discovered to us indisputably. They are therefore greatly mistaken, who think the *Grace* of the New-Covenant consists in God's offering Men *Terms*, which they have a natural Power of performing; but it must be reduced to another Head, as will be considered.

2. THAT hence God doth not require or expect, *that Men should exert these, by the Power remaining in their Corrupt Nature.* If we measure our Conceptions of the Covenant of Grace by this Rule, we go clear off from the Foundation of the Gospel; in which we are acquainted that God hath provided help for us in *another*, and made discoveries to us where it is to be had. When God Commands us to *make to our selves a New Heart*, to *Believe in His Son Jesus Christ*, to *be renewed in the Image of our Mind*, and many the like Precepts given in His Word, He knows that it transcends any remaining Powers in us; and if we should offer at it, and offer to Him any such thing, He would not accept it of us: When therefore *Paul* commanded his *Philippians*, Chap. 2. 12. *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.* He tells them presently upon it, in Ver. 13. *For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* And tho' this may seem a Riddle to our Carnal Reasoning, yet it is exceedingly accommodated to His great Design of saving Sinners by CHRIST; for we are told, Isa. 40. 29. *He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might, he increaseth strength.*

3. THAT nevertheless these are proposed to us in the Gospel Treaty, as *the Terms on which we may come to obtain the Promises.* That they are thus proposed is evident, for that the Promise is connected with these, and made

made on this Hypotheſis, Mark 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved; but he that believeth not, ſhall be damned.* Luke 13. 3. *Except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* And if it be demanded, for what reaſon is it thus exhibited, if we cannot perform it of our ſelves? It may be anſwered, That God doth it,

1. TO aſſure us, *That theſe muſt be wrought in us, if ever we be ſaved.* It gives to underſtand, that *Faith* & *Repentance* are made neceſſary *Media*, by which we may obtain the Promiſe; and except they be wrought in us, we muſt needs abide under the Wrath of God, Joh. 3. 36. *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlaſting life: and he that believeth not the Son, ſhall not ſee life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.* That if ever God deliver us from Wrath to come, and exalt us to the Kingdom of Life, He will give both of theſe Graces to us; Pſal. 84. 11. *The Lord will give grace and glory.* And hereby we are given to underſtand, that ſo long as we remain in our Unbelief and Impenitence, we remain *ſtrangers to the Covenant of Promiſe.* So that hereby we have a ſure Rule of Trial, by which we may prove our preſent State: Hence, 2 Cor. 13. 5. *Examine your ſelves, whether ye be in the faith.* 2 *Pet.* 1. 10.

2. TO convince us, *That our Deliverance is beyond our Power to procure.* God will have Sinners to go out of themſelves, in order to their coming to Chriſt: which that they may do, they muſt be made to find that they can do nothing of themſelves, that can lift them out of the Pit into which they are fallen. There is a *Pride* in every Natural Man, which makes him to think, he can comply with the Command: When therefore he is apprehenſive of his own inſufficiency to this, this helps to *Humble* him out of himſelf, and convinceth him that he can do nothing; and that therefore without His help, we muſt ſtill ly and Periſh: And that our *Salvation* entirely depends on His *Grace*, Eph. 2. 8.

3. TO excite us *to ſeek to God and wait on Him for His Grace to enable us to Anſwer the Covenant Condition.* It is not to drive us to Deſpondency, and bid us to caſt off all Hope; but to make us ſee where our Help is, that ſo, *deſpairing in our ſelves*, we may be perſwaded to accept of His Offers of Salvation; and no longer either neglect it, or ſeek to obtain it in any way wherein we ſhall loſe our Labour, and miſs of it in the end. God therefore, together with this Conviction holds forth to us this great Truth, Hoſ. 13. 9. *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf, but in me is thine help.* And puts us upon making of his requeſt, Pſal. 61. 2. *From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.* And hereby God takes the Opportunity to ſignalize His glorious Grace to miſerable Sinners, and make Chriſt more precious to us, when we Conſider, Pſal. 72. 12. *For he ſhall deliver the needy when he crieth: the poor alſo, and him that hath no helper.*

4. THAT *the* Succeſs *of the outward Means depends upon God's Arbitrary Pleaſure.* We are not to ſuppoſe, that becauſe we give our Attendance on the Ordinances, that this brings God under an *Obligation* to give us theſe Graces, and ſhould wrong us if He with-held them from us: He hath indeed appointed theſe, and made it our Duty to Attend on them; but the Succeſs of them is in His diſpoſe: That therefore may be applied hither, Eccl. 11. 6. *In the morning ſow thy ſeed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knoweſt not whether ſhall proſper, either this or that, or whether they both ſhall be alike good.* And we are given to underſtand that ſuch a Plea as this, will not ſtand Men in any ſtead in the Day of Accounts, Luke 13. 26, 27. *Then ſhall ye begin to ſay, We have eaten and drunk in thy preſence, and thou haſt taught in our ſtreets; but he ſhall ſay, I tell you, I know you not whence you are; depart from me all ye workers of iniquity.*

5. THAT *the* Neglect *of Diligent uſing of theſe, expoſeth us to miſs of this Benefit.* Tho' the Succeſs of theſe depends entirely on God, and He can work theſe Graces in us immediately; yet becauſe He hath put the Honour upon them to make them the *Ordinary way* in which He will communicate Himſelf to us, He hath put a Preceptive Neceſſity on our giving this diligent Attendance upon them, and hath accordingly threatned the Neglect of ſo doing; and indeed this Neglect caſts a Contempt on the Divine Precept. And if it be a Miſery to be without Means, (Prov. 29. 18. *Where there is no viſion the people periſh.*) it muſt needs be a ruining thing to diſregard them; and if this be the way which God hath choſen for the Conveyance of the Bleſſing, ſuch do put themſelves out of the way, and may well expect to miſs of it.

BUT we may now paſs over to a *particular* Conſideration of theſe things; and the Firſt of theſe that is offered in our *Catechiſm*, is *FAITH in JESUS CHRIST*, whereof we have here a *Deſcription* given us. I am not ignorant, that there have been hot Diſputes about the *Order* of theſe Two Graces; ſome giving the Priority to *Faith*, and others to *Repentance*: To which a few words may be here ſpoken. And here we may obſerve, That Divines do very well diſtinguiſh between the *Order of Nature*, and the *Order of Time*. As to the Order of *Time* wherein theſe Graces are ingenerated in us, it muſt be acknowledged that there is no diſtance, but they are both wrought in the *ſame Inſtant*. In Paſſive Converſion or Regeneration, the whole Body of ſanctifying Graces is infuſed at *once*, which is therefore called the *New Creature*, or the *New Man*: Hence that, Eph. 4. 24. *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs.* And, 2 Cor. 5. 17. *If any man be in Chriſt he is a new creature.* But if we ſpeak of the Order of *Nature*, *Faith* may challenge the *Precedency*, as being the principal and leading Grace.

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There is indeed a *Repentance* which is *before Faith*; but it is *Legal*, and cannot be enumerated to the Graces of the Spirit, but is found in Unregenerate Men; but this is not the *Repentance* that we are now in the Contemplation of; it being a common Work of the Spirit, and doth of it self secure Salvation to us. Nor can any *Repentance* be acceptable to God, or carry in it an Evidence of our Salvation, but only that which is influenced with *Faith*, Heb. 11. 6. *Without faith it is impossible to please him.* It is further to be observed, that in the *New Covenant Faith* is the *only Condition of Justification*, that hath any sort of *Casualty* in it; it being an *Instrument*, tho' it is ever accompanyed with *Repentance*: And also it is by *Faith*, that we fetch from Christ all that help, whereby we may exercise aright all the Graces of the Spirit that are in us; and for that reason it may well have the *Precedency* afforded to it.

BUT I proceed to enquire into the *Description* it self, that is here given us of *Faith in Christ*. And here observe,

I. THE *thing it self described*; it is called, *Faith in Jesus Christ*. As to the Word *Faith*, there are hot disputes about the meaning of it, in the *Holy Scriptures*; and it is not to be denied, that it hath *diverse senses*, in which it is there used; and therefore we must fix it in the present Design: It is eno' here to mention, that it is sometimes used for the *Credit* that is given to a *Testimony*, on the Word of him who gives it: sometimes for the *Doctrines of the Gospel*, by a *Metonymy*, because they are to be *Believed* by us on the Authority of God, who is the Author of them: sometimes for the *external Profession* which Men make of the Christian Religion, because this Profession is grounded on the Belief of the Truth contained in the Articles of it: sometimes it is taken for a *bare Assent* to the Truth of a thing: sometimes for a *Reliance* or *Recumbency* on the Object so *Assented* to: sometimes it is used for an *Historical*, sometimes a *Temporary*, and sometimes a *Faith* of *Miracles*; and sometimes for that which we call a *Justifying* or *Saving Faith*: All of which *Senses* might have been instanced in the *several Texts* of the Word of God, where they are so used. Now it is the *last* of these *Senses* that we are here to understand it, inasmuch as it is here brought in as *one* of those *Media*, whereby sinful Man may come to obtain a delivery from the Wrath and Curse of God, and Inherit Eternal Life, which includes in it both *Justification* and *Salvation*. There is also an usual Distinction of *Faith* observed; sometimes it intends *Fides quæ Creditur*; sometimes, *Fides quâ Creditur*: the *former* pointing to the *Object*, the *other* to the *Subject* of Faith; the First hath been *formerly* considered in the *former* part of the *Catechism*, and *latter* falls under our present Consideration. As to the great Dispute among many, whether *Faith* be appropriated to the *Understanding*, or is rooted also in the *Will*, for those who will have it in the Will, do not exclude the Understanding; the difference between these, is because they do not dispute *ad idem*: We deny not a *Faith* of *Assent*, but are also satisfied that the Word *Faith* is of a farther Extent, according to the Gospel, including in it *Recumbency* or *Affiance*; and must needs be implied, in the Believing in or upon an Object, by all that understand the Import of the Phrase, according to the sense of Mankind; and that it is thus intended here, is manifest by the Title or Denomination given to it in Question, *Faith in Jesus Christ*. This therefore is that which stands to distinguish it from every other Faith, and direct us to the right and proper notion of it.

WHEN therefore it is called *Faith in Jesus Christ*, it points us to *Him* as the Object to whom we are carried by it, and on whom we Center.

BUT for our better and more distinct taking up this matter, there are Two things here to be considered,

[1.] THAT the *Object* of Faith may be considered, either as the *Immediate* or *Ultimate*: And we have footing for this distinction given in, Joh. 14. 1. *Ye believe in God, believe also in me.*

1. THE *Ultimate* Object of our Faith, can be no other than *God alone*. This will further appear in the Prosecution of the Description: Here only observe, that nothing can be a satisfying Object of a Divine Faith, but that which can afford *compleat Salvation* to him that so Believes in it; and that can be no other but GOD: He only can Save us from all Misery, and confer upon us compleat Felicity. To trust therefore on any other, is to rely on Lying Vanities; and we are told of all such, Jonah 2. 8. *They that observe lying vanities, forsake their own mercy.* Our Believing on CHRIST ariseth from the Assurance we have that He is *GOD*; and as He is considered as a Subsistence in the Undivided God-head, so He is the *Ultimate Object*: And the Truth is, that Man's Misery began here, that he relinquished God as the alone Object of his Reliance, and placed it upon other things in His room; and that is the Comprehension of the Nature of Sin, as it is summarily Charged upon them in, Jer. 2. 13. *For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.*

2. THE *Immediate* Object of our Faith, is that which we nextly rely on; which may also be called our *Mediate* Object, because our Faith doth not finally determine here, but *by it comes to God*; and this is JESUS CHRIST *God-Man-Mediator*. It is certain that no sinful Man can come to God in any other way but by Him: Hence He tells us, Joh. 14. 6. *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.* And we have such an Expression in Heb. 7. 25. *He is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him.* GOD out of CHRIST is a *consuming Fire*; out of CHRIST He is Armed with Vengeance ready to fall upon the Sinner: It is CHRIST who stands between an Holy GOD and Impure Sinners, to take up the Controversy and make

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the Peace, which Sin had broken; therefore all the Promises which are given for our Encouragement to Believe in God, are laid up and ratified in Him; 2 Cor. 1. 20. *For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God.* This therefore is the Command that is given to all such as come under the Gospel Treaty; 1 Joh. 3. 23. *And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ.* And without this Faith in Him, our pretended Believing in God, will be a daring Presumption, and far from that Faith which will save us.

[2.] THAT *Faith* always supposeth these *Two* things;

1. A *Discovery of that in the Object, which renders it fit to be Believed on.* We do not exclude the *Understanding* from being necessarily concerned in the acting of a right & regular Faith on Christ; and the first thing that it is concerned in, is an apprehension of the Object, as it is recommended to be suitable for us to Believe: *Faith* is a *Confidence* grounded upon *Knowledge*; and to this Knowledge it is requisite, that as we know what our Wants are, so we have that represented to us in the Object, which renders it as able to supply these Wants, otherwise we must Act blindly and unreasonably; whereas one great Motive urged upon us in the Gospel, is the Consideration of the *suitableness* and *sufficiency* of the Object: And this is that which affords us matter of Deliberation, to guide us in our Election; and without this, we cannot Believe as *Men*, much less as *Christians*; who ought to be able to say as he, 2 Tim. 1. 12. *I know whom I have believed.*

2. *A firm Belief of this Discovery.* And this is that which we call the *Faith of Assent*; which tho' it is not alone sufficient to denominate a *saving Faith*, yet is a necessary Ingredient of it, without which such a Faith cannot be exerted. And this also properly belongs to the *Understanding*; we must believe these things to be true, in order to our Affiance: Now the Nature of this Assent, is that it is given to the *Testimony* which God hath given us in His Word concerning them; which is called our receiving His Testimony; Joh. 3. 33. *He that hath received his testimony, hath set to his seal, that God is true.* And is therefore a *Divine Faith*, because it is not built on the Testimony of Men, who are *Liars*, but of God who is Truth it self: However this Belief is but a *step* towards the compleating of the Act of Faith; our Believing *of Him* must be followed with our Believing *in Him*, unto which it is a proper *Medium*: But these things will be more fully exemplified in that which follows.

II. NOW follows the *Description* it self that is given of this *Faith*, in the rest of the *Answer*; where observe,

[1.] THE *general Nature* of it; it is a *saving Grace.* And in this it agrees with all the other sanctifying Habits which are bestowed on Men in Regeneration; mentioned, *Gal.* 5. 22. Here two things,

1. IT is a *Grace*: The word *Grace* signifies a *free favour*; and therefore whatsoever is freely given is so called; and this sometimes applied to *him that gives*, and is sometimes to the *thing given*, *Metonymically*, because it comes *freely* from the Author of it: In the former respect it is ascribed to God, and is reckoned to be one of His *glorious Perfections*; and is, *God inclined to shew Favour to the Creature, of His own good Will, without any Merit or deserving in that*: And this is sometimes used in a more *large* sense, for all the Benefits which He bestows upon the Creature; sometimes in a more *restrained*, for the *special* and *peculiar* Favours that He confers on His Chosen. In the latter respect it is applied to the Subject recipient; and comprehends the Benefit it self whatsoever it be; and that because, as it is a thing Beneficial to Him, so he received it freely: And if God had not bestowed it upon him of His Bounty, he could never have laid Claim to it by any Merit of his. Now it is to the *latter* of these, that the notion of Grace is here applied to Faith; it being a Favour which the Man partakes in by the Gift of God: It is something that He hath received; and been made Owner and Possessor of; but this may be more illustrated in that which follows. Hence,

2. IT is a *saving Grace.* And this Epithet is put to it, to distinguish it from all other Benefits whatsoever that Men partake of thro' the *Benignity* of God towards them: And here we may observe, that if we take the Word *Grace* in the most extended sense of it; it extends to *all the Good* which the Creature participates in; and may therefore be distinguished into *Common* or *Special.* And here,

1. THE one of these is called *Common*, because it is bestowed indifferently on the *Good* and *Evil*: An *Ungodly* Man may have as large a share in it, as one who is truely *Godly*: This refers to the Head of God's *Goodness*, of whom it is said, Psal. 145. 9. *The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.* And in this respect we are told in Acts 14. 17. *He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.* Hither are to be referred the *outward Favours* of this Life which are bestowed upon Men: So, 2 Cor 9.8. *And God is able to make all grace abound towards you; that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound in every good work.* The Gifts which are bestowed upon Men, whereby they are more eminently fitted for Service in their Generation, Eph. 4. 7. *But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.* And any Priviledge or Advantage which one hath above another for Service: Thus the Apostle calls his *Commission* to Preach to the Gentiles, *Grace*, *Eph.* 3. 8.

2. THE other is called *Special* Grace, because it is peculiarly bestowed on God's *Elect*, and no other. It is true, God *offers* this Grace in the Gospel, to all who come under the sound of it: Hence that, Tit. 2. 11. *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men.* But it is not conferred upon all, but only such

ſuch as are *ordained to eternal Life*. Hence we have that remark, Act. 13. 48. *As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed.* And on this account *Grace* is contra-diſtinguiſhed from *Giſts*, and from the *Temporary favours* which God beſtows upon other men: and to this head is *Faith in Chriſt* truely & *properly referred*, for we are aſſured that *all have not faith*; now this is called *ſaving Faith*,

1. TO *diſtinguiſh it from that* common Faith *which many pretend to.* There are many that do in a ſenſe believe the Truths of the Goſpel, and make profeſſion of the Faith of it, and perſwade themſelves that they are true Believers; but it is not the right Faith which is proper to Gods *Elect*, or *Called*, Tit. 1. 1. *The faith of Gods Elect.* And the difference between one and the other, will be evident, when we come to conſider the ſpecial Nature of this.

2. BECAUSE *Salvation is by promiſe* ſecured *to all who have this faith.* This is one of the terms of the *New Covenant*, or the *Media* by which Sinners come to obtain Salvation thro' Jeſus Chriſt; and none that have this Faith really wrought in them, ſhall ever miſs of it. Hence the Goſpel is full of ſuch Promiſes as give us the Aſſurance, That as none ſhall be ſaved without it, ſo none ſhall miſs of Salvation, who are made owners of it. Hence that in, Joh. 3. 16. *For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* And on this account we have ſuch an expreſſion, Heb. 10. 39. *Of them that believe.* Nor did ever any true believer fail of this, but was made to receive the end of his Faith, the Salvation of his Soul, according to, 1 Pet. 1. 9. *Receiving the end of your faith, even the ſalvation of your ſouls.*

3. BECAUSE *it is the* Inſtrument *by which we lay hold on Salvation.* It is true, it is Chriſt whom Faith nextly embraceth, it is therefore a believing in Him, as the next Object, as we have obſerved; but it is a laying hold of *Him in the Promiſe*, in which He is offered to us as a Saviour, and the *Author of eternal life*: So that in and by believing on Him, we embrace this life and accept of it with Him. Hence, Believing is expreſs'd by this, 1 Tim. 6. 19. *That they may lay hold on eternal life.* And therefore by our thus believing we come to have the evidence in us, that we ſhall be ſaved: it is therefore one of thoſe things which the *Apoſtle* ſaith do *accompany ſalvation*, Heb. 6. 9.

4. BECAUSE *in the* Exerciſe *of it, we advance our own Salvation.* There is a work required of us to do, which, tho' it Merits not, yet is of the way to Salvation: We are therefore Commanded, Phil. 2. 12. *Work out your own ſalvation with fear & trembling.* Now to render theſe works ſervicable to this end, that they may be acceptable to God, and crowned with a gracious reward, it is requiſite that they be *done in faith*; for we are told, Heb. 11. 6. *Without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe him.* And whereſoever this Faith is found, God will accept us in Chriſt, and cover the frailty which attends the beſt we do.

NOW there are *two ſorts* of Graces thus beſtowed upon us by the Spirit of God, who is the Author of all Grace in us, and is therefore called, Faith of the Operation of God, and He hath that Title, 1 Pet. 5. 10. *The God of all Grace.*

1. THERE *are thoſe Graces which He confers upon us Relatively*; which of themſelves work no change real in our Nature, tho' they are always accompanied with a real change: but they work a change in our State, from what it was before theſe paſt upon us; and theſe are our *Juſtification* and *Adoption*; which do not only derive to us from the free Grace of God, but confer on us a rich & unconceivable favour, in that we are conſtituted by the one righteous in the ſight of God, and by the other are put among Gods Children; who before were guilty Sinners & Enemies: and by both of them we come to have a title to the glorious Inheritance, ſo that theſe may well have the Name of *Grace* put upon them.

2. THERE *are thoſe Graces He works in us Effectually*; and by vertue whereof there is a real change wrought in our Natures; and theſe are *Sanctification* and *Glorification*; by the one whereof we are made *New Creatures*, and have all the Graces of Sanctification produced in us; by the other there are *all the Imperfections* of Soul & Body finally *done away*, and we are *made perfect.* Now the Grace of Faith belong to *this head*, and particularly to our *Sanctification*, as it hath a reſpect to the change of our Nature that is wrought in *Regeneration.* Now the Faith we are ſpeaking of, is not a tranſcient act, tho' there is the firſt act of it, and repeated exerciſes as long as we live; but it is ſomething abiding, which whether we will call an *Habit*, or a *Principle*, or a *Power*, I diſpute not; and I believe that thoſe who call it one or other of theſe, intend the ſame thing, *viz. Something in the man from which he is enabled to exert thoſe acts of faith which are required*, which no Sinner can do until this power is reſtored or beſtowed upon him. And let us obſerve, that there is a double Conſideration of Faith, *viz.* Of the Nature of it, which is called, *Fides quæ Juſtificat*, and of the way & manner in which it influenceth our Juſtification; or *quâ Juſtificat*: of this latter we have taken an account formerly, when we conſidered the *Doctrine of Juſtification.* And that which now lies before us, is what that Faith is, which is of uſe in our Juſtification, and is alſo ſervicable to other purpoſes in the Life and Courſe of a Chriſtian: and it is of great Moment that we be rightly informed in this matter, becauſe a miſtake in it may prove undoing to us; for no Faith but that which is of the right ſtamp will ever prove ſaving. Here then in general, it is to be accounted to be a work of the Spirit, or a Grace that is planted in the Soul, and hath its genuine Operations in the Man who is owner of it; and is therefore to be numbred to that body of Saving Graces, which go in to the Conſtitution of the New-Creature, which is produced in Converſion, and hath its working in us, ſuitable to the Nature of it; and it is no other but God alone can produce it in the Man

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by His Almighty Power; no Man hath it in Him Naturally, nor is any Man able to obtain it by his own Industry, or earn it of God, by his own Endeavours; but it is a Creating Work, and so a super-natural Grace which comes from above, and is given freely to us; and by the consideration of this *general* Nature of it, we may be helped in the more distinct Disquisition of the *special* Nature of it, which will follow next to be enquired into. Only, Here let us remember, that if we have true Faith, we must not ascribe it to our selves, but acknowledge it entirely to the *Grace of God*, and let Him have the Praise of it.

[FEBRUARY 4. 1706.]

SERMON *CCXIX.*

WE have considered the *general* Nature of *Faith.*

[2.] WE are now to pass over to take an Account of the *special* Nature of it, expresst in those Words, *Whereby we receive, and rest upon Him alone for Salvation, as He is offered to us in the Gospel.*

TOUCHING the *Object* of this Faith, *viz.* CHRIST, enough hath been already said, in laying open the Terms of the *Question*; where we considered, how, or in what respect He is to be look'd upon as the Object of a saving Faith. The things therefore that now remain particularly to be spoken to, are reduced to Three Heads, 1. *The* Acts, *wherein the Nature of it is discovered.* 2. *The* End *or* Design *which it aims at.* 3. *The inseparable* Qualities *of it.* And under these Three we may be acquainted with the distinguishing Notes of a *true* Faith, by which it is differenced from that which is *false.*

I. THE *Acts* wherein the Nature of it is discovered; and these are *Two*; It *Receives*, and *Rests* upon Christ: Our way of reasoning usually leads us to judge of the Nature of Principles by the genuine Acts of them, because we know the *Acts* cannot exceed the *Principle* they derive from; for the Principle is an inherent Power in the Subject, empowering and disposing it to such Acts. Now those which discover the true Nature of Faith to us, are principally,

(1.) OUR *Receiving* of Christ. Hence Faith is expresst by such a word, Joh. 1. 12. *As many as received him.* It is true, there are *other* Acts in which Faith exerts it self, and that thro' the whole Life of a Christian; for it exerts it self in all their Duties of *New-Obedience*, all which are done by the Influence of Faith, which renders them *Evangelical*: Hence that, Gal. 5. 6. *Faith which worketh by love.* But these are the first and most proper Acts of it, as it brings us under the Promise of the New-Covenant; and by it we do embrace the Promise, and Christ in it. Now we are then truely and properly said to receive a thing, when it is offered to us, and we do not reject it, but embrace it: So that in this *receiving* of Christ, there are supposed,

1. A *Discovery*, or *Manifestation* of Him made to us. And this is by *Revelation*; for except we hear of Christ, we cannot accept of Him: Hence that in, Rom. 10. 14. *How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?* And we are told in, Ver. 17 *Faith cometh by hearing.* Nor is this *discovery* only a general Intimation that there is one so called; but a discovery of Him in His *Person*, *Natures* and *Offices*, and therein representing Him to us as an Object suitable for us to put our Trust in: for there is something that we receive Him for, as will be considered anon; and we are to receive Him, as we are *Causes by Counsel*; He must therefore be so recommended to us for our rational Consent.

2. A *free Assent* to the *Reports* that are made of Him unto us. For if we do not Believe Him to be the same, as He is revealed to be, we are far from embracing Him as such an one: This is frequently called a *Knowing* of Him; and we are told in, Psal. 9. 10. *They that know thy name will put their trust in thee.* And in Joh. 17. 3. *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* And *Paul* could say of Him, 2 Tim. 1. 12. *I know whom I have believed.* Christ therefore plumply tells them, Joh. 8. 24. *If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.* i. e. *He* who is *sent* of the Father, and came to work out the Redemption of sinful Men.

3. AN *Offer* of Christ made. This is that gives the Encouragement to the Sinner to Accept Him: And were there not such an Offer made, the convinced Sinner would not dare to lay hold on Him: And tho' there is Encouragement to hear that He is *able*, yet this will not remove Doubts & Fears. Now tho' the Invitation given in the Gospel is general, Isa. 55. 1. *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters*, &c. Matth. 11. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* Yet the Spirit of God is wont to apply this particularly with the Offer; and he apprehends that he hears Him calling him in particular, and saying as, Rev. 3. 20. *Behold, I stand at the door and knock: If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*

4. THE Heart is hereupon opened to *Entertain* and *Embrace* Him in the Promise. He takes Christ upon His word, opens his Heart to receive Him; he offers himself to be His, & he takes Him to be so: Hence that, Psal. 27. 8. *When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.* It is true, the Spirit of God first imprints the Power on him, which is the Grace of Faith; and then draws forth this Power into Act, causing him to close with Him; and now this is an *Act of Faith.*

(2.) HENCE the *other Act* is, He *Rests upon Him.* This also is a *Metaphorical* Expression, and used in the Word of God to express the Nature of Faith. And these *Two* do not so properly denote *Two Acts* of Faith, but are both

of them comprehended in *One*, only this latter discovers the way & manner of receiving Him; and hath these things more specially belonging to it,

1. AN apprehension of the absolute *Need* that we stand in of Him. The Natural Man is carnally secure, and doth not know his Necessity; but the Spirit of God convinceth him of his woful *undone* Estate, his utter insufficiency to relieve himself, the impossibility of all other Objects of trust to help him, & that without a CHRIST he must needs perish, without hope; and perswading him of the *fulness of sufficiency* there is in Him, and the great *readiness* there is in Him to do that for him which he needs; He creates in him an insatiable desire after Him; nor can he take up any where short of Him; and cries as, Psal. 73. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.* And in these longing desires are the first buddings of this new Principle of Faith in the Soul.

2. A free and absolute *Choice* that is made of Him. Faith tho' it be grounded on the discovery made of the fulness of Christ, and compleat ability He hath to answer our desires, and supply all our wants; yet it terminates on the Will, and issues in a *free Election of Him.* Hence the *Scripture* so frequently expresseth it by *Chusing*, which determines the Man to this Object. There are many things that offer themselves to Him, and say, Turn into me? but he turns away from them all, and refuseth them all for Him, and Chuseth Him without any reserve. Hence that, Psal. 20. 7. *Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.* Isai. 26. 13. *O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.* Psal. 142. 5. *I cried unto thee, O Lord, I said, Thou art my refuge, and my portion in the land of the living.* And this also is produced in him by the *Operation of the Spirit*, which determines him to this.

3. AN *Adventuring* of our selves upon Him, for all that which He hath made offer to us of in the Promise. This is the recumbence of Faith, when the Soul casts its whole burden, and leans all its weight upon Him: We are told what God makes *Him* to us, 1 Cor. 1. 30. *Who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.* Now Faith placeth its *Reliance* upon Him for all this, and accordingly it betrusts it self with Him; and for that reason it is so frequently called, a *Trusting in Him*, Psal. 2 12. *Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.* And *elsewhere.* He resolves that there is enough in Him to answer all his wants: And He hath invited him to come to Him for it, and said, Joh. 6. 37. *Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.* And he takes Him at His word, and saith, *Behold I come.* And whatsoever fears he hath, yet he resolves that here he will lye, and go no whither else; saying, Joh. 6. 68. *Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.*

4 THIS *Choise* & *Resignation* is *Immutable.* A Man is then said to *Rest*, when he hath obtained the Object of his desire, and is *fully satisfied* in it. Faith so carries the Man to, and builds him upon Him, as an Unmoveable Foundation, as an Everlasting Rock. *God in Christ* is called a *Resting Place*; and Faith takes Him as such, and saith of Him as the Church, Psal. 48. ult. *For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death.* And as Christ is called a *sure Foundation*, so the Soul that is built upon Him, is built surely, and cannot be moved, Psal. 125. 1. *They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.* And it is certain, that this Faith being a saving Benefit, is *abiding*, & when once wrought in the Man, can never be lost; and that because it is under His Care; and therefore it is said, 1 Pet. 1. 5. *Who are kept by the power of God thro' faith unto salvation.*

II. THE next thing to be considered, is, The *End* or *Design* for which this Faith receives and rests upon Christ; and that is our *Salvation.* It is true, our Faith goes to, and is acted upon Christ, for *every thing we ask of him*; nor can any Prayer be acceptable without it, Jam. 1. 6. *But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.* So that if we ask our *daily Bread*, or Pray for a Blessing upon, and Success in our Temporal Affairs, *Faith* is to be employed in it; and in a large & comprehensive sense, *Salvation* engrosseth *all freedom from evil*, and *participation in good*: but in a more restrained sense, Salvation & Damnation are put in Opposition, *Mark* 16. 16. And this is that which is nextly & peculiarly aimed at in this place, and is the great thing about which Faith is employed. This is sometimes called Life, Joh. 5. 40. *And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.* 1 Joh. 5. 12. *He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life.* And that is by a *Synechdoche*, for there is something more comprehended in Salvation than *Life*: Life was the thing promised in the *first Covenant*; Salvation in the Name Life, designed a state of happiness, in which Man was to have continued upon his Obedience, and never to have known Misery; but *Salvation* supposeth Men to be fallen into *Misery*, & held fast by it; and Salvation contains in it, a relieving him *from that Misery*, and *restoring* him to true *Felicity.* This then is the *Salvation*, which Faith *receives & rests on Christ* for. And here let us briefly observe,

1. AVOIDANCE of *Misery*, and reaching after *Happiness*, is an inextinguishable Principle, rooted in Humane Nature. We are told, Psal. 4. 6. *There be many that say, Who will shew us any good?* And these *many* are *all Men*, besides those that have found it, who are but few in comparison. Man is a reasonable Creature, and hath the resentment of good and evil, and chuseth the one, and refuseth the other. Hence that, Isai. 7. 16. *Before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.* i. e. Come to the *use of his reason.* And tho'

tho' Sin hath wofully misled Man in the Choice of the *Media*, yet he hath a general Notion of the *End*; and his natural Affections carry him *from* the one, and *after* the other: No Man would be Miserable, but earnestly desires that it may be Well with him.

2. THE awakened Sinner is *Convinced* of his Misery by reason of *Sin*, and put upon enquiry how it may be *remedied*. Carnal Security is one of the unhappy Fruits of the Apostacy, which as long as it possesseth the Man, makes him regardless of Salvation, and careless about seeking after it: The Spirit therefore shews him his Estate in it's true Colours, and lets him see the *Curse* that he lies under, and realizeth to him the *Danger* he is in of Suffering it in it's whole weight, the *Terrors whereof make him afraid*: And he useth these Terrors to put him out of his senseless Stupidity, and rouze him up to enquire whether there be no hope that He may be rescued from this forlorn State; and he asks, Is there not Salvation to be had, and what shall I do to obtain it? So it was with the *Jaylor*, Acts 16. 30. *Sirs, What must I do to be saved?* Hence his Request, Psal. 83 16. *Fill their faces with shame: that they may seek thy name, O Lord.*

3. THE Spirit of God discovers to him, the *New* and *Living Way* by which he may be recovered and restored. The Spirit of God treats with Men as with *Men*, and therefore applies himself to them in a *rational Way*; laying before them Arguments, which may carry Motive in them to win their Compliance with His Offers: Having therefore raised in them a *sense of Misery* to awaken them to enquire after Help, they are now prepared for the *good Reports* of it, that they may gladly and thankfully entertain it; but for which the former sense would readily drive them to Despair; whereas *this* opens a door of Hope to them, and encourageth them to Attend the Means in order thereunto: Hence these Two are put together, Hos. 13. 9. *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thy self, but in me is thine help.* And if they may be perswaded to Believe this Report, that there is Help to be had in one that is *mighty to Save*, it will put Life into their Fear, to excite them to seek after the Remedy, and so obtain the End of the Conviction.

4. HENCE, together with his *Offer* of Christ as the Object of his trust, He promiseth him *Salvation* on his *Compliance*. And this is accommodated both to the *State* of the Sinner, and the *Cravings* that are raised in him by the former Conviction: Now, in the opening of the New-Covenant, as there are the Terms required, so there is the Encouragement offered; and that is nothing less than a Promise of Salvation to all such as shall cordially comply with it: Hence that, Isa. 45.22. *Look unto me, and be ye saved all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.* And a greater Promise cannot be opened to sinful and undone Man, than that he shall be Saved on his accepting of Christ: And thus the Gospel Terms run, Mark 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.*

5. THIS therefore becomes a *powerful Motive* to perswade him to *come to Christ*. This is a mighty *attractive*; and the former Conviction helps to make it so, in that it shews him the absolute Necessity that he stands in of it; for the reason why so many that have the Gospel Invitation sent to them, *make so light of it*, is because they do not apprehend nor Believe their own *miserable Necessity* of Salvation, and that it is no where to be obtained but in and by Christ. But when Men are perswaded that Guilt and Misery is upon them, and except delivered from it, they must needs Perish; and now they are invited to come to Christ, and give themselves up to Him, on the Assurance, that if they so do He will become their Saviour, this is *good News*, and acceptable; 1 Tim. 1. 15. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.* It is therefore *as such an one*, that Faith embraceth Him, and for this it adventures upon Him, because as such an one He is exhibited.

III. IN the last place, We are to consider the *inseparable Qualities* of this Faith, whereby the Truth of it is manifested; and it is differenced from a *false* and *presumptious* Faith. And there are *Two Properties* of it mentioned in the *Answer*.

1. IT is *Christ alone* whom he thus *Receives* and *Rests upon* for Salvation.

AND here two things are to be observed,

(1.) THAT we are not by this to understand that *God the Father*, and *God the Holy Ghost*, are hereby *excluded* from being of the *Object* of this *Reliance*. It is certain that *GOD*, and no other, can be the proper Object of a Divine Faith; nor can any other but He, bestow Salvation upon fallen Man; the *Deity* therefore must needs be the *Ultimate Object* on which a saving Faith must terminate: And the *Three Persons* in this God-head, are but *One* and the *same God*; and *every Person* equally shares in all the *Divine Perfections*; and each according to his *Manner* of *being* and *working*, contributes to the saving of the Sinner: Hence we are told, Psal. 3. 8. *Salvation belongeth unto the Lord.* Tho' Christ, *God-Man* be the next and *Immediate Object* of our Faith, thro' whom we come to the *Father*.

(2.) THAT it stands in *Opposition* to every *other Created Being* whatsoever: And that whether separately from Him, or in conjunction with Him. We are to place our sole Affiance on *no other* instead of Him; they are not to be our Saviours: not the *World* and the things of it; we are therefore every where forbidden to put our trust in them, because they cannot Save us. Our *own Righteousness* is also here secluded, for that is a Reliance on *our selves*, which we are required to renounce. *Angels* also, and *Saints* must not be trusted in, for they cannot Save us. Nor are we to rest upon any of these in *Conjunction* with Christ, or *partly* on Him, *partly* on them; for we are assured,

Acts 4. 12. *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.* Nor will He share the Glory of our Salvation with any Second Being: Isai. 42. 8. *I am the Lord, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another.*

2. TRUE Faith *receives* & *rests* upon Him, as He is offered to us in the Gospel. The ground and encouragement of our believing in Him, is *the Offer* that is made of Him to us in the *New-Covenant*; and because the Invitation and Offer is made to us in the way of a Covenant, there are consequently the Conditions, upon which the Promises of Salvation depends, and with which they are connected; and if they are not complied withal, we in vain pretend to believe in Him, and our Faith will prove it self to be Presumption. And there are Three things which are implied in this expression,

1. THAT the *Gospel Offer* is the thing that the Soul takes its encouragement from, to adventure it self upon Christ. God's design in the Gospel Treaty, is to advance the Riches of Grace in the Salvation of sinful Men; accordingly He laid in provision for the bringing about of this Salvation in Christ, in the work of Redemption that was wrought out by Him. He therefore exhibits Him as a compleat Saviour, and profers him to Sinners upon their acceptance of Him as such. As then He offers Him *freely*, so He must be received as a *free gift of God*; so that tho' they must come for Him, yet it must be *without money or price*, Isai. 55. 1. Rev. 22. 17. *Whosoever will let him come.* If then Men pretend to receive Him, on the account of *any thing in themselves*, whereby they think they better deserve Him than others do, they do therein make their own works the procuring Cause of their Salvation, and do thereby derogate from the free Grace of God, and so undermine the Gospel design; whereas we are told, Tit. 3. 5. *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.* True Faith evermore adventures upon Christ under the *deepest sense of Unworthiness*, that so He may have the whole praise of our Salvation paid to Him.

2. THAT we receive Him in the *Quality* which the Gospel offers Him in; i.e. *As a Saviour:* And this comprehends under it the whole *Office of a Mediator* between God & Man; which includes the Three great Offices of *Priest*, *Prophet* and *King*. True Faith embraceth Him as He is the Lord's Christ; one whom his Father hath anointed to Redeem us from the Wrath & Curse fallen upon us for Sin. We must therefore Believe Him to be such, and as so, take him to be ours, else he cannot be the Object of a true saving Faith. We must rely upon him as the great *high Priest* who hath made the Atonement, by satisfying of the Law, and answering the Demands of Justice; and resting on the Vertue and Merit of *His Righteousness*, and one Sacrifice, for the removing of our Guilt, and constituting us Righteous before God. We must embrace him as our *great Prophet*, to Instruct us in the way of Peace, teach us how to live and please God: And as our *supream Lord* and Sovereign, to Guide and Govern us, submitting to his Commands, and *following Him whersoever He leads us.* Hence we must take him to be *all that to us*, which he is made of God to those who do truely Believe in him; and what that is, we are told in, 1 Cor. 1. 30. *But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.* And if in any of these *Articles* we cannot comply with him, but find fault, and count them hard sayings, we are strangers to the *Faith of God's Elect.*

3. THAT we take him upon his *own Terms*, which he hath proposed to us in the Gospel. For if we do not entirely comply with them, we do not indeed receive, but reject him; for he will be ours in no other way. There are many that would accept of Christ, provided they may but make their *own Terms*; but this may not be, but we must cordially accept of *His.* And these are,

1. THAT we *utterly and forever Renounce all Affiance or Trust in every other thing whatsoever.* It properly belongs to the Nature of true Faith, that in it there is a *Change of Objects of Reliance:* The Spirit of God, in working Faith in us, produceth this Change: Every Man hath his Trust somewhere; and the natural Man hath his Trust placed somewhere else, and not in Christ; but he requires if we would obtain Salvation from him, that we come and put our Trust under the *shadow of His Wings*, and expect our *whole Salvation* from him; and this cannot be done, unless we reject all *other*, & with full purpose of heart, that we will trust in them no more: This is that which God directs his People to make a frank and full Profession of in returning to him, Hos. 14. 3. *Asshur shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the works of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy.* And till we come to this, we are strangers to true Faith: we must say to our Souls as he did, Psal. 62 5, 6. *My soul, wait thou only upon God: for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be moved.* For we are told, Jonah 2. 8. *They that observe lying vanities, forsake their own mercy.*

2. THAT we *cordially Repent of all our Sins, and turn from them to Him with a full purpose to serve Him in uprightness.* It is true, *Faith* and *Repentance* are two things, the one produceth a Change in our *Object*, the other in our *Life:* And what this *Repentance* is, will come to be considered in the next place. I here only observe, that sound *Repentance* is always an inseparable Concomitant of true Faith; and we can never aright Believe in Christ, unless with it, we *Turn from all Sin*, and utterly *forsake* it: That Faith therefore, that will have *Christ* and *Sin* too, is not of the right stamp. If we accept of him, it must be with a purpose to be

for

for him, and for no other; and this is one thing which he came to do for his Redeemed, Act. 5. 31. *Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Iſrael, and forgiveneſs of ſins.* And as ſuch we are to receive him. Hence,

3. THAT we *receive Him to ſave us from Sin, as well as to ſave us from Hell.* Sinners that are afraid of dwelling with *Everlaſting Burnings*, would accept of CHRIST to deliver them from theſe, but they are not willing to part with their Sins: but it is vain to make a ſeparation between theſe; for it is certain, that CHRIST came not only to deliver us from Guilt, but alſo to cleanſe us from Pollution; both are included in that, Joh. 1. 29. *The Lamb of God, which taketh away the ſin of the world.* Hence that, 2 Theſ. 2. 13. *God hath from the beginning choſen you to ſalvation, thro' ſanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.* And as ſuch we muſt embrace him, and yield our ſelves up to him for it; yea, put up our earneſt requeſt to him for it, as they in, Hoſ. 14. 2. *Take with you words, and turn to the Lord, ſay unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciouſly.*

USE. WOULD *we then know, and not be deceived in our enquiry, Whether we have eſcaped from the wrath to come?* let us put our ſelves upon this teſt, *Have we truly & ſincerely Believed in Jeſus Chriſt?* Are we built upon Him by a true and a living Faith? And it is a matter of unſpeakable Concernment for us ſo to do; for, unleſs we believe in him, we *cannot be ſaved*, for there is no other way for it. And it is a fearful thing to think what Multitudes there are, who *cheat* their Souls into *Eternal Perdition*, by their *Ungrounded Confidence* on this account. There is an Undoing as well as a Saving Faith; and how many might have been Saved, if they had not thought themſelves ſure of it, by a *Preſumptuous Faith.* Let us then now put it upon the moſt exact & curious Scrutiny, as thoſe who expect that ere-long, the heart-ſearching God will bring us into a *true light*; and he cannot be mocked

[MARCH 4. 1707.]

SERMON CCXX.

QUESTION LXXXVII.

WHAT is Repentance unto Life?

ANSWER.

REPENTANCE unto Life is a ſaving Grace, whereby a Sinner out of the true ſenſe of his Sin, and apprehenſion of the mercy of God in Chriſt, doth with grief and hatred of his Sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpoſe of, and endeavours after New Obedience.

THE Doctrine of *Repentance*, tho' it be as fully aſſerted in the holy Scriptures, as any one Article of the Chriſtian Religion, hath been, and ſtill is, a ball of Contention; and been made Matter of Controverſy not only between the *Orthodox* and the *Antinomians* on one hand, and the *Papiſts* and *Arminians* on the other; but alſo among the *Orthodox themſelves*: Some contending about the *Order* of it, theſe putting it *before* Faith, and thoſe making it to come *after* it, in order of *Nature*. Others diſagreeing about the *Nature* of it, or the thing it ſelf. Some extend it to the *whole Work of Converſion*, and ſo take into it, both *Faith* and *Sanctification.* Others more reſtrainedly, take it to be the ſame with *Sanctification*, and ſuppoſe theſe to intend *one and the ſame thing.* Some do ſtill more ſtrictly take it to be *one part of Sanctification*, which they divide into *Regeneration* and *Repentance*; making the *former* of theſe to be a *Principle* or *Habit* that is infuſed into us, and the *latter* the *Action* or *Exerciſe* of this *Habit.* And others yet more ſtrictly, making it to be *part of Sanctification alone*, which is wrought in, and acted by the *Affections.* And alaſs! Whilſt there is ſuch Bickerings about it, how wofully is the thing it ſelf neglected, and the Practice of it wofully omitted, among ſuch as call themſelves by the name of *Chriſtians?* Now we have obſerved that *Repentance* is *one of the things* that God requires of us in order to our eſcaping God's Wrath, and obtaining Eternal Salvation; for which reaſon we had need to labour to get a *diſtinct acquaintance* with it, how elſe ſhall we be able to Practice it.

WE may therefore enquire diſtinctly into the matter, as it is laid before us in the *Catechiſm.* And here obſerve,

Firſt, THE *Thing* that is under Conſideration, and whereof we have the *Deſcription*, viz. *Repentance unto Life*: For our diſtinct underſtanding whereof we may *Conſider*,

1. THAT the word *Repentance*, is uſed in *Scripture* in *diverſe ſenſes*; and therefore we muſt be *Cautious* how we underſtand it here: There are *two Words* uſed in the *New-Teſtament* to expreſs *Repentance* by; *one* comes of a word that ſignifies to be *Careful* or *Anxious*, or *Sollicitous*; and ſignifies an *after Sollicitude* or *Perplexity of the ſpirit*, in regard of ſomething that we *have done*, which makes us to wiſh we had *not done* it: The *other* comes of a word that ſignifies the *Mind* or *Underſtanding*; and intends an *after Wiſdom*, or *Changing of the Mind*, and practiſing thereupon. The *former* is ſometimes applied to a *common Conviction* and *Compunction*; ſuch as was in *Judas*, Matth. 23. 3. whereas the *latter* is uſually intended of a *thorough Change*, ſuch as is wrought in a *true Converſion*,

Converſion, and then it engroſſeth the *other* alſo in it. Now the word *Repentance* is uſed ſometimes *Synecdochically*, for the *whole Work of Converſion*, or the *ſaving Change* that is wro't in the Man, and ſo it comprehends *Faith* in it: But ſo we do not underſtand it here; but as it ſtands *diſtributively* with *Faith*, in the Terms of the New-Covenant; and muſt therefore come under a *diſtinct Conſideration*, that ſo we may not confound the things proper to *Faith*, with thoſe that belong to *Repentance*.

2. THAT there are *Two ſorts* of *Repentance* mainly taken notice of in Scripture; one whereof is vulgarly called *Legal*, the other *Evangelical*. And we muſt warily diſtinguiſh between theſe two, elſe we ſhall run our ſelves into a groſs Error, and miſs in our Conceptions of that which is an *Eſſential Article* in the Chriſtian Religion.

1. THERE is a *Legal Repentance*, which is ſo called, becauſe it *proceeds from the Terrors of the Law*, and is *produced by Convictions & Terrors of Conſcience*; which makes Men *ſorry* for what they have done, and drives them to do ſome *Legal Works*. It produceth a Worldly Sorrow, and often it drives Men to an *outward Reformation* of their Lives. This is wrought by a *common Work* of the Spirit, who by awakening of the Conſcience, and putting it into an apprehenſion of Guilt for what he hath done, drives it to ſeek Eaſe by doing ſomething in amends for it; which often makes an obſervable Change in the Man's Life.

NOW tho' the Spirit of God often *begins* with the *Elect* in this way, in order to their Converſion, by cauſing of a *ſpirit of Bondage* to work in them; yet it hath not in it ſelf any thing that is *ſaving*; nor is there any neceſſary Connection between it and ſaving Grace: It therefore hath been found ſometimes ſtrangely to work in ſuch as have afterwards Periſhed: There was ſuch a Repentance in *Ahab*, 1 Kings 21. 27. and yet afterwards he repented of his Repentance, or at leaſt returned to his former wicked Courſes. And the moſt notorious Inſtance in this kind was *Judas*; and we are acquainted what fair ſteps he took, in, *Matth.* 27. *begin.* His heart reflected, he yielded to the accuſations of his Conſcience, was *ſorry for what he had done*, *Confeſſed* his Sin, and that openly, *Reſtored* again what he had unjuſtly gotten; and yet after all this, in *Deſpair* he *Hangs himſelf*, and is *gone to his own Place*.

2. THERE is an *Evangelical Repentance*; ſo called, becauſe the *Goſpel hath a mighty influence into the kindly Operation of it*: And not only ſo, but becauſe it is a *Goſpel Medium* to the obtaining of Forgiveneſs and Eternal Life; it is therefore connected with *Remiſſion*, Acts 5. 31. And for this cauſe it is called *Repentance unto Life*, Acts 11. 18. And *this* therefore is the Repentance now under conſideration; and for that reaſon our *Catechiſm* puts the *diſtinct Title* upon it.

AND here let us obſerve, That tho' the Light of Nature tells Men that they ought to Repent of Sin, inaſmuch as it is an unreaſonable thing for Man to Sin, and thereby he procures Wrath and Miſery to himſelf; yet the Law left no room to hope to obtain Pardon and Salvation, for his own Confeſſions and Reformations; but declared him a Tranſgreſſor, and accordingly a Man of Death; whereas the Goſpel hath opened a New Covenant, in which God hath made true Repentance a *Medium* to Salvation; ſo that the right Exerciſe thereof leads unto Life: and there is a vaſt difference between this and the other Repentance, as will be ſeen when we come to conſider the *Deſcription* that is given of it.

THIS *Evangelical Repentance*, which is wrought in Converſion being *a ſaving Change produced in the Man, whereby he paſſeth from Death to Life*, will come under a threefold Conſideration.

1. THERE is *the working of the habitual Change in the Man*. Hence Men are ſaid to be *renewed unto Repentance*, Heb. 6. 6. And this is done by the *Spirit of God* in Paſſive Converſion, who alone is able to produce it effectually: Hence that, Eph. 2. 1. *And you hath he quickened who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins*. And this is that which is properly called *Regeneration*, and the Product of it is called the *New Creature*, which is ſaid to be *Born of the Spirit*, Joh. 3. 6. *Repentance* is anumerated to the *Graces* that are beſtowed upon Men, to fit them for the leading of an *holy Life*. There is therefore ſuppoſed always, that in order to the exerting of *gracious Actions* by us, there be a *Principle* or *Power* infuſed into us, to render us capable of exerting them; and theſe are uſually, by *Divines* called *Supernatural Habits*; *Habits*, becauſe they abide in the Man; & *ſupernatural*, becauſe as the natural Man is void of them, ſo they cannot be wrought in him, but by an *Almighty Power*. It is certain, that no Act can extend the Vertue in the *Agent*; ſince therefore there are Acts of *Repentance* to be performed by us, we muſt have an *Habit* in us in order thereto: And becauſe Impenitence is rooted in our Corrupt Nature, this muſt be infuſed into us if we have it; which muſt be done by a Divine Power, and therefore Chriſt was Exalted for this Purpoſe, Acts 5. 31. *Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and Saviour, for to give repentance to Iſrael, and forgiveneſs of ſins*.

2. THERE is *the thing that is wrought in this Change, whereby the Habit is produced*; and that is, *the Sanctification of the Spirit*; in which he infuſeth into us all the ſpiritual Graces which are to furniſh us for a New Life: And tho' *Sanctification* comprehends all the Saving Graces of the Spirit in it, which conſtitute the *New Man*, it being the Renovation of the whole *Image of God* in Man; (as, Eph. 4. 24. *And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs, and true holineſs.*) and conſequently is more extenſive than *Repentance*, in the ſtrict conſideration of it; and *Faith* it ſelf conſidered as a Grace, belongs to it; yet *Repentance* is one, and properly conſiſts of that Change whereby the Man is alienated from Sin,

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and powerfully diſpoſed to Holineſs; of which we ſhall more diſtinctly conſider in the ſequel: And this is the Principle on which the Man is enabled to exert the ſubſequent Acts of Repentance: Hence called, *Repentance from dead works*, Heb 6. 1.

3. THERE is *the exerting of this Principle, or putting it forth into Act*: Which is produced from the ſame Spirit, and acted by the ſame Penitent. Theſe Habits are put into us by God for Action, and they attain the End of them thereby, and without it they would be in vain, and *loſe the Deſign* of them. Hence, tho' the *other* muſt be, or *this* cannot be; yet the Benefit redounds to us by *theſe*: nor can we actually turn from Sin to God, but by actually Repenting. This then belongs to *actual Converſion*, and neceſſarily follows the other, as is expreſſed, Jer. 31. 19. *Surely after that I was turned, I repented.* And it is called *Active*, becauſe it is really exerted by the Penitent himſelf; for tho' the Spirit giveth us Power, yet it is not *He* that Repents, but *we*; for the Action formally proceeds from us: It is He who *works all our works in us, and for us*, according to, *Phil.* 2. 13. But this is not *formally*, but *vertually*, by influencing us; and *without Him we can do nothing.* Now if we conſider that this Repentance under conſideration is brought in as a Condition of the New-Covenant, in order to our eſcaping of God's Wrath & Curſe due to us for Sin; it nextly intends this *actual* Repentance, and the firſt Act; but yet ſo as it involves or ſuppoſeth the *Principle* or *Habit*: And this alſo is the ſame Repentance which is continued in, and renewedly Acted by the Children of God, in the whole Courſe of their New-Obedience; and will abide to have it's exerciſe in them, ſo long as they have *a law in their Members warring againſt the law of the Mind.*

4. THIS *Repentance unto Life*, is evermore *inſeparable* from *ſaving Faith.* True *Faith* and true *Repentance* do always go together; and tho' ſaving Faith is firſt in order of *Nature*, (for Repentance to Life, requires the influence of Faith, to render it ſuch,) yet in order of *Time*, as to their production, they are Contemporary. *Legal* Repentance indeed, is ſeparable from Faith, and hath nothing of the Ingrediency of it into it, and ſo it is no wiſe profitable to the Man; for it always tarries at home, and the Man relies on himſelf, and ſo it brings him not truely unto God; and too frequently it iſſues, either in *turning with the Dog to his vomit*, as in *Ahab*; or in driving the Man to *utter Deſperation*, as it did in *Judas.* Theſe therefore are to be joyned together, as we find them, Acts 20. 21. *Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* And let a Man's Repentance be never ſo plauſible, yet without the Concomitancy of Faith with it, it cannot find acceptance with God; for we are told, Heb. 11. 6. *Without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe him.* And tho' we uſually diſcern the Truth of our Faith by our Repentance, yet it is an evidence from the *Effect*; and it is by *Faith* that we fetch the Arguments and Encouragements to a kindly Repentance; giving us hope to find acceptance with God thro' Chriſt, in our returning to Him.

5. THAT *Repentance* is a Grace, really *diſtinct* from *Faith.* Tho' they always go together, yet they are not the ſame thing: Indeed they are both of them Graces of the Spirit, yet they are diverſe Graces. There are ſome who endeavour to confound them; but in ſo doing, they *confound* the whole Scheme of the Covenant of Grace, and really bring us back to a *New* and more eaſy *Covenant of Works*: And this hath laid a foundation for *pernicious Errors* in Doctrine, which not a little obſtruct the Converſion & Salvation of ſinful Men. We may therefore here obſerve two or three things, wherein they mainly differ;

1. THO' they proceed from the *ſame Fountain*, viz. the *free Grace of God*, and have the *ſame Author*, who is the *Spirit of God*, and are habitually produced at the *ſame Time*, i. e. in *Regeneration*; yet they have a *diverſe* conſideration in reſpect of the *Object* of them. This is intimated in the fore-cited, *Acts* 20 21. For tho' it muſt be acknowledged that Faith ultimately terminateth on GOD, or the Divine Eſſence; yet it nextly and immediately fixeth on CHRIST; for this reaſon it is called the *Faith of Chriſt*, or *of the Son of God*, Gal. 2. 20. And the Promiſe of the Goſpel runs upon *Believing in Him*, Joh. 3. 16, 36. whereas Repentance goes *directly to God*, altho' it doth it by the help of Faith in Chriſt for acceptance with Him: It was from God that Man departed by his Apoſtacy; and every Sin is called a *departure from Him*, Heb. 3. 12. *Departing from the living God.* To Him therefore are we to return in Repentance, as will after be conſidered.

2. THEIR *Aims* or *Deſigns* are very *different*: I mean thoſe that are *immediate*; for they do herein agree, that they are both uſed as *Media* to attain Salvation according to the Tenour and Terms of the New Covenant; but yet they are diverſly concerned in the Proſecution of this Affair. That which Faith is firſtly concerned in, is to go to CHRIST, and by Him to GOD, for *Peace & Reconciliation* thro' His Blood: And tho' Faith hath it's other Uſes, and mixeth with, and influenceth all the other Graces in the Man, and ſo Repentance it ſelf; yet this it hath proper to it ſelf, and Repentance hath no influence into it: Hence that, Rom. 3. 25. *Whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation, thro' faith in his blood.* whereas the great deſign and buſineſs of Repentance, is, to bring us to a Conformity to the Preceptive Will of God, and the ſincere Practice of it: Hence called, Heb. 6. 1. *Repentance from dead works.* And ſo expreſſed, Acts 26. 20. *That they ſhould repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.* So that in *Faith* we go to God, as He is the Object of our *Truſt*; whereas in *Repentance* we apply our ſelves to Him, as He is the Object of our *Service.*

3. HENCE it follows, That they do alſo *differ* in their proper *Acts*; and this may be conſidered on a *double* account; (1)

(1.) FAITH *is the only Instrument, by which we take hold on Christ and His Righteousness for our Justification.* Hence we are every where said to be Justified before God by Faith, and by that alone; and not by Works: nor is there any other Grace of the Spirit in us which is adapted for this Instrumentality, but only Faith, Rom. 3. 28. *Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law.* Whereas Repentance only carries us to, and engageth us in *New Obedience* to God, from whom we expect our whole Salvation, thro' the Merit & Vertue of the Righteousness and Obedience of Christ; so that we do not obtain Remission by our Repentance, but by our Faith embracing Him. Whereas by Repentance we become alienated from all other lords, and devoted entirely to Him who so forgives us, and consequently our Repentance supposeth us to be believers. Hence that, Tit. 3. 8. *This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works.*

(2.) FAITH *fetcheth all that strength from Christ, whereby we may be able to serve Him.* Hence that, Heb. 10. 38. *Now the just shall live by faith.* Gal. 2. 20. *The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* All that we do that is good, must come from Him; and hence there can be no exercise of Repentance, but in and with the exercise of Faith.

BUT the *Activity of Repentance*, is in exerting that strength for the Glory of God in our Life, in avoiding Sin, and practising Duty: for the influence of Repentance is on the whole course of Sanctification, both in the *Mortifying of Sin*, and *Perfecting of Holiness*; and in the very first act of Repentance there is this engagement of the heart against all Sin, and unto all Holiness: Thus therefore these two differ These things being thus *Premised*, we may proceed,

Secondly, TO a more *Particular* Explication of the *Demonstration* given us of this *Repentance* And here observe,

I. THE *general Nature of it*; it is a *saving Grace*: and in this regard it agrees with Faith, which we have also so described; and under the consideration of that, we took the account why it is called a Grace, and why Saving; which needs not to be here again inculcated: It is a Grace, because it is freely given them of God, and they could neither gain it by their own endeavours, nor earn it of God. And it is a Saving Grace, because it is bestowed on none but God's Elect; and is one of *those things, which accompany Salvation.*

II THE *Subject* of this Grace; or, *the Quality & Condition he is in, before it is wrought in him*; viz. He is a *Sinner*: and herein the Riches of this Grace, or the free kindness of God discovered abundantly: nor indeed, can any other but such an one be the proper subject of it; for the giving of it, evermore supposeth such an one. This is not so to be understood, as if the Sin of the Creature were the *Motive* that put God upon his bestowing of this Grace upon him; for if so, why then are not all Sinners made sharers in it; whereas we know, that he leaves Multitudes to abide under Impenitence, and so to dye in their Sins: but he takes occasion from the Sin of Man, to *manifest his Mercy* towards such as he sees meet, in bestowing of Repentance upon them, and so bringing them to attain Eternal Life. But for a more particular explaining this matter, let us observe these things,

1. THAT *Man in his Primitive State was made Upright, and so needed not Repentance.* The reason of this as grounded in the Nature of Repentance, which will be shortly considered: here only consider, that Repentance *supposeth something amiss in the subject which calls for it.* A Man is to repent of that which is evil, and not of that which is good. Now we are told in Eccl. 7. 29. *God made man upright.* Which Integrity consisted in the *Rectitude of all his Powers*, and their conformity to the Rule: and this Man was possessed of, by vertue of the Image of God which was put upon the whole Man, and sanctified him throughout, in Soul, Spirit & Body: if therefore he had continued in this State, Repentance had been a stranger in the World: Our Saviour hath therefore made that remark, Matth. 9. 12, 13. *They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

2. THAT *Man by his Fall, brought a double infelicity upon himself*; viz. *Guilt*, and a *turning out of the way of Life*; but of these are fully intimated in the word of God: By his Guilt he pulled upon his own head, the curse contained in the threatning, Gen. 2. 17. *In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* By this, he was not only obnoxious to all miseries, but was actually doomed to suffer them; because the law had punctually said in, Ezek. 18. 4. *The soul that sinneth, it shall die.* And this is the true and proper wages of Sin, Rom. 6. 23. *The wages of sin is death.* And by turning out of the way of Life, he got into the broad way which leads to destruction. So it is declared concerning all Men by Nature, That as they are universally guilty, Rom. 3. 19. *That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God* So that they are going in the road to destruction, *v.* 16. *Destruction and misery are in their ways.* All this properly ariseth from Sin, which they would never have been exposed unto, if they had not *fallen by their Iniquity.*

3. THAT *except both of these be removed, the Man must be irrecoverably lost.* This God hath assured us of in his word; and he is in good earnest, and will not recede from it; for he hath told us, 1 Sam. 15. 29. *And also the strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent: for he is not a man that he should repent.* Exod. 34 7. *That will by no means clear the guilty.* As long

as

as Guilt abides on the Sinner, he is held fast bound over to suffer Vengeance from God; and He hath given His *Oath* for the Confirmation of it, Deut. 32. 40, 41. *For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever. If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me.* And He hath equally assured us, if they turn not from their Evil ways, and return to God with their whole Hearts, their *Iniquity shall be their ruin*; and the way of Sin leads to Hell, and will leave Men there at last; Psal. 125. ult. *As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity.* God is an holy God, and He requires Holiness of all those who would have Him to be their God; Heb. 12. 14. *Follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.* He loveth Righteousness and hates Iniquity; and Men deceive themselves if they hope to be saved in their Sins.

4. *THE* latter *of these is only observed, in the way of true & sound Repentance.* It is by this that they turn from their evil way, into that which is right, and leads to Salvation; and for this reason is the Duty of Repentance so much urged in the Word of God. The Gospel Invitation sent unto Sinners, is summarily comprized in those two words, *Repent* & *Believe*; Mark 1. 14. And Christ hath fully assured us, that without these, is no hope before Man of being Saved, but Perdition abides them, Matth. 18. 3. *Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.* Luk. 13. 3. *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.* And this is the Foundation on which our Saviour denounced those fearful Woes, *Matth.* 11. 20, *&c.* God every where invites Sinners to Him, unless they are resolved to Dy; Ezek. 33. 11. *Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?* And, Chap. 18. 30. *Repent, and turn your selves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.* Now this is the proper Nature of Repentance, viz. A *turning from Sin, to God*, as will hereafter be considered.

5. THAT *God will not bestow the* former *of these upon any, without the* latter. God is the Author of both these; He must give us them, if ever we have them; and they are both put together in His Commission, Acts 5. 31 *For to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.* Guilty Sinners, when under Conviction of the Wrath of God that is out against them, are mightily concerned for Pardon; and well they may, for they are Happy that obtain it; (*Psal.* 32. 1, 2.) but if they separate this from Repentance, and seek not after this Turning, they impose upon themselves, and will lose the hopes of it; for God hath plumply said, That except Sinners turn, He will fall upon them in His Fury; Psal. 7. 11, 12. *God is angry with the wicked every day. If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.*

6. HENCE it follows, *That Man by becoming a Sinner, brought upon himself the Necessity of Repentance.* God is angry at nothing but Sin, and Sinners for it; and this He cannot endure: We are therefore told, Psal. 5. 4, 5. *For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight; thou hatest all workers of iniquity.* And because all Men are Sinners as they derive from sinful *Adam*, and are made to participate in his Image; all therefore are under the indispensible Necessity either of *Repenting* or of *Perdition*: And that in this way they may have a good hope of escaping the Wrath of God, and Vengeance of Hell, this is a Fruit of His New Covenant Grace; for there was no room left for it in the First Covenant, which left no such reserve for sinful Man.

USE. LET this then serve to give Warning to Sinners, as ever they hope to escape Eternal Misery, *not to content themselves with a presumptuous Faith,* (as all theirs is, who hope to be saved in their Sins;) but to *seek of God to give them Repentance*, by turning them every one from their Sins. And because we are all Sinners by nature, it becomes the *Youngest* of us to seek for this Gift of God, from Him who is the sole Author of it; and earnestly to put up that request to Him, Psal. 51. 10. *Create in me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit within me.*

[APRIL 1. 1707.]

SERMON CCXXI.

III. THE *Preparatives* unto this Repentance, or the *Grounds* on which it is exerted; which are *Two*, 1. *True sense of his Sin.* 2. *An apprehension of the Mercy of God.*

WE are here to observe, That Repentance is to be considered, either as it is a Grace infused into the Soul, or as it is drawn forth into Act and Exercise: Now as to the Creating of this *Habit*, the Soul is meerly *Passive*, and is only the Subject recipient; and that which only moves Him to bestow it, is His meer free Grace: But because in the exerting of it, tho' the Spirit draws it forth by his Power and Influence, yet the Man is *Active*; and not only is the Subject in which it is done, but also the formal Agent: Therefore the *Spirit* in drawing of it forth, applies himself to the Man, as a *rational Being*, and accordingly disposeth him to it, by prevailing Reasons or Motives, which do thereupon prepare him to Act as a *Cause by Counsel*, and to *this*, do the things under consideration belong, and we are here to consider them. We may therefore take a particular Account of them, and consider how they serve to advance this Repentance.

[1.] THE *former* of these is, *A true sense of his Sin.* Conviction of Sin is the first thing that our Saviour ascribes to the Spirit in His Application to Sinners, Joh. 16. 8. *And when he is*

come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. Now this Conviction is gradual; it is not wrought all at once, but hath it's increases as long as the Believer lives: There are also the *Legal Convictions*, which are Common and not Saving, which the Sinner either wears off, or they drive him to Desperation: Tho' oftentimes this is made serviceable in order to the producing of a thorough and saving Change in the Man, by the sanctifying Spirit. Now this Sense of Sin is necessary in order to an actual Repenting; and tho' a Legal Sense will suffice for a Legal Repentance; yet for that which is Evangelical, it must be gracious: Tho' in the Production of it he makes use of the Law, which is the proper Instrument of this Conviction; for we are told, Rom. 23 20. *For by the law is the knowledge of sin.* But of this *Conviction* we took a particular account, under the Head of *Effectual Calling*; in which we observed, the Sinner is made feelingly to apprehend the Evil and Bitterness of Sin, according to, *Jer.* 2. 19. which is wrought partly by discovering of the *bitter Fruits* of Sin, in that it hath brought upon the Man all the amazing *Curses* written in the Book of God, and denounced against Sinners; partly by giving him a discerning of the *vile Nature* of Sin, in that it is the abominable thing which God hates, and is of its own Nature destructive to the Man's own well-being. And in the working of this Sense, he is made both to apprehend the truth and reality of these things, and give a firm Assent thereto; to Consent to the *Righteousness of the Law* in it, and thereupon to feel himself truly miserable and undone. Now the Necessity of this Sense, in order to actual Repentance, will be evident, if we consider,

1. REPENTANCE ever supposeth *Evil*, in the thing Repented of. In Repentance there is a separation from the thing; and this being an *Imperate Act*, must needs employ the separating Affections in the exertion of it: What Affections are peculiarly employed in this, will come under consideration afterwards. Here only observe, that the *Affections* were put into Man for his avoidance of Evil, and pursuit of Good; and were therefore necessary for the Employment of his Rational Powers, being the *Springs of Action*: If therefore the Man shun and flee from a thing, it is because it is either really Evil, or at least in his apprehension it is so; otherwise he doth not as a reasonable Creature, who Acts according to the Dictates of his Understanding.

2. EVERY Natural Man hath a *Love for his Sin*, which ariseth from a *good Opinion* that he hath of it. This is one of the miserable Fruits of the Apostacy, that by reason of the Corruption of Man's Nature, which hath pervaded every Faculty and Power in him, he Loves Sin, and is carried forth with an eager Delight in it; and this is corroborated by the Error of his Judgment, which hath filled him with a false persuasion of Good & Evil, which makes him to put the one for the other, Isai. 5. 20. *Wo unto them that call evil good, and good evil.* This is it that makes him adhere so close to it; and as long as he retains that Opinion concerning it, as that which is *Good*, he cannot but maintain a Love for it.

HENCE,

3. TILL the Man be truly *persuaded* of the *Evil of Sin*, he never will *Repent* of it: For it is contrary to the Nature of a Reasonable Creature, to Repent of that which he resents as a thing that is *Good*: We are told of them, Jer. 8. 5. *They hold fast deceit, they refuse to return.* And the reason of it is included in the words: It is *Deceit*, i. e. It is a false Principle which he hath imbibed; and being under the Cheat, this makes him tenacious of it; and for this reason we have that given as the ground of their Impenitence, notwithstanding all Endeavours of Conviction that were used with them; Isa. 44. 20. *A deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?* And on this account we find what was the ground of their renouncing of the Prophets Pleas with them, to turn from their sinful Courses, *Jer.* 44. 16, 17. As long therefore as Sinners abide stupid, they cannot Repent; whereas when this Sense is impressed upon their Consciences, this awakens and rouzeth them, and becomes a powerful Motive in them to Repent; it makes their Sin burdensome, which before was Pleasant; and causeth them to enquire how they may get separated from it.

[2.] THE *latter* of these, is, *An Apprehension of the Mercy of God in Christ.* And this is always in Conjunction with the *former*, when it is improved by the Spirit of God, in order to the drawing forth of this Repentance: This also was formerly taken notice of, under the Doctrine of *Effectual Calling*, as it serves to persuade a Sinner to accept of Christ by Believing on Him; and may be here a little further considered, as it is used to be a *Motive* to Repentance, and hath an Ingredience in it.

AND here,

1. HE is *made to apprehend & believe, That there is Mercy with God for miserable Sinners*: Without the Revelation of this, & a persuasion wro't on the Heart, to believe the Truth of it; the Sinner, tho' made uneasy in his present Condition, knows not whither to go; so that tho' the *Law* is necessary to the raising in us a sense of Misery, yet it is by the *Gospel*, that this Sense is made to work kindly: This apprehension is therefore wrought in him by the Holy Spirit, who persuades him to believe, that whatsoever he hath been or done, there is still a door of hope stands open unto him; accordingly we have him so arguing, Ezra 10. 2. *Yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing.* And this is one Note of difference between *Legal* & *Evangelical* Repentance; in the *former* there is only a *discovery of Sin*, but in *this* there is also a *revelation of Mercy*: Hence that, Psal. 130. 3, 4. *If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities: O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee: that thou mayest be feared.* For this reason, when *Peter*'s Sermon had

had wrought his Hearers to a *Compunction*, he preſently applies to them the conſideration of God's Mercy to raiſe in them an Hope; Acts 2. 37, 38. *Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and ſaid unto Peter, and to the reſt of the apoſtles, Men and brethren, what ſhall we do? Then Peter ſaid unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, for the remiſſion of ſins, and ye ſhall receive the gift of the holy Ghoſt.*

2. HE is *acquainted with the* Way *how this Mercy came to be laid in for Sinners*; viz. *by CHRIST.* It is therefore called, *The Mercy of God in Chriſt*; and that, as to diſtinguiſh it from the common Mercy which God beſtows upon Mankind in general, during this Day of Patience and Benignity, *Matth.* 5. 45. ſo to declare to us from *what Fountain* this Mercy underConſideration derives from God to us, and in what way we come to partake in it, *viz.* thro' the Impetration of His own Son: And this alſo becomes a Motive to Repentance, that Mercy which can alone ſtand a Sinner in ſtead, is diſcovered in the Source and Original of it; for there is no ſaving Mercy that can derive to us in any other way: Hence that, Eph. 1. 3. *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt.* And this alſo belongs to the Goſpel Revelation, without which it had never been known.

3. HE is *perſwaded of the* Neceſſity *of this Repentance, if he would partake in that Mercy.* The diſcovery that there is Mercy is his encouragement to Hope, and not utterly to Deſpair of Salvation: But the Manifeſtation of the Way in which it is to be come by, is directive to him how he may obtain, and not miſs of it; and ſo it alſo affords him further Motive to Practice accordingly. Now tho' the FirſtCondition on which he is invited to embrace this Mercy, is *Faith in Chriſt*, unto which a firm *Promiſe of Salvation* is made, *Joh.* 3. 16. yet this is not ſeparate *from*, but in connection *with Repentance*; for we are every where aſſured, that without Repentance there is no Salvation, as was before obſerved: Nor doth this in the leaſt enervate the Promiſe made to *Believing*, but it abides firm; only it is a diſtinguiſhing Note of that *Faith* which is *unto Salvation*, viz. That it is always accompanied with *Repentance*: And ſo it becomes a Rule of Trial, whether our Faith be of the right ſtamp; and aſſures us, that a Faith ſeparate from this, is deluding Preſumption. And this becomes a potent Motive in him, to urge him to ſeek Repentance, as being of the Way neceſſary to Salvation.

4. HENCE in *Hope of*, and *Reliance upon* this Mercy, he is *encouraged & helped to Repent. Hope & Deſpair* are two contrary Affections; and therefore Deſpair of obtaining Mercy in a Way and Courſe of Sin, is a Moral help to break off a Sinner from it, and putting him upon forſaking it: So the hope of finding Mercy is a like Argument to attract and draw him to God, that he may obtain it of Him. This *apprehenſion of Mercy*, by which ſuch an Hope is ſtirred in him, is wrought by the Spirit in every one, in his drawing him forth to the Exerciſe of Repentance; and not only ſo, but he carries him another ſtep forward, viz. to a *full Purpoſe*, reſolutely to *adventure* upon this Mercy, and *rely* upon it. And this is implied in that Direction which God gives to *Iſrael*, for the right ordering of their Repentance, Hoſ. 14. 3. *Aſſhur ſhall not ſave us, we will not ride upon horſes, neither will we ſay any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods: for in thee the fatherleſs findeth mercy.* Accordingly that encouragement is given to ſuch, Pſal. 147. 11. *The Lord taketh pleaſure in them that fear him; in thoſe that hope in his mercy.* And the word *Hope* imports, ſuch an Hope as encourageth and enableth the Man to adventure himſelf entirely upon the *Mercy of God*: And from hence we may infer, the Neceſſity of the Concomitancy of Faith with that Repentance which is unto Life; and that herein a *Legal* Repentance is differenced from that which is *Evangelical*: Nor can a Man kindly Repent of his Sins except he do withal place his recumbency on God thro' Chriſt; for it is this Faith which carries him to God, on whom ſaving Repentance terminates, as will be conſidered.

HERE therefore we may briefly conſider, of what *Neceſſity* this *apprehenſion of Mercy* is, as well as the former *ſenſe of Sin*, in order to the Repentance now under conſideration; for which let us obſerve,

1. IN true Repentance there is an *Object*, to which the Sinner turns; which is *GOD.* This will come in the next Head to be particularly enquired into: Here only it is a little Anticipated for the manifeſting the *Neceſſity* of this Apprehenſion. We are conſidering of *Repentance unto Life*; now every *Turn* that the Sinner makes in his Life, is not an acting or exerciſing of thisRepentance: A Man may turn from one lying Vanity to another; he may Repent of this and that, and ſo leave it, and yet remain Impenitent, becauſe he abides within the Compaſs of the reign of Sin in him; and may be afterwards inſtanced; to which I ſhall refer, when we come to a diſtinct Conſideration of it. Only it is here to be obſerved, that a Man muſt have an *Object*; and therefore if he leaves one, he will faſten upon another: And God directs Sinners to be very Cautious to what Object they do return, Jer. 4. 1. *If thou wilt return, O Iſrael, ſaith the Lord, return unto me.*

2. THERE muſt therefore be a *Diſcovery* of this *Object*, and hope of acceptation with Him, to encourage the Sinner to Repent: And as this Object can be no other but God; ſo Man cannot be perſwaded to turn to Him, unleſs he apprehends a good hope of Succeſs in ſo doing. A bare diſcovery made to the Man of his Sin, in it's evil Nature and Fruits, will only tend to drive him to Deſpair; and ſo there can be no kindly Repentance acted upon it: If the Man hath no proſpect of mending his Condition, the apprehenſion of the Curſe that is upon him, will make him to ſit down in Deſpair and Dy. When once it comes to that, Ezek. 37. 11.

Our hope is loſt, we are cut off for our parts. Earneſt deſires without the leaſt hope, are killing deſires, and will not prompt endeavours, but totally diſcourage the Man: now this is founded upon the hearing and believing that the God of Iſrael is a Merciful God.

3. HE muſt apprehend *how* God comes to be ſuch an *Object*, which is only, *by Jeſus Chriſt.* It is only the Mercy of God by which we may obtain pardon of him, peace with him, and a glorious Inheritance in his Kingdom, that can give us encouragement to go to him: for, by the ſenſe of Sin he knows that the *Juſtice* of God is armed againſt him, and he lies under a ſentence of death; & except this Juſtice be atoned, the wrath of God cannot be turned away from him: He knows that God is a *conſuming fire* in Himſelf to Sinners, and that unleſs his wrath be atoned, he can expect nothing but Eternal Vengeance; ſo that without a diſcovery of Chriſt to interpoſe and be a Mediator, he cannot be ſatisfied how *Juſtice and Mercy may agree in One*, that ſo God may be juſt, and yet merciful to him; for this is brought about only in and through Jeſus Chriſt, Eph 2. 14. *For he is our peace, who hath made both one* ——.

4. HE muſt alſo apprehend how Chriſt hath made *Way* for Acceſs to God by Penitent Sinners. It is not enough to hear that there is a CHRIST, but He muſt alſo be ſatisfied *how* CHRIST came to be *able to Save Sinners that come to God by Him.* For this is our encouragement, Heb. 7. 25. *Wherefore he is able alſo to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.* A convinced Sinner knows, that a Satisfaction muſt be made to the incenſed Law, before ſuch time as God can, conſiſtent with *Juſtice* and *Veracity*, be atoned to Sinners: and is apt to be very inquiſitive, How can it be conſiſtent with the Holineſs of the Law, that ſaving Mercy ſhould be obtained? nor will it ſuffice to be told that Chriſt doth this, but we muſt be perſwaded, *How he hath done it*; for which we muſt believe the report of the Goſpel concerning his Perſon, Natures, Offices, and the Value of his Obedience in doing & dying in our ſtead. *Paul* therefore tells us, 2 Tim. 1. 12. *I know whom I have believed, and I am perſwaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him.* And this is it that makes the way clear to us, and gives us encouragement and hope, that with God we may find Mercy.

IV. WE have an account of the *Parts* of this Repentance, or *the things wherein* it doth conſiſt, or is exerted; expreſt in thoſe words, *He turns from his Sin unto God.* Thoſe two do conſtitute, but *one* act of Repentance, both of them going into the rendering of it ſuch. *For*,

1. IT is eſſential to Repentance, that it is a *Turning.* And for that reaſon it is ſo often in the word of God, called by *that name*; So, Ezek. 33 11. *Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael.* Jer. 31. 18. and *elſe-where.* And the word is *Metaphorical*, properly ſignifying a returning back again to a Place which one had before departed from; and is morally applied to the work of *Converſion*, in which the Man forſakes his ſinful ways, and takes up a Courſe of Holineſs, from which he departed in the Apoſtaſy; & this is done in & by Repentance.

2. HENCE, Becauſe Repentance is a *turning*; it rationally ſuppoſeth *two terms*, viz. *From*, and *to which* it is; and from the Conſideration of *theſe terms* put together, we may take up the diſtinct Nature of Repentance. There is a turning in Faith, as well as in Repentance; and in this alſo there is a turning from Sin to God, for in it we remove our truſt from *lying Vanities*, and place it on the *living God.* We muſt therefore take a particular proſpect of this Affair, by conſidering the *Nature* of this *Turning.* And here,

1. IN regard of the Term *from which*; it is a *turning from Sin.* We muſt here call to mind that the ſubject of this turning, is a *Sinner*; and Man became ſo by turning away from the *holy, juſt & good Law of God*, which was given him to be the Rule of his whole Life; and turning in to the way of Sin, which is diametrically oppoſite to the other; and thus he left God, and embraced *lying Vanities.* And this is the ſtate of all Mankind till ſuch time as by a powerful Converſion, they are made to forſake Sin, and return to their Allegiance. Every *Unregenerate Man* is under the *Dominion of Sin*, and that not only as to Condemnation, by vertue whereof it holds him faſt bound to ſuffer Eternal Vengeance, but alſo as to a lordly power which it holds over him, engaging of him to fulfill its luſts. Hence that advice given to them, Rom. 6. 17. *But God be thanked, that ye were the ſervants of ſin; but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.* And, v. 19. *As ye have yielded your members ſervants to unrighteouſneſs, and to iniquity, unto iniquity; even ſo now yield your members ſervants to righteouſneſs, unto holineſs.* He is become a voluntary *ſlave* to it, and it hath his heart as well as life, and he hath conſented to have his *ear bored* to it. Accordingly, as his whole Man is turned to it; ſo the *whole Man* is engaged in this *turning from it.* Now Sin comes under a double conſideration, viz. *Original* and *Actual*; by the former of theſe, he is filled with all curſed Principles, and Revolt & Rebellion; by the latter he is voluntarily and reſolutely engaged in the Proſecution of Sin with greedineſs; and in the work of Repentance he is engaged to turn from it in both theſe reſpects: He is to make to himſelf a *new Heart*, and lead a *new Life*; he is in his preſent poſture looking *hell-ward*, and muſt therefore turn his back upon it, and look *heaven-ward.* Sin is properly *Anomy*; 1 Joh. 3. 4. *Whoſoever committeth ſin tranſgreſſeth alſo the law: for ſin is the tranſgreſſion of the law.* i. e. It is a contrariety to the holy law of God, and is applicable either to the Mans State or Actions; and in both of theſe regards it is to be abandoned.

abandoned. So that in this Repentance, there is both an alienation of the *Heart from Sin*, and a relinquiſhing of it, in the *Life & Converſation*; and where there are not both of theſe exerciſed, there is no Repentance: And tho' the Grace to do this muſt be given us from on high, yet the Exerciſe of it muſt be Practiſed by us, if we would approve ourſelves for true Penitents. As for the *Way* wherein this turning is to be Practiſed, ſo as to prove it to be Sincere, and ſo unto Life; it will come to be conſidered under the *next Head*. I here only obſerve, where it muſt begin, and from whence it muſt take it's Progreſs; it muſt be a flight from Sin, or elſe it cannot be that Repentance, which is a proper *Medium* for our eſcaping the Wrath and Curſe that is due to us for Sin.

2. IN regard of the Term *to which*; it is a *turning to GOD*. This we obſerved, is called a *Returning*, becauſe Man in his Creation was placed near to God, and went away from Him in his Apoſtacy; and therefore all Sinners are ſaid to be *far from God*, Pſal. 73. 27. And therefore in Repentance they come back again to Him. It is to be obſerved, that *GOD* and *Sin* are put in Oppoſition, for Sin is conſidered *as a lord* that hath us in Subjection; and as we are to renounce it's lordſhip, ſo we are to ſubject our ſelves to God's *Supream Government* over us: And it intimates, that we cannot ſerve Sin and God too; for what the one commands, the other forbids; and what the one forbids, the other requires: Hence that, Matth. 6. 24. *No man can ſerve two maſters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or elſe he will hold to the one, and deſpiſe the other. Ye cannot ſerve God & mammon.* And as in *Believing* we return to God, as the Object of *our Truſt*, ſo in *Repentance* we return to Him as *our Sovereign Lord*; as it is expreſſed, Iſa. 26. 13. *O Lord our God, other lords beſides thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name.* And it is certain, that the Term *to which* we return in Repentance, is as indiſpenſibly neceſſary to be *God alone*, as that *from which* we turn, is *Sin*: And hence for Men to pretend that they have left off theſe and thoſe ſinful Courſes which they formerly purſued, is always a vain Pretence to their having ſavingly Repented: Nor indeed can a Man be truely ſaid to be turned from Sin, except he in it have *returned to God*. It is a thing frequent for Men to turn away from *ſome* Sins, which they formerly purſued with greateſt eagerneſs, by an *outward Reformation*, and a *ſeeming Indignation*; but it is not *unto God*, but unto ſome *other Sin*, which they can with more eaſe and quietneſs Proſecute; and conſequently they do not return to the Service of God, but ſtill remain under the Power & Command of Sin; for this reaſon we have God complaining of this as an *Hypocritical* Repentance, becauſe tho' they turned, yet it was not to Him, Hoſ. 7. 16. *They return, but not to the moſt High.* And elſewhere. He Chargeth them for *traverſing their ways*, Jer. 2. 23. Which Word ſignifies *ſhifting, changing, turning* ſometimes this way, ſometimes that: Sometimes Sinners follow *Intemperance*, but being convinced of the Miſchief they find in that, they turn to *Covetouſneſs*; which might alſo be inſtanced in other things: But this is far from amounting to the Repentance we are conſidering of; they ſometimes turn from a *leud Life*, to a *ſober Converſation*; but in that alſo they *turn to themſelves*, but not *to God*, whilſt they ſeek to eſcape God's Wrath, and obtain Salvation by their own Righteouſneſs: But what belongs to a ſincere turning to God, will alſo come under a more diſtinct Conſideration under the *next Head*, which may be taken Account of, the next Opportunity.

USE. WE may for the preſent only take Notice of the *Vanity* and *Folly* of ſuch as make *high Pretences* to a *ſtrong Faith*, but are *utter Strangers* to *ſound Repentance*. There are thoſe who do *profeſſedly* expunge *Repentance* from the *Goſpel Covenant*, and charge thoſe that preſs it on their People for being *Legal Preachers*; but there are a great many more, that *Practically* neglect, and conſequently reject it; and tho' they have their great Confidences, yet never ſeek for this Change, or examine themſelves about it. But we are here aſſured, that ſuch will find their Hopes to deceive them, and finally fall ſhort of the Salvation they promiſe themſelves: For tho' it be a Truth, that every one that truely Believes in CHRIST ſhall be Saved; yet it is alike true, whoſoever *really Believes* in CHRIST, hath alſo *Repented*, and *turned from Sin to God*. And would we not loſe our expectation at laſt; let us carefully ſee to this.

SERMON *CCXXII.*

V. WE have the diſtinguiſhing *Properties* of this Repentance; by which the *Truth* and *Sincerity* of it may be diſcerned; and the *Falſehood* of a *Vain* and *Hypocritical* Repentance of many may be diſcovered. And this is ſet forth with reſpect to *both* the Terms which belong to it; or *Sin* which is *turned from*, and *God*, who is *turned to*: And the Conſideration of *both* theſe, will help to give us more clear light into the *Nature* of this *great Work*, which is wro't in the *Converſion of a Sinner*. We may then proceed to take an Account of each of theſe ſeverally:

[1.] IN reſpect of the Term *from which* he turns; we are told, that he doth it with *Grief at*, and *Hatred of* his *Sin*. And under theſe two are comprehended *Synechdochically*, all thoſe things which are Ingredients into, and do conſtitute this *turning from Sin*. And here let us obſerve, that as the *whole Man* is engaged in this Repentance, both *Soul* and *Body*; and it is both *Original* and *Actual* Sin, which is thus departed from; ſo there are two things wherein this *turning*, (if it be real and in good earneſt,) will make diſcovery of themſelves, *viz.* In regard of the *inward Principles* in the Man; and with reſpect to the *Practice* upon theſe Principles: Which may therefore be ſeverally touched on.

(1)

(1.) IN regard of the *inward Principles* that are in the Man. And here consider, that all his separating Affections do stand engaged in this *turning from Sin.* In Man considered as a Reasonable Creature, we observe a Rational Soul, as well as a Body and Senses: And in this we find *Intellectual* and *Moral* Powers, by which he is enabled to perform those human Actions which belong to his specifick Nature: An *Understanding* by which he judgeth what is right or wrong, good or evil, eligible or refusable by him: A *Will* by which he is able for Election or Rejection of an Object set before him, according to the best Verdict of the Practical Understanding: And *Affections*, by which the Will pursues it's Elections, in it's Imperate Actions, and improve the whole Man in the Execution of them. Hence all these Powers are employed about, and have their influence into *Repentance*, and are firstly considerable in it, because the Sincerity of it, is primarily to be judged of by these. The *Understanding* applies it self to search, and upon it finds and resolves, that Sin shall no longer be hugged by him, but utterly abandoned. And this Consideration and Resolution, is declared to be the leading step to the Man's turning away from it; as we are told in, Ezek. 18. 28. *Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, and not die.* And the *Affections* are hereupon moved and engaged to prosecute this Resolution; and so the Heart or inward Man is turned, and the whole Soul is set right. This therefore is in the first place to be enquired after. Now because there are Objects that are *Good* & *Evil* set before the Man, *one* whereof is to be Chosen and Prosecuted, the *other* to be rejected and abandoned: God hath for that reason put *Affections* into Men, that are suited to *both* these; and by the Exertion of these, he hath a discovery of the Verdict of his *Understanding*, and the determination of his *Will*; and this is to be considered, not only in regard of *Rational* Actions, in the prudent Management of his temporary Affairs; but more peculiarly in his *Moral* and *Gracious* Actions, with respect to Sin and Holiness. So that in his turning from Sin, his separating Affections are nextly improved & employed. And those which are especially concerned here, are these,

1. HE is affected with a *Godly Sorrow* for it. Godly Sorrow is therefore said *to be unto Repentance*, 2 Cor. 7. 10. *Sorrow* is opposite to *Joy*; as by *that* we embrace and take Satisfaction in an Object; so by *this* we are weaned from it, and it is made distasteful to us: It is the folly ascribed to Sinners, that they rejoice in Evil; and whilst they do so, they will not part with it: But when a Man is affected with Sorrow for it, he is now made willing to have no more to do with it. And this Sorrow is set forth by Mourning for it, as a thing that is become bitter to him, and he bears it as a burden insupportable; and hence we read, *Psal.* 31.9,10. Zech. 12.10,11. *They shall mourn, as one mourneth for his only son.* He is grieved that he should ever Consent to it; *Psal.* 38.18. Yea, the presence and in-being of *Original* Sin, makes him cry as, Rom. 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!* And it is a *Godly* Sorrow; for there is one that is *Worldly*, which *worketh Death*, 2 Cor. 7. 10. That therefore which embitters it to him, is the discovery which God hath made him, and powerfully convinced him of, that it is a brutish vile thing; and that which is displeasing and dishonourable to God: Hence that in, Psal. 51.4. *Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.* Sin it self is made *exceeding sinful* to him, *Rom.* 7. 13.

2. HE is filled with a *Cordial Hatred* of it. *David* therefore could say, Psal. 119. 104. *I hate every false way.* It is a Property of every Natural Man, that he *Loves* Iniquity, that it is as dear to him as Life; he can as willingly *cut off his right hand*, and *pluck out his right eye*, as part with his Lusts. Men are said to be *glued* to their Idols; and it is this Love that is the Cement, *Hos.* 4. 17. But in Repentance this Love is turned into Hatred: The Spirit kills the endearedness of the Heart to it, makes him to look upon it as vile & abominable: The sense of his own Corruption makes him to abhor himself upon the Act of it, *Job.* 16. 6. This therefore God promiseth to do for his People, when he gives them Repentance, Ezek. 36. 31. *Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall lothe your selves in your own sight, for your iniquities, and for your abominations.* Now *Hatred* is the Primitive separating Affection: As therefore when he *Loved* Sin, that carried him insatiably in pursuit of it; so this *Hatred* doth as naturally carry him away from it; he cannot endure the Presence of it, and is set irreconcilably against it: Nor can be ever known to entertain kindly thoughts of it as long as he lives; so far as this Grace is Active in him.

3. HE is filled with *confounding Shame*, by reason of his Sin. It is an unhappy Property of reigning Sin, that it makes the Sinner to glory in it: Hence that, Phil. 3. 19. *Whose glory is their shame.* When they have committed Lewdness, they think they have done something worth Boasting of: Hence we have such Complaints made on this account, *Isa.* 3 9. & Jer. 6. 15. *Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush.* But in the Production of this Repentance, the Soul is filled with shame, and covered with Confusion, and he cannot tell how to look up: This is very genuine; for what else is *shame*, but a depression of Spirit, arising from an inward Sense of the baseness of the thing, and Reproach which the Man hath brought upon himself by it? And where that Apprehension is deeply fixed, it will have

this

this Operation on the Affections: Thus it was with him, Ezra 9. 6. *And said, O my God, I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens.* And with the Publican, *Luk.* 18. 3. This then is a thing ever inseparable from that Repentance which is of the right stamp.

4. HE is affected with a longing *insatiable desire* to be rid of Sin: Or rather an *unappeasable aversation* from it. For, Desire, in propriety of Speech, is a craving after the enjoyment of an absent good; the contrary to which is that under present consideration: tho' improperly it may be called a desire, tho' not after the thing, but of getting away from it, as that which is to him an insupportable burden, and he bears the presence of it very impatiently; as he complains, *Psal.* 38. 4. And this is by some termed, *Fuga*, a flight; and when it is ascribed to the Affections, it is a derivative from Hatred, and creates a weariness in the Soul, and makes him to cry out as, Jer. 4. 31. *Wo is me now, for my soul is wearied, because of murderers.* He pants for rescue, and looks out with sighing; Oh! when shall the time come, when Sin shall no more be present with me!

(2) IN respect of his *Practice* upon these Principles. For tho' the foundation of true Repentance is laid in the Soul, and the first stirrings and movings of it are in the Affections; yet, if it be right, it doth not rest there, but proceed farther. The Affections are the feet of the Soul, and when they are moved, they will move the whole Man, according to the impression that is made upon them: And this is the proper end & use for which they were put into the Man, and would without this be in vain. And it is certain, that if the Heart be changed, the whole Man is so; for in the work of Sanctification, the whole Man is wrought upon, Soul, Spirit & Body are turned; and *all old things are done away*, 2 Cor. 5. 17. And where this new Heart is given, it will indubitably be followed with a new Life; and the things wherein this discovers it self, are mainly these,

1. BY a free and hearty *Confession* of his Sin. And this, tho' not always to Men, in regard of some particular Sins; yet always to God, whose Law is broken, and whose Name is dishonoured by it. This is always a proper adjunct of true Repentance, and it waits upon it; so that he who upon Conviction of Sin, doth not freely Confess it to God and bewail it before Him, hath sufficient reason to fear that he never repented of it. The very burden which his Conscience is distressed with, by reason of it, will make him to seek relief, by an ingenuous acknowledgement of it: and this is one discovery of our being weary of it, and earnest desire of being delivered from it; and it is a spirit of Impenitence that keeps Sinners from this Confession. If *Ephraim* repents, he bemoans himself, *Jer.* 31. 18. And what is it that he bewails, but his Sin, as is evident? And this is that which God expects and waits for, in order to his manifesting himself reconciled to them; as, Lev. 26. 40. *If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me.*

2. BY a practical *Forsaking* of it. This therefore and the former are put together in the promise of Mercy; Prov. 28. 13. *He that covereth his sins, shall not prosper; but whose confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.* And except this follows the former, the Confession will be an airy and empty thing. The Confessions of true Repentance, are not a disburdening our selves of trouble, that we may with the more ease and freedom, return to our Confession of Sin: This is the most gross Hypocrisy, or rather a very high degree of Profaness, and a witness that our hearts are not right. In Repentance, the league is broken between the Man and his Sin; and that includes a firm resolution, to have nothing more to do with it: And this is the Natural Operation of that hatred of it, which is enkindled in him by the Sanctifying Spirit: Nor can that Man sincerely say that he abhors it, if he doth not relinquish it, and avoid it as a Toad or Serpent: This also will be the product of shame, if it be indeed Sin it self that he is ashamed of, and not some other thing. By these Affections thus influenced, we come to be dead to Sin: And the Apostle offers that pungent Question, Rom. 6. 2. *How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*

3. BY maintaining of a resolute *Warfare* against it, with utmost endeavours to Mortify the Lusts of it. Repentance is a Grace of Sanctification, and is therefore imperfect at first, and in that regard it is progressive, and consequently to be practised as long as we live. Nor is it enough to abstain from the *Acts* of Sin, but to seek and endeavour the *Death* of the very *root* of it. An Hypocrite may do the former, and take much pains in it; but a sincere Penitent will be deeply concerned for the latter. Original Sin will abide on us here, and we are to have no peace with it, nor consent to any truce, but maintain War with it till Death; and this is evermore a disposition put into us by Repentance: This therefore is commanded, Col. 3. 5. *Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.* And by this we are always turning from Sin: And this is not done by the meer suppression of the Acts of Sin, but by seeking the Life of it; and he who Repents indeed, will do so.

4. BY a careful *Avoidance* of the Intisements to the Commission of Sin. Impenitent Sinners shew the respects they have for Sin, by the endeavours they use to make provision for the gratification of their craving Lusts; but where there is true Repentance wrought in any, they will as carefully endeavour to with-

withdraw fewel from them, and avoid any thing which they know will nouriſh Concupiſcence in them; according to that counſel given in, Rom. 13. ult. *Make not proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil the luſts thereof.* They will ſhun vain Company, and all Opportunities of Temptation to Lewdneſs, avoid Intemperance, and all immoderate Uſe of the Creature; turn away their Eyes from ſuch Objects, as Experience hath told them, have been ſnares and traps to entangle them in Miſchief; and whatſoever of like Nature.

[2.] IN reſpect of the Term *to which* he turns; which we are told is *GOD*. And this we have obſerved hath reſpect to Him conſidered as He is our Lord and Lawgiver, which is that which puts a difference between *Faith* & *Repentance*, in reſpect of this Object; both whereof do ultimately determine upon God. Now the *Qualification* of this is briefly expreſſed in our *Catechiſm*, in theſe words, That it is *with full Purpoſe of*, and *endeavour after New Obedience*; but I ſhall Eſſay a little to dilate on this matter: We may therefore take this diſtinct and ſummary Account of it;

(1.) THAT in Repentance we *turn to God* as He is our *laſt End*. God hath revealed Himſelf to us in His Word, as He is the *firſt Cauſe* of all Good to us, and as He is the *laſt End* to whom we ought to Conſecrate our ſelves and our whole Life: As therefore in the *former* of theſe reſpects He is the Object of our *Faith*, ſo in the *latter* He is of our *Repentance*: As we were made dependent Creatures, and our whole Bleſſedneſs muſt derive from God, ſo ought we to truſt in Him; and as we were ſubordinate Beings, we owed our ſelves and all our Powers to Him that beſtowed them upon us, and ſo we ought to employ them; on which account He is our Lord and Lawgiver: Hence both of theſe go together, Iſa. 33. 22. *For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our law-giver.*

(2.) HENCE that which our Repentance *leads us directly unto*, is *New-Obedience*. As Man's great End was to *glorify God* by an actual Conformity to His revealed Will, which was his *reaſonable Service*; ſo Man being fallen from this End of his by Sin, muſt recover it again by Repentance; hence it is called *Repentance from dead Works*, Heb. 6. 2. And conſequently the Term to which it leads muſt be *Obedience*; for ſo only can fallen Man reach his laſt End; Pſal. 119. 59. *I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy teſtimonies.* It is therefore called *New Obedience*, either becauſe we are anew reſtored to it after our Revolt from God, and turning to lying Vanities, by this Renovation; or becauſe the Obedience it ſelf is of a New Stamp; the former being *Legal*, whereas this is *Evangelical*: The *Old Covenant* requiring perfect Perſonal Obedience as the Condition of Bleſſedneſs; but in the *New Covenant* ſincere Obedience is accepted in teſtimony of our Gratitude to God: And the former was to be performed in our *own* Strength; but this by new Strength derived from CHRIST: Hence that, Phil. 4 13. *I can do all things thro' Chriſt which ſtrengtheth me.*

(3.) HENCE in Repentance, *our cloſing Affections do carry us forth to God, and His revealed Will.* We obſerved that the Uſe of theſe is to unite us to our Object; and becauſe in this, God is our Object, as He is our ſupream Lord, we do by it cloſe with Him, by a voluntary Subjection to Him; and this muſt be according to His revealed Will, which is made known to us, as the Rule of our Obedience, *Deut* 29. 29.

AND here,

1. *WE Love God and His Laws.* As the Natural Man hates God, ſo he diſcovers it by being a lump of Enmity againſt the Law, which renders him incapable, whilſt ſo, of paying Him true Obedience, *Rom.* 8. 7, 8. Before he was full of Prejudice againſt God by reaſon of the Command; but now it is his Delight, and his Love to the Precept: Love is the root of Obedience; for which reaſon it is called *Love*, 2 Tim. 1. 13. And we are told on this Account, Rom. 13. 10. *Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.* Now in Repentance this Love is kindled and rendred inexpreſſibly great: Hence that in, Pſal. 119. 97. *O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.* We diſcern by this new Light, ſuch hidden things in the Law of God, that endear it to us; and for it, we Love Him who is the Author of it; and we are made to give it that Encomium, Rom. 7. 12. *The law is holy, and juſt, and good.*

2. *OUR Joy or Delight acquieſceth in Him and in His Law. Joy* is a derivative from *Love*; and implies the Satisfaction that we take in the Object, when it is enjoyed: The natural Man is void of this Joy, he cannot rejoyce in the Lord, and His Commands are grievous to him; whereas in Repentance this Affection is turned; & from the Satisfaction that it was won't to take in Sin, it Delights it ſelf in doing the Will of God: And that Service which was before a Burden, is now a Recreation to him; it was by this that the Pſalmiſt was enabled to put that Encomium upon the Law of God; Pſal. 19. 10. *More to be deſired are they than gold; yea, than much fine gold: ſweeter alſo than hony and the hony comb.* It makes us to be like Chriſt in our meaſure, who ſaith of Himſelf, Pſal. 40. 8. *I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.*

3. *WE are not aſhamed of, but count it our Honour, to own our ſelves to be His Servants, and pay Obedience to His Commands.* It is the unhappy Diſpoſition of Sinners, that they count it a Reproach to ſtand up for God, and own Him for their Lord, when the World Reproach them for it: Hence that, Mark 8. 38. *Whoſoever therefore ſhall be aſhamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and ſinful generation, of him alſo ſhall the Son of man be aſhamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.* But Repentance puts another Reſentment into the Man; *David* could ſay, Pſal. 119. 6. *Then ſhall I not be aſhamed, when I have reſpect unto all thy commandments.* And *Paul*, Rom. 1. 16. *I am not aſhamed of the goſpel of Chriſt.* It will make us to count our Glory to be

be called His Servants, and our Honour, if we suffer Ignominy from Men, for His sake, *Acts* 5. 40.

4. *OUR Desires are prest in longing after Strength or Ability to serve Him.* Such is the Opinion we have of God and His Service, that the sense of our Infirmity or little Strength to perform it with that Vigour and Life which we ought, makes our Souls to break forth in Craving after more: No Service we do pleaseth us, because of our short-coming; nor shall we ever be at rest in our Cravings, till we come to Angelical Perfection: Herein therefore did the Apostle testify his Repentance, in his reaching after this Perfection, *Phil.* 3. 13, 14.

(4.) HEREUPON we are brought *to take up a full Purpose to Obey Him.* Before, we were resolutely set to withstand Him, and refuse to take His Yoke upon us; we are determined in this, that we will be for Him, and for no other, (*Isa.* 26. 13.) and is this free Choice which he makes of the way of Holiness, unto which he binds himself with the strongest Obligations: And this proceeds from the Election of the Will, having received the Reports of the Practical Understanding which recommended this to him; Psal. 119. 30. *I have chosen the way of truth.* And in this Choice we confirm our Purpose with strongest Engagements: Hence that, Psal. 119. 106. *I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.* And now the Vows of God are upon him, and the great Care which he is concerned in, is to perform this Oath of his.

Hence,

(5.) WE are now put upon it, *to Use our utmost Industry in the Prosecution of this Purpose.* For if we make Vows to God, and neglect to pay them, we betray our gross Hypocrisy; but Converting Grace is a Principle in us, which will prompt us to Fidelity in our best Endeavours to fulfill our Covenant-Engagements. It is true, There are and will be, the remains of Sin in us, notwithstanding this great turn that hath been wrought, so that we cannot do what we fain would, Rom. 7. 19. *For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil that I would not, that I do.* *Gal.* 5. 17. All therefore that we do on this Account will be with Wrestling and Scuffling, and many Flaws in our Obedience: However this Principle, so put into us, will have it's Operations, and engage us to use our utmost Vigour in serving of God, by a Conformity to his revealed Will, and in strengthning and fortifying all the Graces bestowed upon us, unto a more lively and steady Prosecution.

(6.) THERE are two *Qualities*, that do evermore *adhere* to this *Purpose & Endeavour*, whereby it's *Sincerity* discovers it self.

1. IT is *Universal.* As in turning from Sin, there is an *Universality*, it being from *all Sin*, (*Psal.* 119. 104.) and if there be *one* Sin that keeps the throne, the Man is not turned, and all other turnings are Hypocritical; so in this turning to God, in respect of Obedience, all the Commands are without Exception embraced, *Psal.* 119. 6. He doth not pick and chuse, take one and neglect another; but he puts himself entirely under the *whole* Law of God, and none of His Commandments are grievous to him: And tho' remaining Flesh reluctes and gives him Molestation; yet the Grace which is put into him pronounceth of them all, that they are *Holy, Just & Good.*

2. IT is *Unrepentable.* Repentance is one of the Gifts of God which are without Repentance: True Repentance is such a Change in the Man, from which he never more Changeth his Mind, but abides by it; hence called, *Repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of,* 2 Cor. 7. 10. That Man who repents of his Repentance, never Repented aright, but it was only Feignedly: He that sincerely turns from his Sin, bids it an everlasting Farewel; it is a Divorce never to be revoked: We are therefore told how it is, Hos. 14. 8. *What have I to do any more with idols?* And when he gives himself up to God and His Service, it is not for Time, but Perpetuity, never to *go back* from Him, *Psal.* 86. 18. It is the Spirit of God who works those Purposes in the Heart, and so fixeth them, that they shall never be totally lost: And if at any time they become weakened thro' Temptation, they shall be afresh renewed and prosecuted.

AND thus have we taken a brief Account of the true *Repentance*, which is recommended to us in the Covenant of Grace; and which is a necessary *Medium* to our escaping God's Wrath and Curse, and obtaining of the Salvation which is set before us in the Gospel.

USE. LET this then *put us upon the Trial of our selves*, in regard of the *Hope* we have of being Saved. Every one that Lives under the Gospel, and hath any resentments of his Misery by Nature, by reason of the Wrath that is out against him, would fain obtain, and bear himself up upon an Hope that it shall go well with him for ever: But it is a matter of Infinite Moment, that we be not mistaken in this, and our Hope should, like that of the Hypocrite, be cut off, and prove as a Spider's Web. Let us then be careful, as to prove our *Faith* that it be not *Presumption*, but the Faith of God's Elect; so that we be not deceived in this, let us examine our selves about our *Repentance*, whether it be *unto Life*, and not that which will be found false & destructive. Let us then remember, that as without Repentance there is no Salvation, but we must Perish; so it must be a Repentance not to be repented of; lest with *Ahab & Judas*, we Perish for all: And to that end, bring it to the Test of the Characteristical Notes which have been laid down about it in the Premises. And that we be not imposed on, in this our search, Let us distrusting our selves, apply our selves to the Heart-searching God, and lay our selves open before Him, with a sincere offer of his Supplication, Psal. 139. 23, 24. *Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts. And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

SERMON CCXXIII.

QUESTION LXXXVIII.

WHAT are the outward and ordinary means, whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of Redemption?

ANSWER.

THE outward and ordinary means, whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of Redemption, are his Ordinances, especially the Word, Sacraments & Prayer; all which are made effectual to the Elect for Salvation.

UNDER the two *former* Questions, we took an account of the two *great* Conditions, on which Salvation is offered to Sinners, in the Covenant of Grace: Which, tho' God alone can work in Sinful Men, yet we are assured that without them, none can be Saved; and that if ever he brings any to obtain Eternal Life, he will do it in this way: So that unless these be wrought in us, we are assured that we are not in a state of Grace, nor can have any grounded expectation to escape the Wrath to come, unless we obtain them. We have now before us, a general account of the course which God takes in order to his working of these Graces in us, whereby we may be brought to the actual enjoyment of the happy fruits, which CHRIST, by his Redemption, hath purchased for all His. And that we may take a right account of the Subject we are upon, a few things may be observed, under two heads.

First. IT is here supposed that *God works the Grace in us, by which we are brought to partake in Christ's benefits, by the use of Means.* And there is nothing more fully asserted in the Scriptures than this, that these Graces must be wrought in us by God, if ever we partake in them; for they are beyond our power to produce them in ourselves; and it is certain that no meer Creature can do it in and for us. Hence that, Joh. 1. 13. *Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* But if he be asked, Why God makes use of the means in the order of producing this Effect? tho' it be sufficient to say, That it hath so seemed good to Him who is infinitely Wise, and is not accountable to us; yet there may be some account taken of it. And that,

[1.] Negatively, *NOT because he cannot do it without them.* There is no necessity lying upon Him thus to do, as will be evident to us, if we consider,

1. THAT *the Means* themselves used by Him *are Arbitrary.* He useth his own liberty in the chusing and appointing of them: they are therefore *Positive Institutions*, the force and obligation whereof, depends upon his Sovereign Will. Hence the great Argument which he useth to put a force upon these Precepts to bind us to Obedience, is, *I am the Lord*; which leaves us no room to dispute them.

2. THE *whole Force and Efficacy of these Means entirely depends on Him, and the mighty Operation of his Spirit.* That the Means of and by themselves do not, cannot produce this effect, is very evident both from Scripture and Experience. That they do not, there needs no more to demonstrate, than what is obvious to daily observation, if we will not shut our Eyes; and as we are told in the word of God, so we may see it in the course of his Providence, That the same Means which are to some a Savour of Life, prove to others a Savour of Death, 2 *Cor.* 2. 15, 16. And we are told, That God sometimes sends the most powerful Means to Men in Judgment; as is wofully intimated in that Commission, Isai. 6. 9, 10. *And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes: lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed.* And that they cannot do it of themselves is no less manifest, if we consider, That the Means are all of them moral & swasive, which must needs have a Subject capable to receive the impression of them, if ever they become effectual; whereas the Natural Man is not so, but must have a mighty Change wrought in him, to put this next capacity into him: and this properly belongs to the powerful Grace of God; for which reason it is compared to a Creation, and a Resurrection, which are works that none but God can produce: And hence we have that solemn remark made by *Moses*, Deut. 29. 3, 4. *The great temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs and those great miracles: Yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.*

3. THAT *in Passive Conversion, the Spirit of God worketh Immediately.* For tho' He applies His Grace together with the dispensation of the moral Means, yet the Means themselves do nothing in the production of the New Principle of Regeneration in the Man, but the Spirit alone doth it; tho' in the drawing forth of this Principle and Power into Act, He applies the Means, and makes them Instrumental therein. For tho' it be a truth, that the Spirit acts together with the Word, in Passive Conversion, *Jam.* 1. 18. Yet it is certain, that whilst he offers the Word to Men, and by Moral Argument presseth it on them, there is his preventing Grace which comes in, and produceth the Habit by a creating-work, by which

He

He puts a power into us, to receive those impressions savingly.

[2.] Positively, or Affirmatively; *THIS way* of God's treating Men, *is exceedingly accommodated to the Nature of Man*, with whom God treats in the New Covenant. Man is a reasonable Creature, or a cause by Counsel; as therefore God treated with him in the first Covenant as such a Creature, in which he offered him Life upon Terms; so he doth in the New-Covenant, as the Gospel every where informs us. Now in the Management of this Treaty, God is pleased to open the Terms of this Covenant to him, and urge upon him the way in which he may be Saved, and the Motives suited to convince him of his Necessity, and direct him in the way of it: And for this, Means are most properly adapted; and the very nature of the Gospel is such, as aptly suits hereunto. And tho' the Efficacy depends on him, yet the Means adapted to the End, in their order, and that agreeably to the Infinite Wisdom of God, who doth all things according to Counsel: For tho' God is Sovereign in His Appointments, yet all His Works are in Wisdom; and hereby Men that slight and despise the Means, are rendered inexcusable, because the Offers made to them, were most highly Rational. And it is certain, that there is not only requisite ordinarily the habits of Grace in the Heart, but the exercise of them in the Life, to which Men must be drawn by these *Media* set home upon them: For tho' in *Passive Conversion* the Habits only are infused, whereby the Powers in the Man are renewed; yet in *Active Conversion* there is a voluntary exerting of these renewed Powers, to which the Means most genuinely serve.

Secondly, WE are to observe, That here are *two Epithets* put upon these Means, which serve to point us to a right Apprehension of the Subject now under Consideration, viz. *They are the outward*, and *they are the ordinary Means*: Both of which requires a little of our Consideration.

(1.) THEY are the *outward Means*: These are so called to difference them from the *inward Applications* of His Spirit to the Hearts and Consciences of Men: which tho' He is wont to do in and with the *other*, and without which they cannot be made effectual; yet they are *separable*, and Men may enjoy the *former*, and yet never experience the efficacy of the *latter*: These therefore may in a sense be called *inward Means* for tho' they proceed from the Spirit himself; yet in it He useth the *other* by bringing them to the Minds of Men, and causing of them to ponder on them. And tho' they are not always effectual to their Conversion, yet they are improved to dispose & prepare them, who are God's Elect; *viz.* The *touches* on the Hearts which leave Conviction on them, create Fears and Terrors in them, and put them upon Enquiry; because without this inward Operation, the outward Means make no Impressions, but are as *Water spilt upon a Rock*. Now these are called *Outward*, because they are nextly applied to the outward Man, and are to be entertained and let in by the Senses, thro' which they are to pass to the Mind, and be improved by the Rational and Moral Powers of the Soul; and the principal of these Senses, is that of *Hearing*, as, *Rom.* 10. 17. And for that reason it is vulgarly called the *Sense of Discipline*; and in the outward application of these Means, God is wont to make use of the *Ministry*, or *Instrumentality* of Men, to whom He commits the Dispensation of them; as, 2 Cor. 5. 19. *And hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.* And these considered by themselves are meerly *Moral*; and can no further attain the End of them, than as God pleaseth to set in with them, according to, 1 Cor. 3. 6. *I have planted, Apollos watered: but God gave the increase.*

(2) THEY are the *ordinary Means*: And there are Three things more especially indigitated to us in this;

1. THAT tho' *Man is obliged to the Use of these, yet God is not limited to them.* They are made Necessary for us by the Necessity of the Precept; so that we have no ground to expect these Benefits but in the Use of them: Hence such as enjoy the Privilege of having these Means, yet do not apply themselves to them, but despise and neglect them, do put away Salvation from them, and judge themselves unworthy of Eternal Life, *Acts* 13. 46. But God hath no where said absolutely, that He will not draw Men to Him, but by these *outward Means*; so that neither is His Power nor His Sovereignty limited on this account.

2. THAT there are the *extraordinary Ways*, in which God doth sometimes *Convert Sinners* to CHRIST. Not only doth He reserve His Liberty to himself, but when He pleaseth, He doth actually make use of it. There are the *Immediate Revelations* of Himself to Men, of which the Scripture gives us the Account, by which He reveals CHRIST to, and in them; and how many have so been acquainted with the way of Peace, it is not for us to determine, because it depends on His own Pleasure: Doubtless *Abraham's* Call from Idolatrous *Nabor* was of this Nature; and we have reason to think, that the Wise Men that came from the *East*, by the direction of the Star, were thus drawn; and we are certain that *Paul's* Conversion at first began by an extraordinary Apparition of CHRIST to him from Heaven, *Acts* 9. *beg.*

3. THAT God *seldom proceeds in any other way but this*, for the *Conversion* of Sinners. Things are not only said to be *Extraordinary*, when they exceed the *Ordinary Course* of the Powers of Nature, for so is every Conversion; but also when they are done but *seldom*: And in this regard it is a Truth here; for which reason we find it laid down in the Word of God, as a Rule Universal: Hence that of the Apostle, 2 Cor. 4. 3. *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost* And, *Rom* 10. 14, 15. And such Expressions must needs infer, that whensoever there is any Conversion wrought in any other way, it is a thing rare and admirable.

WE may now proceed to a more particular Consideration of these *Means*, in which Account is given us, *What they are*; and, *In what respect*

they become serviceable to make us to participate in the Benefits purchased by Christ for Men.

HERE then two things ly before us to enquire into; *viz.* 1. *What these Means are?* 2. The *Way* in which they are made *Useful* for the Purpose of them.

I. *WHAT these Means are*; which are laid down.

[1.] *Generally*, THEY are *the Ordinances of God's appointment*: *His Ordinances.* An *Ordinance*, according to the usual acceptation of the Word, is, An *Institution* or *Appointment* ratified by lawful Authority, to be a *Medium* for the obtaining some End that is designed by it: And so we are to understand it here. It is of the Nature of an Ordinance, that it is a Law Enacted; and so it necessarily infers that the Maker of it be vested with a Jurisdiction impowering him to make such a Constitution; and that it be in the Wisdom of the Law-giver for the bringing about some worthy Design, and be therefore accommodated thereto; and we are acquainted that there are diverse such Ordinances, tho' all of them are joyntly serviceable to the same Purpose. But these things will come under a distinct Consideration in the sequel; only here we are to observe, the *Limitation* of them to the Author of them: They are therefore called, *His* Ordinances, i. e. CHRIST's, as appears from the *Question*; and this word is used exclusively, *q. d. His*, and *no other*: They are therefore called *His*, in opposition to the Ordinances and Institutions of *Men*, and every other way and Medium that is invented by them; giving us to understand that no other Appointments but such as have the Seal of His Authority to make them Authentical, can be proper *Media* to bring us to participate in His Benefits; and the reason of this is very obvious, as will appear, if we consider;

1. THAT all the Means *have their absolute Dependance*, for the Efficacy of them, *upon His Blessing* them thereto. We have already observed, that the outward Means are in themselves only *Moral*, and therefore can be no further Efficacious, than as the Divine Power makes them so: And it necessarily follows, That if an Ordinance obtains it's end, the vertue of it must needs derive from CHRIST, by His Spirit, who only can work that Change in Sinners, by which they may be turned from the Power of Satan to God.

2. HENCE our *only Encouragement*, to make use of Ordinances, is, *Christ's Promise of His Blessing* to those that rightly improve them. It belongs to Man as he is a reasonable Creature, to use Means for an End, and accordingly to be prompted to the using of them, by a Prospect that he hath of obtaining in this way. Now there is requisite for this, not only that Christ can give them this Success if He sees meet; but also that He will, if we so use them: And this depends on His free Pleasure, which requires that we have such a Promise: And for this reason the Gospel offers such Promises together with the Ordinances, which it requires our Obedience to, many whereof are there recorded.

3. *CHRIST hath made no Promise of Blessing to the Ordinances of Men*; but on the other hand hath *threatned* those that *Conform* to them. How often therefore are Men Charged with Sin, for *teaching for Doctrines the Commands of Men*? and challenged His People, *Who required these things of their hands*? And He assures them that the Worship offered to Him in a pretended Obedience, is altogether Vain; *Matth.* 15. 9. And hence that Objurgation of the Apostle, *Col.* 2. 22, 23. Men do not herein Serve God; but Dishonour Him, and so cannot ultimately expect a Blessing on them, but a Curse.

[2.] THESE Ordinances are laid down in *particular*; Specially the *Word*, *Sacraments* & *Prayer*. Here they are ranked under Three Heads, which will come afterwards to be distinctly handled, both as to the *Nature* & *Usefulness* of them. Here only we may just observe, That they are introduced with the word *Specially*; which intimates that there is some *other* Ordinance of Christ appointed, and made serviceable to this End. And here some take notice of the *Ordinance of Discipline*, or the *binding* & *loosing*, which Christ hath Instituted in His Church, which is not here enumerated, because it is not for constant Practice, but only *Occasional*, in case of *Scandal*; and was not nextly appointed for Conversion, by which only we are brought to have a Right to Christ's Benefits; altho' it cannot be denied but that *this* is sometimes Blessed to the Conversion of such as were before Unconverted.

II. WE come to consider, *The* Way *in which they are made useful for the Purpose of them*, expressed in those words, *All of which are made effectual to the Elect for Salvation.*

AND here we may observe,

1. THE *great Design* for the advancement whereof these Ordinances are appointed to be Means, viz. *Salvation.* We are told, that they are the Means of *Communicating to us the Benefits of Redemption.* And here we are acquainted, what is the upshot and comprehension of these Benefits, and that is *Salvation*; and every of these Benefits do comprehend something in them, that contributes to the compleating of that Salvation. Now *Salvation* in a *Theological* Sense includes in it, the *Deliverance* of a Sinner *from the State of Sin & Misery* into which he is fallen, which is the Condition of Mankind by Nature, (*Eph.* 2. 3.) and the restoring of him to the *Enjoyment of true*, and in the end, of *consummate Blessedness*, which was the End of Christ's coming into the World, (1 *Tim.* 1.15.) and is that which the Gospel is appointed to be the Instrument of: For which reason it hath that Encomium, Rom. 1. 16. *The power of God unto salvation.* It was because Mankind had undone himself, and God had a Purpose to manifest His rich Grace in Saving of him, that He contrived a Way to bring it about, and saw good to constitute these Ordinances to be

be a Medium to be used by him, for the accomplishing of this Purpose of His; and hence it is called, *the Gospel of Salvation.*

2. THE *Usefulness* and *Serviceableness* of these Means, *they are Effectual*; and they do certainly prove so in the Event, how Contemptible soever they seem to be to vain Men, who look upon them as foolish and weak: Of the Power and Prevalency whereof the Apostle gives that Account, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. *For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty thro' God, to the pulling down of strong holds: Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every tho't to the obedience of Christ.* By these are Sinners awakened, convinced, terrified, humbled, converted; and by these are the Converted confirmed, established, and built up in their holy Faith, and wrought up to a Meetness for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. Hence we are told of the Usefulness of the Scriptures for this end, 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. *All Scripture is profitable for Doctrine,* &c. And all the other Ordinances do share in the same Efficacy.

3. *HOW* these Means come to be so Effectual; they are *made* so. This intimates that the Efficacy of them is *Dependent*; and that they cannot exert or produce it of and by themselves; but must be so used by another: The Ordinances themselves are Instruments for the doing of this Work, and are made serviceable to the End of it; but it is of the Nature of an Instrument as such, that it wholly depends for it's Operation on the prime Agent: It lies still, except it be applied; it can do nothing, but as he doth with it; and whatsoever Vertue it hath in it, or suitableness for the advancing of the End, yet it must have it's reference to the first mover of it: And voluntary Agents, tho' they are in their Order Efficients, and deliberate Agents; yet in respect of God who useth them in this Work, they are but Instruments: For not only doth God make use of them in the Course of His Providence; but also if their Work succeed in this Affair, it is He alone that gives the Blessing with their Endeavours: He therefore who renders them thus Effectual, must be CHRIST *Himself*; and because they are of His Chusing and Ordaining, needs must they obtain, and not fail. Let the Instrument be never so good, yet every hand cannot Use it, so as to do every Work with it, that it is capable of being serviceable to: Whereas, let the Means be never so contemptible, and the Instruments never so improbable, yet they shall not fail of the Success, when He comes to apply them to fulfill His own Purpose withal: And the less probability there seemed to be in the Instrument, the more admirable will the Wisdom and Power of the supream Agent appear to be.

4. THE *Subject* in whom these Ordinances are made thus effectual to Salvation, *viz.* The *Elect.* Here only observe,

1. THAT these Means *are not thus Effectual in all those that do enjoy them.* That there is a vast difference on this Account between some and others is very manifest, as we have before observed and proved: If some are Converted by them, others are Hardened; and as these grow better, the other grow worse.

2. *THERE must be some Reason of this different Efficacy upon these and those.* It cannot rationally be ascribed to meer *Casualty*; for this would be to Deny the all-governing Providence of God over the Affairs of the World, which is *Atheism*: We must therefore reduce it to some Cause, which determines this Matter; which produceth this Efficacy in some, and doth not do it in others: And we had need to be very Cautious in our determination of this, else we shall rob God of this Glory of His Grace, which doth eminently shine forth in this; for we are told, Eph. 2. 8. *For by grace are ye saved, thro' faith; and that not of your selves: it is the gift of God.*

3. THAT *this cannot with reason be ultimately resolved into the Means themselves.* For tho' it is true, that all are not favoured with the Means; and of those, that is awfully observable, Eph. 2. 12. *At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the common-wealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.* But this difference is found among those that have the Means, who yet give a contrary Entertainment to them: nor is it because some have more of the Means, and more skilful Instruments of dispensing them; for this is seen in those that have the same individual Means allowed them. *Christ* Himself, the best Minister that ever Preached, found not the same reception from all; and *Paul*, a most faithful, able, and zealous Preacher, was to some a *savour of Life, &c.* The same Sermon that prevailed with some, enraged others; and some Blasphemed, whilst others Believed; and the meanest Instruments have brought the most Souls over to Christ.

4. *NEITHER can this be in the Subject to whom the Means are afforded.* All are equally filled with the cursed root of Enmity and Opposition to the Glory of God, and impotency to receive the Instructions of Wisdom: And whatsoever Natural Tempers Men are of, yet this contributes nothing to it, because they have no Power in them to accept of Christ, and Salvation by Him; and we are assured, that the worst Natures, and most resolute Gain-sayers are wrought on, when the most amiable Dispositions are not moved; as that ingenious Young Man, *&c. Matth.* 10. And the rough Jaylor, *&c. Acts* 16.

5. HENCE it *must needs terminate in the good Pleasure of God, which is according to His Election.* It is He that puts the difference; and His Sovereignty is herein discovered; to this therefore doth the Gospel determine the whole Matter: We are therefore told in, Rom. 9. 16. *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.* And he resolves it into that, Ver. 18. *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and*

whom

whom he will, he hardeneth. And so he expresseth it, Chap. 11.7. *Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.* Hence we are told, Acts 13.46. *As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed.* There are some whom God hath Ordained from Eternity to Salvation; and these are found in the rubbish of Mankind, equally involved in Guilt and Misery; these are to be brought from a State of Sin and Misery to a State of Salvation; and in order to accomplishing it, there are the Means laid out and prescribed by God, which He made effectual to this End: He therefore who knows who are His, comes and affords His Influence with them to these, and to no other; and so these being primarily for the Elect sake, they thus fully attain their Design.

USE. 1. WE hence learn, *What a singular Favour it is, to enjoy the Means of Grace.* Those that have them, are *singularly* Priviledged, above such as are without them, and that because they are the appointed *Media* to Salvation: We ought therefore to be exceeding Thankful for them; and count the *Lines fallen to us in pleasant places.*

USE 2. TO warn us to take heed, that we do not *Despise* the Ordinances. What tho' their Efficacy depends on CHRIST; yet as He hath appointed them to be Means, so if we neglect them, and cast Contempt on them, we thereby put away Salvation.

USE 3. TAKE heed that we *rest not* or *rely upon Ordinances*; but wait on Him who is the Author of them, to give forth His Influence with them, that so they may be efficacious Means of our Salvation.

SERMON *CCXXIV.*

QUESTION LXXXIX.

HOW is the Word made effectual unto Salvation?

ANSWER.

THE Spirit of God maketh the Reading, but especially the Preaching of the Word, an effectual Means of convincing & converting Sinners, and of building them up in Holiness and Comfort, thro' Faith unto Salvation.

UNDER the *former*, we had an Account given us, what is the usual & frequent *Way*, in which God hath chosen to bring about the Salvation of those whom He hath Chosen, and Christ hath Redeemed, *viz.* By His *Ordinances*, which are the appointed Means, and accommodated in Infinite Wisdom, for the Working of Faith and Repentance in them, and carrying them from Grace to Glory. And the principal of these were reduced to Three Heads, *viz* The *Word*, *Sacraments*, & *Prayer*, not excluding the *Providences* which pass over them, which in their Order and Subordination are also made use of; tho' without the other they cannot contribute any thing towards this great Work; as is to be seen in the Heathen, who were strangers to the Gospel. But because these Means have not, in themselves, that Efficacy that can render them effectual; it is necessary more particularly to enquire, in what *Way* & *Manner* they are made to attain this End? And, What is *required of us*, in order to our finding of them to be thus serviceable for our best Good? Accordingly our *Catechism* proceeds to give us a distinct Account of each of these, to shew us the Way how we may obtain this Benefit, and satisfy us in the usefulness and sufficiency of them for this Purpose. And that which first lies before us, is the *Word*; which is the Principal, and therefore challengeth the first Consideration; for without it we have no *Rule of Direction* how to Use the *other* to advantage; for the *Sacraments* are appendages to it, and *Prayer* depends on it, both for Direction and Encouragement.

IN the clearing up of this we are to consider. 1. The *Subject* spoken of, the *Word*. 2. The *Author*, or *prime Efficient* of this Benefit, that derives thro' the Word, The *Spirit of God*. 3. The *Casualty* of the Word, viz. *Instrumental*. 4. The *Way* by which it is made effectual, viz. By the *Reading*, *especially the Preaching* of it. 5. The *Effects* produced by it, whereby it is made serviceable to promove their Salvation, by *Convincing & Converting Sinners, and of building them up in Holiness and Comfort*, &c. These things may therefore come under a distinct Consideration, for a more clear taking up of this matter.

I. THE first thing that comes to be tho't of, is the *Subject* spoken of, viz. The *Word*, i.e. *The Word of God*; for it is so called emphatically. It is needless here to consider, in how many senses this Word of God is taken in the Bible; & what it here intends of these things we had a more distinct Account, at *Question Second.* In sum, It is whatsoever God hath pleaseth to reveal of Himself to Man; and more peculiarly, that wherein He hath told us what is our Duty, and wherein we may obtain Blessedness; so called, because *Words* are the usual way for us to impart our Minds by, one to another: And tho' He hath used many ways to impart this His Mind to His People, as, *Heb.* 1. *beg.* Yet in the Gospel Times, He hath pleased to commit it to Writing, and leave it on Record in the Canonical Books of the Old and New Testament, in the Last

whereof

whereof is the Viſion Sealed; and ſince that, Immediate Revelation hath ſo far ceaſed, that addition thereto is forbidden, *Rev.* 22. 18. Of the ſufficiency of which we are aſſured, 2 Tim. 3.16, 17. *All ſcripture is given by inſpiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs: That the man of God may be perfect, thro'ly furniſhed unto all good works.* This then is the Word under conſideration, of the Fulneſs & Perfection of which, we have formerly had the account: and this is it which we are here told is made uſe of, and becomes effectual to the Elect for Salvation: And *how*, or after what *manner* it is ſo, now comes to be diſtinctly enquired. Hence,

II. THE next thing to be conſidered, is, The *Author*, or prime Efficient of the great Benefit which derives to us by the Word, *viz. The Spirit of God.* By which we are to underſtand, the Holy Spirit, the Third Perſon in the Sacred Trinity; to whom belongs the application of the purchaſed Salvation to all ſuch as CHRIST hath Redeemed, and who is able to do it for them. This is not to be underſtood excluſive of the other Divine Perſons, who are one and the ſame God; but to denote the Œconomy of the Perſons in this great work of ſaving Sinners. I ſhall here only take notice of theſe Two remarks which are proper to this head, *viz.*

1. *THAT the Spirit makes uſe of the Word, in His ſaving applications to the Souls of Men.* We are here to conſider this under a Diſtinction, that we may not be miſtaken in it, as ſome are. The Word may be conſidered, either as to the *Truth* contained in it, or as to the *Manner of the application* of it to Men, by the Spirit: As to the *Former* it is certain, that whether He treats Men Mediately, or Immediately, it is by the Word, *i.e.* by thoſe Truths which He applies to them, and reveals in them, that they are drawn, and by the efficacy whereof He perſwades them to comply with the Terms of the New-Covenant; for He deals with Men, as with Reaſonable Creatures, and they are the very Truths that are contained in the Word, which He imprints upon them, whereby they are won: Though He hath ſometimes Revealed them more Immediately to them. We are therefore ſaid to be *begotten by it*, Jam. 1. 18. And in regard of the *Latter* of theſe, though the Spirit is not neceſſarily tied to the external diſpenſation of the Word; as will be evident in the next: (but as He can do it by Himſelf without it, ſo He hath not ſaid, that He ever will,) yet He hath given us to underſtand, that *this* is the ordinary and appointed Medium that He uſeth in this affair; elſe that had been inargumentative, Rom. 10 14. *How then ſhall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how ſhall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how ſhall they hear without a preacher?* This is the way that He hath choſen, and given us the only encouragement to wait for it. Hence that, Exod. 20. 24. *In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bleſs thee.* And Rom. 10. 17. *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* And Chap. 1. 16. *For I am not aſhamed of the goſpel of Chriſt: for it is the power of God unto ſalvation, to every one that believeth, to the Jew firſt, and alſo to the Greek.*

2. *THAT the whole Efficacy of the Word for this end, entirely depends on the Co-operation of the Spirit with it.* As the Spirit will not ordinarily apply himſelf, but with the Goſpel; ſo the Goſpel cannot, of it ſelf, accompliſh this end, except the Spirit ſet in with His Power to ſucceed it. Hence that, Zech. 4.6. *Not by might, nor by power, but by my ſpirit, ſaith the Lord of hoſts.* That the Word it ſelf cannot alone do it, will be ſeen from the Nature and Uſe of it; and may be conſidered under the next particular: and that it is not in the Power, either of the Man himſelf to apply it ſavingly to himſelf, nor in the Power of any Man or Men, who are uſed in the Diſpenſation of it, is evident, both by the Greatneſs of the work it ſelf, which requires the ſame Power that was exerted in the Reſurrection of Chriſt, (*Eph.* 1. 18, 19.) and by the Impotency of Man, either to do it for himſelf, or for another. The Man cannot change himſelf, who is dead in treſpaſſes & ſins; and the beſt of Men can only ſpeak to the Ear, but cannot mollify the Heart. And this is eminently exemplified in the diverſe Subjects of the Goſpel Adminiſtrations; it is notorious, that thoſe that enjoy the ſame Means, ſet under the ſame Miniſtry, have the ſame external Helps, and advantages afforded them, do yet give a different Entertainment to them: Some are Enlightned, others are Blinded; ſome Softned, and ſome Hardned. The Apoſtle gives us a ſolemn account of this affair, 2 Cor. 2. 15, 16. *For we are unto God a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt, in them that are ſaved, and in them that periſh. To the one we are the ſavour of death unto death; and to the other the ſavour of life unto life: and who is ſufficient for theſe things?* Yea, many times, the moſt unlikely are gained, when the moſt likely, and of whom there were greater hopes, are obſtinate and impenitent. Hence that, Matth. 21. 31. *Publicanes and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.*

III. WE are here to take notice of the true and proper *Cauſality* of the Word in this concern, *viz.* it is *Inſtrumental.* And this is to be argued from the two former; for if the whole work that is done in the bringing of a Sinner, from a ſtate of Nature, to that of Grace, and thro' Grace to that of Glory, be aſcribed to the Word, there muſt needs be ſome Cauſality attend it: and if it can do nothing of it ſelf, but all its Energy depends on the holy Spirit, then it can claim no other Cauſality, but that of an Inſtrument. For it belongs to the Nature of an Inſtrument, to be made Uſe of by an Agent in the doing of a work, in which it moves, but as it is moved by the Agent: only to render it an Inſtrument, there is ſuppoſed to be in it, an Aptitude, or at leaſt a Capacity

pacity of being used in the bringing about of the Effect. Only we are here to observe this difference between the Spirit, who is a Divine Agent, and Second Beings, that are Created Agents, that *these* can use Instruments, no further than they have the Vertue in them; whereas He can put the Vertue to the Instrument, to cause it to serve to His end or design; yea, He can with it communicate that Vertue to the Subject, which shall accomplish his purpose effectually. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged, that the Spirit hath accommodated the Word to be a suitable Organ, by which to work on the Hearts of sinful Men. This will be evident, if we consider it as a *Moral Instrument*, to work on the Rational Powers that are in us, to draw us, as *Causes by Counsel*, to comply with those things that are servicable to advance our Salvation. For we must here observe, that as in the Production of the Habits of Grace in us, we are Passive; so the work is done by the Spirit alone, by a Creating Power, in which there is no Instrumentality of any thing; but as we are drawn to comply with the Terms of the Covenant of Grace, and spontaneously to exercise *New Obedience*, and prosecute the business of Salvation; so the Word is made use of by the Spirit, and so applyed to our Understandings, with, and Affections, that being by the mighty influence of God thus set home, we are Helped by them, and thro' them it is that the Spirit brings us this Help; so that the discoveries there made, the Rules there laid down, the Motives and Arguments there represented, are the things that are set home upon our Hearts; and the Spirit with them perswades us to *Believe* them, to Entertain them, and Resign our selves up to the guidance, and conduct of them. And tho' this Efficacy accompanies the Word, where it comes with Power, yet it derives from Him who only can so work upon our *Moral Powers*, as to give them both *Ability & Exercise*. But the particular way and manner of this will come to be considered in the sequel.

IV. WE are pointed to the *Way* in which it becomes Effectual to this end, viz. *By the Reading, and specially by the Preaching of it to Men.* We are here, in general to observe, that for the *Reading* of the Word, Instrumental in this affair, there is an Application of it necessary to be made to us; and because it is a *Moral Medium*, it must be applied to our *Moral Powers*, suitable to our Nature & Capacity. Now it is certain, That there is this order in such a Conveyance, *viz.* The Truths of the Word are first applied to the Understanding, by which we may know the meaning, and discern the reason of them; for here all humane Actions begin; and being approved by the Judgment, it must be past over to the Will for its Election, whereby it embraceth the Truth commended, and is won over to it; and from thence it is imprinted on the Affections, to which the Will commits the Prosecution of the choice which it hath made, and by which it performs its Imperate Actions. Hence, in order to the Word's being made servicable to this purpose, it is requisite, that the Understanding be irradiated to Discern the Truth in its admirable Excellency, (which is the proper work of the Spirit, and without it the Word it self cannot obtain; for tho' it gives us Light, yet it doth not give us Eye-sight, that being proper to Him alone to open the eyes of the Mind: Hence his Prayer, Psal. 119.18. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.*) So it is no less requisite that the Truth it self be set home upon the Heart, and the Man have the Light of it, that he may know what he Believes & Entertains: and the Matter of this is contained in the Word of God, in which are all the Rules both of Faith, and Manners are contained, which are sufficient in their Order for our Salvation. And because God Reveals Himself to us in these things Mediately, and hath chosen the Word to be the great *Medium* for this, it is requisite that there be some *Medium* for the Conveyance of it to our Understanding, and by that to our Wills and Affections. Now the Means that are most conveniently fitted for this Conveyance to us, are the *Reading & Preaching* of the Word: It is certain, that (tho' there are the relicks of the Law upon the Consciences of Natural Men, tho' dark and confused, yet) the Knowledge of the Truth as it is in Jesus, or of the way to Improve any Divine Truth, in order to Salvation, hath no rooting in the Natural Mind, but it must be some way imported to us from Abroad, by Revelation; till when, we remain utter Strangers to any such thing; and therefore there must be the Means for this. Now it hath pleased God to bring this home to us, in & with His exciting us to Improve the Powers seated in us, with which He conveys His Blessing to us; and these are the things under Consideration, *viz.* the *Reading* and *Preaching* the Word. In both of these, the Word is the subject, but there is a difference in the manner of the Conveyance; and the difference aimed at between these two, I suppose is, that in the one there is a Personal or Private using of the Word; in the other there is an Open and Publick Dispensation of it: in the Former, either the person himself Reads the Scripture; or if he have not the skill, he may make use of some other to Read it to him; in Preaching, the Word is not only Read, for that is not properly Preaching, but it is Opened; the Truths contained in it laid open, and Applied to the Hearers Consciences for their Practice accordingly. And hence it follows, that both of these are Duties prescribed by God, to such as He hath seen meet to communicate His Word, and Providentially called them into Religious Societies. There are here Two Assertions in general to be laid down concerning both of these conjunctly.

1. THAT *both Reading & Preaching the Word are Evangelical Duties*: i. e They are required of such as are under the Gospel Dispensation.

2. THAT *Both of these are made use of by the Spirit, for the furtherance of the Salvation of Men.* And we may take an account of these severally.

(I.) *IN respect of the* Reading *of the Word*: That

That this is an Ordinance of God, & made a *Medium* of Salvation, will be evident if we consider these things;

1. THAT *it hath pleased God, for holy & gracious Ends, so commit His Word to Writing.* The Writing of these sacred Truths, is accidental to the Word, which is properly the Truths which God hath revealed to Man for his Salvation; hence called, *The Word of Truth*, Eph. 1. 13. And these Truths were at first Extraordinarily revealed to some, and then communicated to others by word of Mouth; but it pleased God to order, in His Time, the recording of these, and that in good Will, that they might be preserved for the Benefit of His Church; as therefore they were given by Inspiration, (2 *Tim.* 3. 16.) so the Writers of them were instigated to it, as well as assisted in it, by the Spirit of God, (2 *Pet.* 1. 21.) and this was a singular Favour to those who enjoyed it, and was once a distinguishing Privilege bestowed on *Israel*, (*Psal.* 147. 19, 20.) And hence mentioned as an Aggravation of their Sin, (*Hos.* 8. 12.) And by this are these sacred Archives preserved from Generation to Generation.

2. THAT hence *it must needs be a Duty of all that have it, to get acquainted with it.* The Word of God doth not work after the manner of a *Charm*, but as a *Moral Instrument*, which is to be applied to the Reason and Consciences of Men; and hence it can no farther do them a Kindness, than as they have the Use of their Rational Powers; they must therefore some way know, what there is in it, how else shall they Use their Reason for the Application and Improvement of it, for their own Benefit: The want of this Knowledge is Destructive, *Hos.* 4. 6. And the Scriptures become able to make Men *Wise to Salvation*, only to such as *Know* them, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15.

3. THAT *Reading of the Word is one proper way to come by a Literal acquaintance with it.* Yea it is necessary, that either God should immediately Inspire Men with this Knowledge, or that it be heard by the Man himself, or by some others that may be able to give him an Account of the Truths contained in it. Besides, the Word is of daily Use for a Christian, and ought to be the *Man of his Counsels*, as *David* saith, *Psal.* 119. 24. The Memory also is very treacherous, and we have not always the Opportunity of the *Preaching* of it; but we have the written Word at all times to repair to, both for our Direction, our Awakening, and our Encouragement.

4. THIS Word contains in it *all those Truths that are necessary for the pointing us to the way of Salvation, and establishing of us in it.* Of the *Perfection* of the Scriptures we have formerly considered; and of the special *Usefulness* of it in the furtherance of our Salvation, will be particularly considered in the next particular: And that it must needs be *Perfect* in this regard, is evident, because it was given by God, to be the *Rule of Life*; and certainly the Infinite Wisdom who is the Author of it, could not fail of making it every way to answer the end for which He hath given it to Man. Our Saviour therefore useth such an Argument to perswade them to the careful *Reading* of it, Joh. 5. 39. *Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life.* And we are acquainted with the fulness of sufficiency there is in it for the advancing of this Design, *Psal.* 19. 7, *&c.* It must needs therefore excel all the other Writings in the World, which, being *Humane*, must needs be *Defective*, and labour of *Imperfection*: And this cannot but Commend them to the Reading of all.

5. *IT is by the frequent Reading & Meditating of the Word, that Christians gain acquaintance with God, and out-do others who neglect it.* We find that *David* delighted in Conversing with the Word of God; and he tells us what he gained by it, *Psal.* 119. 97, *&c.* For as the Word is the Store-house of saving Truths, *Reading* of it is one help in our Digging for them, that we may find and enjoy them. And God, who hath required this Duty of us, hath promised His Blessing to this Diligence, and threatned such as neglect so to do; and we are told, Hos. 6. 3. *Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord.*

6. HENCE there are these *Corrolaries* which do rationally follow from the Premises;

1. THAT *Christian Parents are under a potent Obligation to see that their Children are taught to Read.* And the too great neglect of so important a Duty is to be rebuked, especially in Places where there is Advantage for it. Truly, If we go no further than the Consideration of the *Usefulness* of it for Human Society, it would be enough to urge it; and the want of it renders Persons unfit for many Services, which otherwise they might Profit themselves by, and through this Defect they render themselves Contemptible: but when we consider, that God hath stored the hidden Treasures of Wisdom in the Records of His Word, which must ly by as a Book sealed, as to those that cannot Read; doubtless all Parents that have regard to the Souls of their Children, will be very careful to obtain for them this Benefit; the neglect hereof must leave them guilty of brutish Inhumanity.

2. THAT *such as have their Understanding, ought to have their Bibles, and to make daily Use of them.* It is surely a token of great Irreligion, when we come into a numerous Family, and can scarce find a Bible there; we must rationally conclude, that there is little or nothing of the Fear of God in that Family: And it is a vain and insignificant Plea, for any to pretend their Inability to furnish themselves and theirs, with this most necessary and desirable piece of Houshold-stuff, since they can find wherewithal to furnish themselves with that which is less necessary; and it argues much of Atheism, and little concernedness for their own Souls, and the Souls of theirs. Nor is it less sinful in those that have them, that they let them ly by as things useless, and seldom, if ever, make use of them, or call upon th[illegible]

heirs to Converse with them; and yet it is justly to be feared, that there are too many who would be called Christians, are deeply Chargable with this Fault: Doubtless this Neglect argues a great Contempt of this great Kindness of God, in that He affords them such a Privilege: And a Bible that lies by covered with Dust for want of using, will rise up in Judgment against such another Day.

3. THIS shews us *the Necessity of having the Word of God to be Translated into the Vulgar Languages*. If it be the Duty of all Christians, the Unlearned as well as the Learned, to Read and acquaint themselves with the Word of God, it is necessary that it be accommodated to their Capacities, else it can be of no Profit to them. All Men who are concerned to know the Scriptures, are not, nor can they be acquainted with the Original Languages in which they were first Penned, and so without a Translation they would be serviceable but to a few, who are Learned, and others must be deprived of so unvaluable a Treasure. We are therefore deeply beholden to God, that He hath stirred up such as were able and faithful, to make the Word speak to us in our Language, and render the Mysteries of Salvation intelligible to us. Let us then be Thankful, and herein testify our Gratitude, by our making diligent Use of it, which if we do not, we shall render our selves inexcusable.

4. IT tells us, *That they are Enemies to Christ and Souls, who Forbid the Use of the Scriptures to the People.* That it is so in the Popish Dominions, is notoriously known; in which, as Translations into the Vulgar Language are forbidden, so the Use of the Word of God is strictly prohibited to all but such as obtain a special Licence for it. And it is made, not Criminal only, but expoſeth Men to all Cruel Persecutions, so much as to have a Bible in their Houses; herein directly contradicting the Command of Christ, who bids all to *search the Scriptures*; and thus keeping Men in Ignorance of the things of their Peace, and enslaved to their blind and Idolatrous Superstitions. What an awful Account will these have to give up to God another Day? And how Miserable must the Condition of those enslaved People be, from whom the Key of Divine Knowlege is thus kept, by those who will not themselves enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, nor suffer those that would, to enter? Let us then Pray to God, That He will shew His Compassion to those that sit in this Darkness for want of the holy Scriptures; That He will remove the Tyranny, and restore to them this Liberty: And let us gratefully acknowledge the signal Favour of God, that we dwell in *Goshen*, where there is this Light and Liberty; and carefully make use of the peculiar Privilege that we hereby enjoy; seeking for the Spirit to make this Word powerful in us, for our Salvation.

SERMON *CCXXV.*

(II.) *IN respect to the* Preaching *of the Word.* That this also is a Divine Institution, and made a Medium for the Conveyance of the Word to us, by God's appointment, is evident by the Scriptures: And that this is a more eminent Mean for the promoving of the Salvation of Men, is intimated in the Note of *Specialty* put upon it. Here then two things may be considered; 1. *What is the Preaching of the Word here intended?* 2 *In what respect it is a more special Medium for Man's Salvation?*

Q. 1. *WHAT is the Preaching here intended?*

Answ. IT is here put *distributively* with the *Reading* of it; and if *that* points to the more *Private* using of it, *this* will intimate the *Publick* Dispensation of it. But we may take a farther and a more distinct Account of it; and we may observe, that the Word generally used in the New Testament for *Preaching* signifies, *Openly to Proclaim a thing, with a loud Voice, before a Multitude:* And it hath a special reference to a *Herauld*, who is to Proclaim to the Subjects, such Edicts as are emitted from the supream Powers; and this by vertue of an Office to which he is Commissioned. This is *Metaphorically* applied to a Gospel Minister, who is Authorized by CHRIST to Declare and Proclaim His Mind to the Children of Men; and that in His Name: Hence that in, Rom. 10. 15. *How shall they preach except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!* I shall here only remark two things;

1. THAT *God hath seen good to appoint a certain Order of Men, to Preach unto others.* They come from God to Men, in the Quality of Ambassadors; hence so called, 2 Cor. 5. 20. *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ.* They are therefore Authorized by Him; and their Warrant for their Preaching, is the Commission to their Work which He hath given them, Mark 16. 15. *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.* These are under the Authority and Influence of CHRIST, who is the Chief Shepard, who are to Act under Him: Hence that, 2 Cor. 6. 1. *We then as workers together with him, beseech you also, that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.* Now the ground of this is, Sin had made a breach between God and Man, by occasion whereof Man was exposed to suffer the Curse of the broken Law; but God, in tender Pity to Men, hath opened a Treaty with them, in which He offers and proposeth Terms of Reconciliation: And because He seeth meet to manage it in a *Mediate* way, He hath chosen to treat them with Men like themselves, to whom He hath committed this Affair, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. And betrusted them to deliver His Mind to them; to lay open the Terms of Faithfully,

fully to them; and with Importunity to urge the Entertainment upon them: And this seems to be suitably accommodated to Man's nature, to treat them with Men of like Infirmities: It was therefore the request of that People, when God had made the more immediate Discoveries of Himself to them, Exod. 20. 19. *And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.* These Preachers therefore are such as He pleaseth to separate from others, and calls to their Work, and furnisheth them for it.

2. THAT *the great Business they have in Charge, is to Preach the Word.* Thus, 2 Tim. 4. 2. *Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.* Which is elsewhere called, the *Preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom*; Preaching the *Unsearchable Riches of Christ*; so that as *Preaching* is something diverse from barely *Reading* the Scriptures to the People, so it is not every Discourse that is offered to Men, that will bear this Denomination; but it consists in the Opening and Applying of the Gospel Truths unto Men. For tho' *Men* are the Ministers of this, yet it is the Word of GOD contained in the Holy Scriptures, which contains the whole Instructions of their Embassy; and they are to keep themselves within the Limits of that, if they would not transgress their Commission: And if they will be true to their Trust, they must *take heed to their Ministry*; for the Apostle hath left that solemn Warning, Gal. 1. 8 *But tho' we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.* They are to Open the Scriptures, to declare the Articles of the Christian Religion, to Confute the Errors of the Times, to establish the Truth, and use all endeavours to win Souls to Christ, and build them up in their Faith. This is summarily laid open in, 2 *Tim.* 4. 2, 3.

Quest. 2. *IN what regard it is a more special Medium for Man's Salvation?*

Answ. THAT we mistake not on this Account, this may be distinctly considered:

AND that,

1. *Negatively*; NOT that there is any more *Intrinsecal Vertue* in *Preaching* than in *Reading*: If the Word Preached at any time takes effect in the Hearts of Hearers, the Preacher must say, as they did in another Case, Acts 3. 12. *Why look ye so earnestly on us, as tho' by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?* And this will be evident if we consider,

1. THAT it is *the same Word*. We observed, That *That* is the great Instrument used by the Spirit, and with the Application whereof the Vertue is derived: And the Reading or Preaching of it, are but *Circumstances*, and do not in themselves at all alter the *Property* or *Quality* of it: it hath the vertue of an *Instrument*, for we are begotten by it in our Regeneration, as it is intimated in, *Jam* 1. 18. which Vertue abides in it, and suffers no Alterations; for without it, we observed that, none are Saved; and it is evermore applied in the working of Conversion, and carrying on of Conversion Work.

2. *THE whole Success of it entirely depends on the Spirit of God who useth it.* Tho' the Word be wisely accommodated to *this Use*, yet the Efficacy of it cannot be wrought in the Hearts of Sinners, except He gives the Impressions thereon by it. If ever a Sinner be Converted, if ever a Saint grows in Grace, it must derive from one and the same Spirit, who is the *prime Efficient*; for tho' *He* can do the Work immediately without the *external Application* of the Word, yet *that* cannot possibly do it without *Him*; Phil. 2. 13. *For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* And tho' we cannot, without Sin, neglect the attending on the Word, yet He communicates this Vertue with it at His own Discretion; Rom. 9. 18. *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will, he hardeneth.*

3. *THE best Endowments of Preachers are only adapted to Moral swasion.* As true Preachers are sent of God, so He is not wont to send Messengers without Feet; but all whom He Commissions are some way Qualified for it: And tho' as He distributes these *Gifts* in what manner and measure He sees Good, and frequently useth such as are most despised of Men, to do this great Work withal, whilst such as do more excell, are not so succeeded; yet it must be acknowledged, that such as have more Plenty of these, have a greater Advantage to apply them to the rational Powers in Men: Hence in this regard, there is no small Privilege to *Hear* such, above the meer *Reading* of the Word; because they are enabled to Open the Scriptures to us, for the help of our Understanding them, and acquaint us with the Articles of our Religion which are scattered therein; to Interpret to us the mind and meaning of things, that are to us abstruse and difficult; and to urge the Arguments therein used, to move our Affections; without which our *Reading* may no more Profit us, than the *Ethiopians* did him, *Acts* 8. 30, *&c.* But when they have done their utmost, they can but thus lay these things before us; nor can they either Cure our natural Blindness and Error, or take away our Enmity or Obstinacy, and so cause us to pass from Death to Life: they can set things before us *Objectively*, but not renew our Faculties *Subjectively*, which are spiritually *dead in trespasses and sins.*

2. *Affirmatively*; THIS is the way which God hath seen good to *sanctify* as a *special Medium* to this End. And hence it is that the Usefulness of it to *this* End more than the *other* derives; which is included in that Enthymeme, *Rom.* 10. 14, 15.

BUT we may here take a more distinct Account of this in a few Conclusions:

1. IT is sure, *This Way is suited to Treat with Man as a* reasonable Creature, *and consequently fitted to his Moral Powers.* God, in His Government, manageth His Creatures according

to the Nature which He hath put into them: And becauſe Man is a *Cauſe by Counſel*, endowed with Underſtanding, Will & Affections, He applies Himſelf to theſe Faculties; and that by ſuiting His Addreſs to them, agreeably to the Nature of them, by which He doth not violently Compel, but draw him: Hence that, Cant. 1. 4. *Draw me, we will run after thee.* Now in the Preaching of the Goſpel, there is afforded Light to inform the Underſtanding, and Argument to move the Will and Affections: Hence that in, Hoſ. 11. 4. *I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love, and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them.* Nor is there any thing wanting in this Diſpenſation as to Means; for we are told of the Scriptures, 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. *All ſcripture is given by inſpiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs: That the man of God may be perfect throughly furniſhed unto all good works.* And Mens not complying herewithal, is charged on Men as Bruitiſhneſs; yea, that which makes them worſe than the moſt ſtupid Animals, *Iſa.* 1. 3. *Pſal.* 32. 9.

2. *BUT the ſaving Efficacy of theſe depends upon His Bleſſing of the Means.* It is of the Nature of Inſtruments, that let them be never ſo well ſuited for the Work, yet there muſt be an Agent to uſe and apply them to the Work, elſe they do nothing; and every hand cannot ſo apply the Inſtruments, but it muſt be one who hath both Skill and Ability: Now it is certain, that tho' Preachers can apply the Word outwardly, yet they cannot make it to leave ſaving Impreſſions on the Soul; but this muſt come from a more powerful Hand. They may Preach, but He muſt Bleſs and Proſper it, if any good be done: *Paul* therefore tells us, that when they have done their Beſt, this depends on God alone; 1 Cor. 3. 6. *I have planted, Apollos watered: but God gave the increaſe.* Hence that, Eccl. 11. 6. *In the morning ſow thy ſeed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knoweſt not whether ſhall proſper, either this or that, or whether they both ſhall be alike good.* And this was his Conſolation, Iſa. 49. 4. *Then I ſaid, I have laboured in vain, I have ſpent my ſtrength for nought, and in vain; yet ſurely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.*

3. *HE hath put this Honour upon His Word, to make it the great Inſtrument of Man's Salvation.* It is the prime Medium, and that without which no other are available: for tho' He ſometimes uſeth Providences to be ſerviceable to Men for this End, yet not without the Word, by which they are directed to the right Improvement of them; as, Pſal. 94. 12. *Bleſſed is the man whom thou chaſteneſt, O Lord, and teacheſt him out of thy law.* And when He employs Men in this Work, they are ſtill to make uſe of the Word in all their Applications: Hence that in, Pſal. 19. 11. *By them is thy ſervant warned: and in keeping them there is great reward.* And ſuch is the Uſefulneſs and Neceſſity of it, that there is ordinarily no Salvation to be expected without it, 2 Cor. 4. 3. *If our goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt.* Prov. 29. 18. *Where there is no viſion, the people periſh.*

4. HENCE *He hath adapted the Preaching of the Word, to Treat with Men, as Reaſonable Creatures.* And there are ſeveral reſpects, in which this manner of Diſpenſation is accommodated to diſplay His Wiſdom and His Kindneſs to Men.

1. *IN this way He addreſſeth us by* Men *like ourſelves.* He could apply Himſelf to us more *Immediately*; but His Glorious Majeſty would be a Terror to us, and His dread make us afraid, whilſt we dwell in theſe houſes of Clay. *Iſrael* deſired that God would ſpeak to them by *Moſes*; and it is doubtleſs His kindneſs, to treat us by Men of like Infirmities, who can ſpeak to us in our own Language: Hence we have that in, Job 33. 6, 7. *Behold, I am according to thy wiſh in God's ſtead: I alſo am formed out of the clay. Behold, my terror ſhall not make thee afraid, neither ſhall my hand be heavy upon thee.* And Chriſt mentions it as a Condeſcendency, Joh. 3 10. *Art thou a maſter in Iſrael and knoweſt not theſe things?*

2. *HE beſtows* Gifts *upon Men, to fit them to apply the Word to our Moral Powers.* When He ſent forth His Apoſtles to Preach to the World the Goſpel of Salvation, we find in, Luk. 24. 45. *Then opened he their underſtanding, that they might underſtand the ſcriptures.* And it is mentioned as belonging to His Aſcenſion Gifts, Eph. 4. 7, 8. *But unto every one of us is given grace according to the meaſure of the gift of Chriſt. Wherefore he ſaith, When he aſcended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.* And that is remarkable, Amos 3. 7. *Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his ſecret unto his ſervants the prophets.* And tho' theſe extraordinary Gifts are ceaſed, which he immediately beſtowed on them at firſt, yet He hath appointed Means for their knowing His Mind, and Bleſſeth them for that end, that ſo they may be ſerviceable to the carrying on of this Work, for the furtherance of Men's Salvation: Hence that Promiſe, Matth. 28. 20 *And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world, Amen.*

3. *HE hath Promiſed peculiar* Succeſs *to attend this Appointment of His, and Threatned the Neglect of it.* As He hath made it the Duty of Men where the Goſpel is Preached, to wait upon Him in the way of His Ordinances, as they hope to obtain Eternal Life; ſo He hath promiſed that if they do ſo ſincerely, they ſhall have the good of it beſtowed upon them: Hence we have that Encouragement, Prov. 8. 34. *Bleſſed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the poſts of my doors.* And tho' He reſerves a Liberty in the diſpenſing of this Grace, that it may appear to be of Grace; yet where He gives an Heart to Attend, He alſo cauſeth ſuch to Profit: And He hath alſo menaced ſuch as do

do Deſpiſe the Means, and diſregard the Ordinances; and declared, Luk. 10. 16. *He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me; and he that deſpiſeth me, deſpiſeth him that ſent me.*

4. *IN thus doing He puts Honour upon Men, and advanceth His own Glory in our Salvation.* It is a great Honour put upon frail and ſinful Men, that Chriſt will make uſe of them, to be Inſtrumental in the Converſion and Salvation of their Brethren; that He will admit them to be workers together with him; (2 *Cor.* 6. 1.) And *Paul* looked upon this to be a Privilege, that he could not ſufficiently deſcant upon, Eph. 3. 8. *Unto me who am leſs than the leaſt of all ſaints is this grace given, that I ſhould preach among the Gentiles the unſearchable riches of Chriſt.* In this way alſo, He conſults His own Honour, and makes it to appear that He alone is the Author of that Salvation, which He uſeth them to be Inſtrumental in bringing about, in that they are ſuch as are no way Competent; and thro' their Frailty, His Power is made illuſtrious, 2 Cor. 4. 7. *But we have this treaſure in earthen veſſels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*

5. *BUT this is not ſo reſtrained to Preaching, but that he alſo confers this Grace together with Private Means.* There is as much Vertue in one as the other in themſelves; the Efficacy therefore is as God will; and He hath Bleſſed, and will Bleſs all His own appointments. The Publick Means are ſometimes ſuppreſt, and many are ſhut up from them, that they cannot enjoy them; and tho' this be a ſore Affliction, yet He can, and will be a little Sanctuary to them that Fear Him; and ſo make up to them this want, by *Private* Means, that their Souls ſhall ſtill thrive: and not ſeldom are the firſt ſenſible Applications of Himſelf to the Soul, made in their ſecret *Reading of the Scriptures*, and the more Private Addreſſes of *Counſels* to them; tho' ſtill, it is to thoſe who are made to Prize theſe Goſpel Liberties, and long for the Sanctuary, when ſhut out from it; and do not, becauſe they find Him here, grow Careleſs of the other.

V. WE are now to proceed to conſider, the ſeveral *Uſes* which the Spirit of God makes of the Word, in order to the advancement of our Salvation, viz. *Convincing and Converting Sinners, and Building them up in Holineſs and Comfort*, &c. And under theſe is comprehended, all that is requiſite in the bringing of us from Sin to Grace, and thro' Grace to Glory: This whole Work is therefore reduced to two Heads, *viz.* The Bringing of Men out of a *State of Sin & Miſery*, into a *State of Salvation*, which is intended in Conviction & Converſion; and the Perfecting of the Work in them, to their preſent Conſolation, and future Glory, intended in the *Building them up*, &c. The work of Grace is here compared to the Building of an Houſe, in which there is to be a Foundation laid, and an Edifice erected and finiſhed: Now, as the whole of this is the Spirit's work, ſo he makes uſe of the Word of God in every part of it; and ſo makes it effectual to obtain the End of it. Touching the things themſelves that are here aſcribed to Him, and whereto the Word is made ſerviceable, they have been formerly conſidered in the Nature of them; the great thing therefore that lies here before us, is to conſider, *How*, or in what *Way*, the Word is made Inſtrumental in each of theſe, through the Operation of the holy Spirit? We may therefore make ſome particular glances on theſe things,

I. AS to the *Bringing of Sinners into a State of Grace*, in which there is the Foundation of Salvation laid in them: All Men in their Natural State are alienated from God, Children of Wrath, and far from Salvation, (*Pſal.* 119. 155.) They muſt therefore be brought over from Sin to God; and till they are ſo, they are in the way to Perdition: And in this there are two things obſervable, viz. *Conviction* and *Converſion*; for tho' it is true, that Conviction is a ſtep to Converſion, and hath a proper reference to it, and is ordinarily a Diſpoſition to it, and is made ſo Eventually in God's Elect, and in that regard may be ſaid to be *Saving*; yet in it ſelf it is a common Work of the Spirit, and doth not alone put Men into a State of Salvation; but is uſed in way of Preparation; and how it doth ſo, hath heretofore been accounted for: That therefore which now lies before us, is,

(1.) TO obſerve how the Spirit *Improves* the Word in the Diſpenſation of it, to *promove this Conviction in Sinners, in order to their Converſion.* And this is done by making of their preſent ſinful State evil and bitter to them. Every natural Man in his Carnal Security, is in love with his Sins, is deceived in his tho'ts, and tenacious of his Errors; he muſt therefore be rouſed from this, and made to entertain other reſentments of it, before he will ſeek after a redreſs from it: And tho' the Spirit alone can work this, and till He comes to do it, the Sinner deſpiſeth all the Means, and grows harder under them; yet He Improves and Applies the Word to their Conſciences in this. And how he makes it ſerviceable to this purpoſe will appear in a few Conſiderations:

1. IT is by the Word that He *makes diſcoveries of Sin to Men in it's true Nature & Colours.* There are indeed thoſe Convictions in the natural Conſcience, which make them that *have not the Law*, to be *a Law to themſelves*, Rom. 2. 14, 15. And theſe do ſometimes raiſe great Terrors in them, as the Philoſophers do obſerve; for there are common Moral Principles in Men ſince the Fall; but theſe are but faint Repreſentations to ſuch as the Word of God makes of this matter. The Word of God gives us the account of the Original of Sin, and of that Original Sin that cleaves to us, and hath pervaded all our Powers; of the Vileneſs of it, how odious it is to God, how hurtful it is to us, and what a ſhame and reproach it brings upon us; here we have its Pedigree, Rom. 5. 12. *by one man ſin entred into the world, and death by ſin; and ſo death hath paſſed upon all men, for that*

all

all have sinned. It tells us how it hath stript us of our Primitive Glory, and debased us below the sensible Creation, Isa. 1 3. *The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his masters crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.* It represents it to us as that which is abominable to God, Jer. 44. 4. *Oh do not this abominable thing that I hate.* which hath armed His Holiness against us, Hab. 1. 13. *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity.* And hath rendred us every way unprofitable, and emptied us of all true Goodness, Rom. 3. 10, 11, 12 *There is none righteous, no not one: There is none that understandeth, that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doeth good, no not one.*

2. IT is by this Word that He *convinceth them of the true Misery under which they ly, by reason of Sin.* The Gentiles had some faint Discoveries of this, but their resentments did not drive them to Despair, tho' their Consciences reflected Guilt upon them, and told them that they exposed themselves to the Divine Displeasure; yet it was only in regard of more notorious Crimes: and they thought they could by their own Power atone for them: whereas the Word of God discovers Guilt in the least Sin; and assures Men, that it lays them open to Judgment; Matth. 12. 36. *I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account in the day of judgment.* Eccl. 12. 14. *For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* And it assures them, that they can make no Satisfaction to the Justice of God for one Sin, no not the least; but that every Sin exposeth them to Ruin, Ezek. 18. 4. *The soul that sinneth, it shall die.* Here are all the Plagues and Torments, denounced against Sinners, which are enough to make their hearts to tremble.

3. BY this He shews them, both the *Unreasonableness* and *Unprofitableness* of Sin. Ungodly Men think, that they Sin with a great deal of Reason; and that the Course of Sin, which they pursue, is very Advantageous to them; so they, Prov. 1. 13. *We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil.* But by the Word of God, they have abundant matter of Conviction set before them of their foolish Mistake in it: It discovers the worse than Brutality of Sin, in that it breaks all the Bonds & Obligations laid upon them; that it is against God who made, and preserves them, who hath Sovereign Authority over them, and by right requires Obedience of them; and who hath laid the most forcible Obligations on them to please Him: hence that, Isa. 1. 2, 3. *Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.* Jer. 2. 5. *Thus saith the Lord, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?* Deut. 32. 6, 7. *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee? Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee, thy elders, and they will tell thee.* It also gives evident Demonstration, that there will be no Profit, but abundance of Mischief arise from Sin; that the Pleasures of it are but for a Season; that they will ere long be ashamed of it; that a Miserable End will follow upon it; and the more Sin, the more Torment.

4. BY this He shews them, the *Necessity of their Perishing, if they get not delivered from Sin.* There are two things that attend a Sin in the Natural Man, *Guilt* & *Dominion*; and as long as these abide, the Sinner stands bound over to suffer Eternal Vengeance; and the Word of God is full in assuring us of this: We are told, Exod. 34. 7. *That he will by no means clear the guilty.* And hath declared it the upshot of Misery, Joh. 8. 24. *I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.* The Sinner is apt to be secure; is not willing to think of, or believe that he is so exposed; and is ready to slight all Warnings given about it; but this matter is fully determined in the Word of God: It assures us that *Iniquity will be our ruin*, if we obtain not a discharge from it: it tells us, Psal. 11. 6. *Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup.*

5. BY this He shews them, the *Vanity of all the Refuges of Lies, which they have sheltered themselves under.* Nothing more hardens Sinners in their lewd ways, and to despise Warnings and Counsels, than a *vain Presumption* that they are out of the reach of Danger, and secured against God's Wrath and Vengeance: Hence they, Isa. 28. 15. *We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass thro', it shall not come unto us; for we have made lies our refuge, and under falshood have we hid ourselves.* But the Word of God abundantly Confutes this Confidence, representing God not only in the Truth and Veracity of His Threatnings, but also in His mighty Power to give being to His Word, in spite of all the Attempts of Sinners to secure against Him; hence that, Ver. 17. *Judgment also will I lay to the lines, and righteousness to the plummet, and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.* It therefore gives them to know that He is resolved; and if they resist Him, they shall not prosper; yea, He gives His Oath to it, *Deut.* 32. 35, 36, 40, 41.

6. HENCE by this, He *rouseth them up to enquire after Deliverance from the Wrath to come.* It is imprinted on Man's Nature, to be

be wrought upon, by the real apprehenſion of Miſery to which they are ſubjected, to be very ſollicitous to ſeek how they may eſcape it; and it is nothing but their fearleſsneſs of this, that makes them Content in their preſent State, becauſe they apprehend no Danger. The Spirit of God therefore not only ſets theſe Truths before them by the Word; but together with that, He powerfully imprints on their Conſciences ſuch a Belief of the Truth & Veracity thereof, as puts them in Fear: He toucheth their ſleepy Conſciences, & cauſeth them to reflect theſe things upon them with aw, & they can no more withſtand them: But the Word ſo ſet home, leaves deep Wounds on their Souls, and horrid Terrors ſieze them, and will give them no reſt. Hence that, Iſai. 33. 14. *The ſinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulneſs hath ſurprized the hypocrites: who among us ſhall dwell with the devouring fire? who amongſt us ſhall dwell with everlaſting burnings?* For this reaſon we have that requeſt put up for ſuch, by the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 83. 16. *Fill their faces with ſhame: that they may ſeek thy name, O Lord.* Now ſuch impreſſions as theſe made upon the hearts of ſinners, will naturally lead, in the iſſue, to one of theſe two things, *viz.* Either to ſink under deadly diſcouragement, and die of deſpair; or elſe to make the moſt earneſt enquiries, how they may eſcape the wrath to come. And how the Spirit of God applies theſe things to the Elect, to this Enquiry, in order to bring about their thorough Converſion, will come under the next ſubject of Conſideration.

SERMON CCXXVI.

(2.) THE next thing obſervable, in which the Spirit makes uſe of the Word, in order to the ſinners Salvation, is *his Converſion*: By Converſion we are to underſtand the great Change which is wrought in the Sinner, in Regeneration, by vertue whereof he is renewed in the whole Man, and there is an Univerſal Change wrought in him; a general account whereof is given us in, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. The neceſſity of which Converſion, if ever a ſinner be ſaved, is fully aſſerted in the word of God, Hence that, Joh. 3. 3. *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him, Verily verily I ſay unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot ſee the kingdom of God.* Matt. 18. 3. *Verily I ſay unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye ſhall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.* And that the Spirit is the Author of this work is certain, for it is a work of the Almighty power, which none but He who is God can exert; ſuch therefore are ſaid to be *born of God*, Joh. 1. 13. But how, or after what manner he makes uſe of the word, in the bringing of this about to effect, will call for a more diſtinct Conſideration. And here we may obſerve, that Divines take notice of a double Converſion, or of Two ſteps that there are in this work, one whereof in order of Nature goes before the other, and makes way for it, *viz. Paſſive*, and *Active*: And there is a vaſtly different reſpect which the word of God bears to the one & the other, as will evidently appear by the Conſideration of them ſeverally.

1. AS to *Paſſive* Converſion; it properly conſiſts in the great Change, which is wrought on all the Powers of the Man; by which all the Sanctifying Graces of the Spirit are infuſed into him; and ſo a new Nature is put into him, whereby he is furniſhed for a Life of Grace; and this is that which the Apoſtle ſpeaks of in, *Eph.* 4. 22, 24. Now this, being a creating work, is wrought by the Spirit Immediately, and indiſcernably in it ſelf; nor is the Word properly an Inſtrument of it, but he alone doth it: it is therefore ſaid, Ezek. 36. 26. *A new heart alſo will I give you, and a new ſpirit will I put within you, & I will take away the ſtony heart out of your fleſh, and I will give you an heart of fleſh.* Nevertheleſs, there is a Concomitancy of the Word in the production of this, James 1. 18. *Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth.* And we may take this ſummary account of it:

THE Word of God being a Moral Inſtrument, the Spirit, when He applies Himſelf to Sinners in the Goſpel treaty, doth make uſe of it, as accommodated to the Rational Powers; in which He ſets before them their Miſerable State, and ſhews them how they may obtain Deliverance, and invites them to accept of the offered Salvation, ſetting before them the Promiſe of Life to thoſe that ſo do; and whilſt He is thus doing, He ſteals in His Grace, by which He puts a Power into them, enabling them to comply with this Invitation of His. At what inſtant this is done, is hard for us to define, He being Arbitrary in it. Chriſt therefore tells us, Joh. 3. 8. *The wind bloweth where it liſteth, and thou hearеſt the ſound thereof, but canſt not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: ſo is every one that is born of the ſpirit.* But in His ordinary diſpenſation of His Grace to Men, He is not wont to produce this Change, but together with the offer of the Word, and the impreſſion that He leaves by it, on their minds; and it is certain, till this Change be wrought, none of the Natural Powers in the Man, can give him a gracious entertainment; but whilſt the Word is ſet before the Man, and all Moral endeavours are uſed with him, he on a ſudden finds a mighty turn on his Soul, whereby he knows, that the Finger of God hath been there.

2. AS to *Active* Converſion, which properly conſiſts in the Exerting of this new Principle thus infuſed, (which is produced by the Spirit's ſetting a ſecond hand to his own work; for we are told in Phil. 2. 13. *For it is God which worketh in you, both to will & to do.*: Heb. 12. 2. *He is the author and finiſher of our faith.*) There is a manifold uſe of the Word for this purpoſe, it being every way adapted to be ſerviceable to this end. We are told of the Divine drawing, *Cant.* 1. 4. *Joh.* 6. 44. and theſe drawings are not Compulſive, but ſuch as work upon the Rational Powers in Man, which attract his Voluntary

tary consent to, & compliance with the Spirit in His call; and he saith as he, Psal. 27. 8. *When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.* And here, tho' the Efficacy still depends on the Operation of the Spirit, yet there is the spontaneous Operation of the Man, which is drawn forth by the application of the Word, to his renewed Faculties; and how He useth the Word in this we may observe in several particulars;

1. *BY it He discovers to him, that there is Hope of Salvation for him.* We here suppose the previous work of Conviction wrought on the Man, which tho' of its own Nature tends to Despair, yet is by the Operation of the Spirit, made serviceable in his Active Conversion; having therefore stollen into him a gracious Principle, He thus draws it forth after a Rational manner: and whilst the sinner was under Terrors, and saying, Must I needs perish? He sets a good Hope before him, and gives Activity to this Grace in him: and hereby he is encouraged to wait upon God for His rich Mercy to appear to him, in delivering him from the Curse: and this He doth by revealing to him the New-Covenant, in which provision is made for the Salvation of sinful Men: the Truth whereof is abundantly revealed in the Gospel. Hence that, Job 33. 24. *Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom.* And therefore we are told, Psal. 25. 14. *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him: and he will shew them his covenant.*

2. BY this He reveals to him, *the Fulness of sufficiency there is in Christ, to save him to the Uttermost.* The convinced sinner is at a loss how the Justice of God may be salved in his Pardon; but the Spirit of God, reveals to him by the word, how this great matter is adjusted, and a perfect harmony made between Justice & Grace, Psal 85. 10. *Mercy & truth are met together: righteousness & peace have kissed each other.* Rom. 3. 25, 26. *Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.* By this He acquaints him with the suretiship of Christ, and the compleat satisfaction which He hath made to the Law. Hence it discovers to him, His Person, His Offices, His work of Redemption; so that there is nothing wanting for the display of Justice, as well as Mercy in his Salvation; and thus it assures him, Rom. 8. 34. *Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.* And tells him, Heb. 7. 25. *Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.* And by confirming this in him by His secret influence, He thereby establisheth his hope, which encourageth him to wait on God for it, and to seek it of Him.

3. *BY this He humbleth him out of himself, and all self dependence.* In active Conversion, the sinner must wholly go out of himself to Christ; and this also the Spirit produceth in him, by applying of the Word to him. Convinced sinners, are apt to Object against the Terms of the New-Covenant, that they are impossible Conditions, which creates sinking Discouragements in the Soul; but by the Word He acquaints him, that the Benefit is not only presented to him on Terms, but that the Working of these Terms in him, depends on Him; and when he is most sensibly lost, he is neareſt to be found; for Christ hath said, Luk. 19. 10. *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.* And lets him know, that this also is the gift of God: and by this He perswades him to look to Him, who is able to do it in him, which puts him upon crying out with *Ephraim*, Jer. 31. 18. *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God.*

4. *BY this he allures him to accept of Christ:* The New-Covenant requires this acceptance in order to Peace & Salvation: and therefore having infused this power into him, he draws it out into Act, by applying of the Word to him: and this he doth by setting home all those gracious Invitations & Promises of the Gospel, in which Christ offers himself to them, stands at the door & knocks, assures him that he is as willing as he is able to Save; and that if he comes to him, he will not reject him, Joh. 6 37. *Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* But that if he embrace the Terms, he will receive him graciously; and sets before him the great happiness that shall accrue to him, in case he doth comply with him, *Rev.* 3. 20.

5. *BY it he opens to him the Terms of the New-Covenant, and works him to a compliance with them.* The Treaty he holds with Men, is on Terms, with which the promise of Grace is connected; and these are Arbitrary with him, and must therefore be revealed to us, in order to our comporting with them: Now these are laid down in the Word, & with the offers of them, he enlightens our Minds to discern them, for they are *Spiritually discerned*, 2 Cor. 2. 14. And it is he who perswades us to embrace them cordially; for which he shews us the excellency, the suitableness, the desirableness of them; and hereby he draws forth our cordial consent to them, which is nothing else but the exertion of that Grace which he hath infused into us in Regeneration. Hence we are told in Psal. 110. 3. *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.* Now to all these the Word is adapted; and where it is made effectual, the Spirit sets in to render it so: for in this Active Conversion, we act as Causes by Counsel, and are able to give a reason of our hope; and can say, *That we know whom we have trusted*; the Revelation whereof is made to us by the Gospel, tho' it works efficaciously on none but such as he applies it unto, whilst others who enjoy the same outward

ward discoveries, neglect and despise it. And as the Word cannot do it without him, so neither is he won't to do it without the Word, which is for that reason compared to a Seed that is sown in us, and produceth such fruit as this.

II. WE are now to consider *the Usefulness of the Word, or the improvement the Spirit makes of it, to carry on the Work of Grace in us to perfection.* We are assured that both of these do belong to him, *Phil.* 1. 6. *Heb.* 12. 2. And a great deal is to be done between the laying a foundation of Grace in the Heart, and the laying of the topstone in Glory; and for this also are the Word and Ordinances appointed and made use of by him. And for this reason, as the Word is compared to Seed in Conversion, so to Food and Nourishment in regard of Edification, 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. Grace at first is small, Sanctification is therefore progressive; and though it is a Divine Work to carry it on, yet there are the means which God makes use of for this end, the principal whereof is the *Word*: In which there is provided, both Milk for new-born Christians, and strong Meat for such as have attained to a greater stature in Grace. It is certain, that God hath appointed all true Converts unto Perfection, which as they are to arrive unto, when they pass into Glory, so they are to be carried to it gradually in this Life, and for this is the Word and Ordinances designed, *Eph.* 4. 11, 12. And though, as we before observed, Providences are made to subserve to this, yet it is by and with the application of the Word to them; and therefore they are put together, Psal. 94. 12. *Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law.* Now there are Three Things which are here attributed to the Word, as it is an Instrument in the hand of the Spirit on this account, viz. 1. Their Increase in Holiness. 2. Their Establishment in Comfort. 3. Their Perseverance in Faith to Salvation. Now all of these things, the Spirit of God works in the Believer: And in doing of them he applies the Word to effect. And we may take a brief account of these severally.

1. *HE makes the Word serviceable to their Increase in Holiness.* By Holiness we are here to understand the Grace of Sanctification, which is wrought in us in Regeneration, by which we are helped to serve to the great end that we were made for: And it is made the Duty of all that are Converted to endeavour to increase in it, to be adding to every Grace, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4, 5. to grow in it, *Chap.* 3. 18. For which end there is the Nutriment suitable for it, which is to be made use of; and this is presented to us in the Word, and we are to wait upon it to that end. Now as Sanctification hath two essential parts in it, viz. Mortification of Sin, and the giving Life unto Grace; so is the Word adapted for the promoving of both these in it.

1. *IN respect of Mortification of Sin.* Though Original Sin hath received a mortal wound in Conversion, yet it abides in the Man, and hath not a little strength and influence; as he experienced, *Rom.* 7. And no small part of a Christians growth consists in the exercise of the Spiritual Warfare against it. And for this the Word is made very serviceable. And that,

(1.) *BY acquainting him with the Vileness and Odiousness of it.* *Jer.* 2. 19. In that it is, that he is acquainted how contrary it is to his new Nature, how foul and loathsome a thing it is, how inimical to his own Soul. How it obstructs him in pursuing the great end of his Regeneration; what Guilt it contracts, and how much it exposeth him to God's displeasure, and lays him open to the reflections of his Conscience, which serves to kindle his hatred of it. Psal. 119. 104. *Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.*

(2.) *BY giving him seasonable Warnings against it.* The Psalmist tells us, Psal. 19. 11. *Moreover, by them is thy servant warned.* When we are tempted to Sin, the Spirit often brings some Word home to us, and sets it home with power, which gives a check to lust within us, and arms us to resistance. Hence that in Isai. 30. 21. *And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.* *Gen.* 39. 9. And by this, Grace that is in him, is excited to a resolute fortifying against the Temptation, which otherwise would have been too hard for him.

(3.) *BY shewing him how much, and how justly, Sin is displeasing to God.* Grace in the Believer hath engaged him to seek the Glory of God, and to avoid every thing that will grieve the Holy Spirit. Now by the Word he is made to see how contrary this Sin is to God, how odious it is to his Holiness; and represents God so expostulating with him, Jer. 44. 4. *Howbeit I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early & sending them, saying, O do not this abominable thing that I hate.* And this is made a powerful Caveat to him. It tells him, that God loves Righteousness, and hates Iniquity. It saith as, Hab. 1. 13. *Thou art of purer eyes then to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he.* And *Psal.* 5. 4, 5. and 2 *Sam.* 11. *ult.* And by this means it excites in him an holy fear, lest if he do this, he shall procure his Father's Anger. And makes him to say, as Psal. 119. 120. *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.*

(4.) *BY shewing him where to get help against it.* It tells him where his relief is, viz. in Christ, who only can subdue his lust in and for him; and by whose Cross he may get it crucified, *Gal.* 6. 14. The consideration of what it cost him to satisfy for Sin, is laid forth by the Word, and is made serviceable to imbitter Sin to us.

2. *FOR the giving Life and Vigour to Grace.* Infant-Grace is very weak, and stands in need

of being ſtrengthned in us; and it is he who ſtrengthens us with might in our inward Man: whereby we may with more vigour and reſolution, purſue the work of our Generation, and grow in every Grace of the Spirit, and be more in love with Holineſs, & delighted in the work of our Generation. And this alſo he promoves in us by the Word. And that,

(1.) *BY diſcovering to us more of the Beauty of Holineſs.* It is by our love of it, that we are quickned to purſue it with earneſt deſires after it. Love is the prime cloſing affection, and that which fortifies this love, is the diſcovery we have of the Excellency and Amiableneſs of the Object of it. The way to increaſe in Holineſs, is to exerciſe it continually, and that which excites us to vigour in this, is the great value that we have for it. And it is the Word which ſets forth the character of it, and imprints it on us. Hence it tells us, Prov. 3. 13, &c. *Happy is the man that findeth wiſdom, and the man that getteth underſtanding.*

(2.) *BY affording us the proper Directions for the proſecution of our Work.* If we would increaſe in Grace, we muſt proſecute it; and that we may do it aright, we muſt be guided to it by the Holy Spirit, for it belongs to him to *lead us into all truth*, Joh. 16. 13. And it is by applying the Word to us, that he ſo doth: in which are all the Rules of holy Living given to us to direct us. We are therefore directed hither, for the right ordering of all our Courſe, *Iſai.* 8. 20. And it belongs to the uſefulneſs of the Word, to ſerve to all the ends of this direction.

(3.) *BY offering us ſuitable Motives to excite us hereto.* Man as a Reaſonable Creature is prompted to his work by Arguments ſuited to his inclinations. Now in the Word, the Spirit offers all the obliging Arguments to raiſe our affections to Holineſs, by ſhewing us the great Good that will accrue to us by it; and aſſuring us of the help of God to ſucceed & proſper us in all Work, and to bear down before us all that would offer to withſtand us in it; aſſuring us, 1 Cor. 15. ult. *Your labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord.*

2. *HE improves it alſo for their Eſtabliſhment in Comfort.* God hath provided Conſolation for his People in this Life, and therefore Joy in the Holy Ghoſt, is one of the Benefits which do flow from Chriſt to his Children, during their abode in this Pilgrimage in the World, to ſupport them under, and carry them comfortably through the fatigues which they encounter in their warfare. Hence we have that in, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *Whom having not ſeen, ye love: in whom though now ye ſee him not, yet believing, ye rejoyce with joy unſpeakable & full of glory.* Theſe therefore are the Wells of Salvation, out of which the People of God are made to draw Waters, *Iſai.* 12. 3. And we read of the *Comfort of the Scriptures*, *Rom.* 15. 4. And hence we are told, Heb. 6. 18. *That by two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lie, we might have a ſtrong conſolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope ſet before us.* And here,

1. *IN it he diſcovereth to them, what are the Glorious things that are laid up for them in the Promiſes.* There is a joy of Hope. We are therefore told, Rom. 8. 24. *For we are ſaved by hope: but hope that is ſeen, is not hope: for what a man ſeeth, why doth he yet hope for?* And *Chap.* 5. 2. A Believers great happineſs is in Reverſion, from the expectation whereof there reſults Conſolation to him; and the more full diſcovery he hath of the greatneſs of this felicity, the more exuberent muſt this joy of his needs be. Now though it is but a little of this, which he is now acquainted withal, in compariſon of what it ſhall be when he is put in poſſeſſion; for we are told, 1 Joh. 3. 2. *Beloved, now are we the ſons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be: but we know, that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him: for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* Yet there is ſo much as carries rapture in it, and aſſures him that it ſhall unconceivably ſurpaſs all that hath been now told him; and that what is acquainted with it, hath ſuch a dazling Splendour in it, as makes all the delights of time ſhrink up and diſappear. And how many deſcriptions of this, doth the Word of God abound withal!

2. *BY it he beſtows what Security there is laid in for their unfailing receiving of the Promiſes.* The meer relation of what excellent things they are, though it may raiſe the deſire after them, yet it cannot quicken joy in them, further than they are ours. Joy flows from fruition; but that conſiſts either in actual Poſſeſſion, or in an undeceiving Expectation, which leaves no room to doubt of having it in due time. And this latter is the Believers preſent Priviledge, the aſſurance whereof is made over to him, and he is confirmed in it, by the ſtability of the Promiſes, which are given to him through the Word: and that he gives him the evidences of his title to them; and by that he affords him the teſtimony of the immutability of them; and that from the immutability of the Promiſer, who cannot repent of his Word, or fail of performance. Hence that, in Tit. 1. 2. *In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promiſed before the world began.* *Heb.* 6. 18. *Rom.* 11. 29.

3. *BY it he fortifies them againſt all that offers to diſcourage them in their way.* There are many dark things that occur in their Paſſage, which do ſometimes bring them to a ſtand, but by the Word he corroborates their Faith, and affords them all the comfort that is needful. *David* ſaith, Pſal. 27. 13. *I had fainted, unleſs I had believed.* Now the Word is called the Word of Faith, becauſe by it the Spirit revives it when it languiſheth, and enables it to bear down all that would undermine it. By this it aſſureth him, that God will never fail him, and thereby encourageth him under all his hardſhips: Saith to him, as Iſai. 41. 10. *Fear thou not, for I am with thee;*

thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. It secures to him the Divine help, and makes him to despise all the things that would fright him from his Work, or drive him into despondency; so that he can rejoyce in tribulation, and triumph over all that stands in his way, and beat a Challenge to every thing that looks menacing on him. Hence that, *Rom.* 8. 35,37. And this the Spirit doth in and with the Ordinances, by setting home the Word with power, and rendring of his Faith by it invincible; so that he can believe in Hope against Hope.

3. *HE applies the Word to them, to persevere through Faith unto Salvation.* There is a Connection made in the Gospel between final Perseverance, and Eternal Life; and that both Affirmatively and Negatively, Rev. 2. 10. *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* Heb. 10. 38. *If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.* Now it is here to be remarked, that notwithstanding this Connection, and the Precept given us of Perseverance, and the warning against Apostasy, nevertheless in the same Covenant wherein Salvation is promised to Faith, there is a security given of Perseverance; otherwise that Promise might fail: for Perseverance as well as Salvation depends on the Power of God, who alone can keep us from falling. And therefore we have that promise, 1 Pet. 1. 5. *Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto Salvation.* And the necessary dependance of this on the Spirit of God is very evident, whether we consider the Nature of Grace that is in them, which is a Creature, and needs Sustentation; or the Weakness of it, together with the Opposition it meets withal, from the Carnal part within, which ever wars against it, and leads him Captive; as he complains, *Rom.* 7.23. Or the Adversaries from abroad, who seek his ruin. We are therefore told, 1 Pet. 5. 8. *Your Adversary the devil, is as a roaring lion walking about seeking whom he may devour.* And of his Power, in *Eph.* 6.12. And this is witnessed by the many wounds, and decays which we suffer in our Pilgrimage, which evidence that we are not our own keepers; and therefore we are told, Psal. 37. 24. *Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.* And hence such are said to be preserved ones, *Jude* 1. Now he makes use of the Word for this end, and in its Order it is very proper and serviceable thereto.

FOR,

1. *BY it He Corroborates their Faith.* We are told, Heb. 10.38. *Now the just shall live by faith.* While therefore Faith is maintained in its Vigour, it preserves the Believer from Apostasy; nor will he go back unless his Faith fails. Now it is the *Word* that is the *Food of Faith*, and from thence are we to fetch all the supports of it: and a Believers Faith, can go no farther than it hath a Word: And there is nothing about which we have occasion to exercise our Faith, but there is sufficiently laid in for it in the Word of God, which is the rule of Faith: And he that believes the Word, will never want matter to nourish and strengthen his Faith. Hence that, Psal. 17.4. *Concerning the works of men, by the words of thy lips, I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.*

2. *BY it he rouseth them out of their dead frames, and recovers them when fallen.* They too often grow remiss and heedless to themselves, and sometimes they fall and wound themselves; and did not he quicken & recover them again, there they would lye: but he in faithfulness raiseth them again, and gives both reviving and Repentance. And though he often sends Afflictions to rouse them, nevertheless he with them brings the Word, by which he shews them their sin, & danger, and this quickens them to purpose, and will suffer them to lye no longer in that Condition. Thus he sent a Word by the Prophet to *David*, 2 *Sam.* 12. *begin.* And when he sets in with it, and applieth it, it produceth this effect.

3. *BY it he Animates their Constancy, by assuring them of his help.* Their Warfare is sharp, their Enemies formidable, and they are sometimes ready to resolve, that they shall fall by their hand: But then he brings a seasonable Word, and by reviving their Faith helps them in the fight, and makes them resolute. Hence that, 1 Joh. 5. 4. *For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world, & this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.* By that he assures them that the Cause is not theirs but Christ's, and that he is the Captain of their Salvation, and bids them to go forth in his strength and Conquer. Hence we have that of the Psalmist, in Psal. 56. 3, 4. *What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.* And, *ver.* 10, 11. And while he hath the security of his presence and protection, he cannot be daunted.

4. *BY this he revives their Courage, by presenting them with the Crown which is secured in the Promise.* Hence that, *Rev.* 2. 10. *Moses* perseverance was by this Corrobarated, *Heb.* 11.26. And doubtless *Paul* signifies what influence this had upon his, 2 *Tim.* 4. 7, 8. And while he is confirmed in expectation of such a Crown, he recruits his strength, and renews the fight with fresh Spirits: resolving with him, Rom. 8. 18. *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.* While he looks on the Glory to come, which is hung out in the Gospel before him, and remembers that it is for this that he is engaged, he despiseth all difficulties, and resolveth that he will take Heaven by force.

USE. *LET this make us exceeding thankful to God for his Word and Ordinances.* And take heed that we do not despise or neglect them. It was once rated as a singular & distinguishing favour bestowed on Israel, Psal. 147. 19, 20.

He ſhewed his word unto Jacob, his ſtatutes and his judgments unto Iſrael, He hath not dealt ſo with any nation; and as for his judgments they have not known them: Praiſe ye the Lord. And doubtleſs it is no leſs a kindneſs afforded to us; and it becomes us to prize it accordingly: and if we put a ſlight upon it, we highly affront him, who hath given us the advantage of it above Multitudes in the World. And that we may have the ſaving benefit by it, let us remember, that this depends upon the Spirit, who only can render it effectual to this purpoſe: And be ſure to ſeek to God for it, that ſo the Word may become ſaving unto us. And let us take that for our encouragement to be importunate in it, Luk. 11. 13. *If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more will your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?*

SERMON *CCXXVII.*

QUESTION XC.

HOW is the Word to be read and heard, that it may become effectual to Salvation?

ANSWER.

THAT the Word may become effectual to Salvation, we muſt attend thereunto with Diligence, Preparation and Prayer, receive it with Faith and Love, lay it up in our Hearts, and practice it in our Lives.

UNDER the former Queſtion we had a brief account of the Work of the *Holy Spirit*, in and with the Word of God, to render it efficacious for the bringing about of the Salvation of the Sinner. Where was obſerved in what Order of Cauſality the Word ſtands, with regard to this great affair, viz. as an Inſtrument in his hand. We conſidered what ſort of Inſtrument it is, viz. Moral, or accommodated to Mans rational powers, as he is a Cauſe by Counſel, it is therefore ſuited to inform the Underſtanding, to perſwade the Will, and to move the Affections.

THAT which now lies before us for our Contemplation, is the Duty that lies upon all ſuch as enjoy the benefit of this Word, in order to their obtaining of ſaving good by it, and that we may not receive the Grace of God in Vain: That there is ſuch a Duty incumbent on us, and that we cannot without Infinite hazard to our own Souls, live in the neglect of it, the Word itſelf abundantly informs us: For, though it is certain, that the efficacy, entirely depends on the Operation of the Holy Spirit, it being a work of Almighty Power: Nevertheleſs, there is ſomething that he requires of us, to which he applies both his preventing and Co-operating Grace in the Elect; according to, Phil. 2. 13. *For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleaſure.* We are not to ſuppoſe, that the Word is uſed only as a ſpell or charm, for the producing of this effect, but as a *Moral Inſtrument*; and therefore we, as reaſonable Creatures are to apply ourſelves to it, that we may reap the benefit of it: and what this is, is the matter that we are now called to apply ourſelves to enquire into.

HERE then we may obſerve, that there are two ways in which the Word of God is made ſerviceable for the Salvation of Sinful Men, viz. For their Converſion and their Edification: In the former of theſe the Spirit prevents us, for it is certain that he muſt put the Grace into us, that we do our Duty Graciouſly, before we can ſo do, Iſa. 65. 1. *I am ſought of them that asked not for me: I am found of them that ſought me not: I ſaid, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name.* But ſtill, it is the Duty of all that Live where the Goſpel comes, to wait upon the means, and that not only becauſe he hath required it, but alſo becauſe they are means ſuited in their Order for ſuch an end. And it is in and with them that he is wont Ordinarily to work theſe things in Mens Minds and Conſciences, that are morally Preparitory for his coming with his Grace into their Hearts, viz. The Conviction of Sin and Miſery; thoſe Fears and Terrors by which they are rouſed to enquire after the remedy, together with which he is wont, as he pleaſeth, to come in and plant his Grace in them. Which Grace, when infuſed, enables them to improve thoſe Convictions and Compunctions in their Active Converſion; and that as Reaſonable Creatures. Nor is this to be expected in any other way but this, as the Experience of ſuch as have been Converted will Confirm. In the latter of theſe, there is alſo the Co-operation of the Spirit, with inherent Grace, which not only excites, but alſo aids the New Principle in them to its Operations; for as every new born Chriſtian, is at firſt a Babe in Chriſt, ſo he is regenerated in order to growth: As there is a foundation of Eternal Life laid in him, ſo he is to be built up in it, in order to his being made meat for the Inheritance. And as the Word of God, is accommodated both for the New Birth, *Jam.* 11. 18. And alſo for growth, as 1 *Pet.* 2. 2. So it is our Duty to improve the Word to both theſe ends: and for this reaſon, we are not only to hear it, but to endeavour ſo to hear it, as that it may be ſerviceable hereunto; hence that caution given by Chriſt, Luk. 8. 18. *Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whoſoever hath,*

to him ſhall be given ; and whoſoever hath not, from him ſhall be taken even that which he ſeemeth to have. And we are told, Rom. 10. 17. *So then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* Nor is it ſufficient for us to plead our own impotency in either of theſe regards, but our ſenſe of Impotency ſhould drive us to ſeek aid of him, who is both able & ready to afford it us, *Luk.* 11. 13. Now the Duties required of us, that we may be truly advantaged by the Word, ſo as to get ſaving Benefit by it, may be ranged under three heads.

I. *THE due attention which is to be given to the Word* ; We muſt attend thereto with Diligence, Preparation and Prayer.

AND here let us Obſerve,

1. THE Duty itſelf required is *Attention.* And there are ſeveral things required in this; briefly ; we are then ſaid to attend to a thing, *When we ſo apply ourſelves to a thing, as to make a buſineſs of it.* And it is uſually oppoſed to neglect, and perfunctorineſs in and about a thing, and it requires the whole Man to be engaged in it: but this will be more diſtinctly taken up in theſe things that follow. Hence,

2. *THE manner of doing it*, or the things required for the right diſcharge of it ; and theſe are three ;

1. *DILIGENCE.* God requires of his People that they uſe induſtry in all the works which he requires of them, Eccl. 9. 10. *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might : for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wiſdom in the grave whither thou goeſt.* And this Reading or Hearing of the Word, is one of thoſe, to which there is a Promiſe made, *Iſa.* 55. 3. Now becauſe our right Improvement of the Word, is a matter of vaſt import, and this Affection to it, is of Abſolute Neceſſity, in order to ſuch an improvement, We may take a brief account of what is contained in this Diligence, which is ſo much inculcated in the Word of God ; which will fall under diverſe Conſiderations.

1. *WE muſt give Diligence to attend upon the Word.* Care is to be uſed that we do not omit this Duty, in the proper ſeaſon of it : And though that alone is not ſufficient for our Profiting, yet it cannot be neglected without our Damage ; and becauſe Reading and Hearing doth not engroſs all the buſineſs of a Chriſtian in this World, but there are many other things incumbent on him ; it is no little part of his Diſcretion, in ordering his affairs, ſo as they do not interfere one with another, nor yet that they do ſhut out one the other. And becauſe there are ſo many fleſhly Avocations from this Duty, the greater Vigilance ought to be uſed in it, leſt the things of this Life ſhould hurt us in our purſuit of the Affairs of our Souls & Eternity.

HERE therefore,

(1.) *WE ought to be very frequent in Reading the Word of God.* God hath not only ſent his Servants to tell us what is our Duty, but he hath afforded us our Bibles to keep in our Houſes ready for our uſe. And this is not to let them ly, to be covered with Duſt and Mould, but to take Opportunities to divert and recreate ourſelves with them ; and certainly we cannot Ordinarily let one day paſs without taking a turn with this precious Companion, and at leaſt Morning and Evening ; and if we have a due Love to it, it will herein diſcover it ſelf, Pſal. 119. 97. *O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.* And this is the way to profit greatly, ver. 99. *I have more underſtanding then all my teachers : for thy teſtimonies are my meditation.*

(2.) *WE ought to take every ſuitable Opportunity to hear the Word Preached.* There is a ſpecial Bleſſing of God annexed to this Ordinance, which will only reach to thoſe who afford their Attendance upon it. Hence that encouragement, Prov. 8. 34, 35. *Bleſſed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates ; waiting at the poſts of my doors. For whoſo findeth me, findeth life, and ſhall obtain favour of the Lord.* Now all have not the like Advantage for this ; ſome enjoy it only on the *Sabbath*, others have it *in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon :* And God's Providence may put in an Obſtruction ſometimes, but we ſhould not make any of ourſelves, without reaſon. The Sabbath is a Day which is ſet apart for this, among the other parts of Worſhip, and our ſecular buſineſs may not excuſe us from it ; and except Sickneſs, Tempeſtuous Seaſons, War, Fire, or ſuch emergencies intervene, it will be our Duty to attend ; according to Heb. 10. 25. *Not forſaking the aſſembling of our ſelves together, as the manner of ſome is, but exhorting one another : and ſo much the more, as ye ſee the day approaching.* And as to other Occaſional Opportunities in the Week time, as we are not to neglect the outward Affairs or work appointed for the ſix days, on pretence of running to hear Sermons, ſo a careful Chriſtian who values his Soul in the firſt place, will endeavour to redeem ſuch Opportunities as much as he can, if he hath the Pſalmiſts Eſtimate, Pſal 84. 10. *For a day in thy courts is better than a thouſand ; I had rather be a door-keeper in the houſe of my God, then to dwell in the tents of wickedneſs.* And doubtleſs the too great neglect of many Profeſſors in all theſe regards, is a thing to be Lamented.

2. *WE ought to give our Diligence, in our attending upon the Word Read or Heard.* It is not enough, that we omit not the Seaſons, but we muſt ſee that we husband them well, that ſo we may get the profit of them. And there is not a little care to be uſed in this.

(1.) *WE muſt keep our minds and thoughts fix'd upon the preſent Buſineſs.* In all Duties of Worſhip God requires the Heart. Prov. 23. 26. *My ſon, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes obſerve my ways.* For which reaſon we are adviſed to great watchfulneſs over our ſelves, leſt otherwiſe we prove like *Ezekiel's* hearers, Ezek. 33. 31. *And they come unto thee*

as the people cometh, and they ſet before thee as my people, and they heard thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they ſhew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetouſneſs. And this is not an eaſy work; there is a root of corruption within, and the firſt motions of Original Sin are in the tho'ts; and there is ſo much of Atheiſm in our worſer part, that makes us think none ſeeth our inward motions: And Satan our buſy Adverſary, is then more intent to ſuggeſt vain imaginations to us, whereby he leads our Hearts into the ends of the Earth. And by this mean the Word flies over us, and leaves no impreſſion behind upon us.

(2.) *WE muſt reſiſt drowſineſs of Body.* This is very apt to creep upon us, when we are engaged in the Duties of Worſhip, and if it be not withſtood, it will ſtupify our ſenſes. And he that is half aſleep at an Ordinance, is in no fit poſture to give diligent attention to the Word that is diſpenſed. When therefore the Pſalmiſt was engaging in Duty, he rouſeth himſelf up to it with great earneſtneſs, Pſal. 57. 8. *Awake up my glory, awake pſaltery and harp; I my ſelf will awake early.* They that ſet themſelves to ſleep, and put themſelves into a poſture for it, have no reaſon to expect that the Spirit will come in, and make the Word profitable to them. The Apoſtle tells us, in Rom. 10. 17. *So then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* But he that ſleeps at a Sermon, obſtructs his hearing; how then ſhould his Faith be nouriſhed thereby? We are not to expect that he will apply himſelf to us in a dream, who are called to wait for the Inſtructions of his Word.

(3.) *IT is our Duty at ſuch a time, to ſet a ſtrict guard on our Senſes.* As the ſenſes are to be employed in our Attendance upon the Word, becauſe in the ordinary diſpenſation, it comes thro' theſe to our Underſtandings: So theſe ſenſes ſtand in need of being looked after, that they in there order be rendred ſerviceable hereunto. Theſe ſenſes are either External or Internal: The latter of theſe may be referred to what was conſidered under the keeping of our minds. And the former nextly comes under our preſent Conſideration. And it is by theſe ſenſes that too frequently diſturbance is given to us in our attention, and we are not a little diſtracted in hearing the Word: and though there is no ſenſe but what may be thus affected, yet the Eye and the Ear are more peculiarly concerned, and therefore to be well watched over: And the *Eye* moſt of all. There are various Objects that open to our ſight, and if they draw our eyes after them, they will readily ſet our Imagination on work, & quite divert us from the preſent buſineſs: for which reaſon he Prays to God on this account among others, Pſal. 119. 37. *Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken thou me in thy way.* The *Ear* alſo is apt to be engaged by every noiſe brought to it, to divert us to the Object, and thereby to put an Interrupting Parentheſis into our Attendance, that renders us incapable of making ſenſe of the things that are ſpoken to us; ſo that though this be the great Senſe of diſcipline, yet without great caution it will give us a Let in our ſo hearing, as is required of us.

3. *TO this Diligence is alſo requiſite, that we carefully apply our rational Powers, to the things that are taught us by the Word of God.* If the Word be a Moral Inſtrument, and is accordingly applied to our Moral Powers, it neceſſarily requires the exerciſe of theſe Powers, and the entertainment which we give to it. And that which is here nextly concerned is our Underſtanding; for as to the Operation of the Will and Affections in this affair, it will come to be conſidered afterwards. Now there are two things about which our Underſtanding is to be exerciſed with care, in our attendance on the Word, *viz.*

(1.) *TO get a right apprehenſion of the true notion of the Truths, that are therein laid open before us.* Though we are not capable of a full comprehenſion of the Myſteries of the Goſpel, yet a diſtinct apprehenſion of the mind or meaning of them, is one great deſign of their being given us; and for the obtaining of which we are to uſe great diligence; this *David* Prays for, Pſal. 119. 18. *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.* And the wiſe man tells us in what way it is to be gained, Prov. 2. 2. &c. *So that thou encline thine ear unto wiſdom, and apply thine heart to underſtanding.* And it is a great buſineſs incumbent on the faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel, to apply themſelves to this purpoſe; as Jer. 3. 15. *And I will give you paſtours according to mine heart, which ſhall feed you with knowledge and underſtanding.* And let perſons take never ſo much pains, in giving their Bodily attendance on the Ordinances, yet if they ſtill abide Ignorant of the things taught to them, they loſe the good of ſuch Attendance. Hence that is charged upon ſome, 2 Tim. 3. 7. *Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.* And we are aſſured that this is the way in which God hath been wont to impart this knowledge to the Children of Men, Pſal. 119. 98. *Thou through thy commandments haſt made me wiſer then mine enemies: for they are ever with me.* And if he had not thus done, he could not have ſaid as, ver. 105. *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*

(2.) *TO make a right Judgment of them.* This belongs to the practical Underſtanding, and without the exerciſe of it, the other will not profit us, but it will evaporate in the Air. And there are two things about which the Judgment is to be employed, viz. The *diſcerning of the truth and reality of them*; without which we ſhall look upon them, as no better than an idle tale, and empty Romance, which we ſhall let in at one ear, and out at another. And the other is *an apprehenſion of the uſefulneſs and neceſſity of them for us*, otherwiſe

wiſe we ſhall be but a very little concerned about them. And this requires the application of them to ourſelves, and that we conſider what influence they have into our well being. He ought therefore to enquire into the Beauty, Excellency, & Pleaſancy of theſe Truths, and the great things contained in them; and till we come to have ſuch an inſight into them, we ſhall but contemn and neglect them.

4. *IT is further required in this Diligence, that we quicken ourſelves to ſerioufneſs in this Attendance, by proper Motives.* There is a Native indiſpoſition to Diligence, and aptitude to ſlothfulneſs in us, by reaſon of indwelling Sin, which maketh it needful for us to uſe endeavours to excite ourſelves to this Induſtry. And here,

(1.) *WE ſhould rouſe ourſelves by the conſideration of the great concern of our Souls in ſo doing.* *Moſes* uſed this Argument with Iſrael, Deut. 32. 46, 47. *And he ſaid unto them, Set your hearts unto all the words which I teſtify among you this day; which ye ſhall command your children to obſerve to do, all the words of this law. For it is not a vain thing for you: becauſe it is your life.* It is by this Word, and theſe Ordinances, that God is pleaſed to treat with us about our Everlaſting Affairs, and if we do not diligently attend theſe, we therein make it evident that we have a low regard to our Souls; than which, what greater diſtraction can we labour of? And could we bear upon our Hearts, the worth of a Soul, and calculate according to that of our Saviour, *Math.* 16. 26. it would put another frame into us.

(2.) *WE ſhould affect our thoughts with an apprehenſion of the Preſence of God, which is peculiarly converſant in the Evangelical Diſpenſations of his Word.* God's Omnipreſence fills the whole World, but there is a more awful Preſence of his in his Aſſemblies: and He, with a critical Eye taketh notice of the frame and deportment with which we entertain his Word, when it is ſet before us, according to his Inſtitution. And ſurely if he be ſo there, he cannot but be diſpleaſed if he obſerves a ſlighty frame of Heart in us, and a wandring Spirit; and will animadvert upon it. Whereas, if we be right in this, he who takes notice of it will approve it, and give us ſome teſtimony of his Acceptance. And this was the frame that *David* endeavoured ever to maintain, *Pſal.* 16. 8.

(3.) *WE ſhould come to hear the Word, with the ſerious Conſideration, that this may be our laſt Opportunity.* We ſhould come to every Ordinance, with ſuch a reflection on ourſelves, that hearing time will ere long be over. And we have no aſſurance that we ſhall have another advantage for this in this World. And we ſee this often verified in others, and why may not our turn come to be the next? And we ſhould think, if we were ſure that this would be our laſt, how ſhould we hear? And let this ſtimulate us to hear accordingly; and except we are horribly ſtupid, it muſt needs put us upon ſerious Attention.

2. *THE next thing that belongs to this Attention, is Preparation.* And indeed, without this Preparation, we ſhall never rightly uſe that Diligence, which we have had under our Conſideration. There is ſo much of Carnality abiding in us, by reaſon of the corrupt part which remains in the Children of God while they are here: And the influence which this hath into all the outward Affairs of Life and Time, which we are called to be converſant with in this World; and our aptneſs to have our Hearts too deeply engaged in, and interchanged with theſe things; that it requires not a little care and induſtry, to get in a readineſs to attend this Duty after a ſpiritual and profitable manner. And he who ruſheth into this Duty, will be in hazard of doing it perfunctorily, and miſs the benefit. And here theſe Things are required,

1. *WE ſhould lay off, not only our outward Buſineſs, but alſo the Incumbrances on our Minds.* Tho' there are more ſolemn practices of this at ſome times, yet there is no time when we are to read or hear the Word, but we ought in order thereto to ſeparate ourſelves from other things, both as to our thought, and actions. It is therefore a remark made, Prov. 18. 1. *Through deſire a man having ſeparated himſelf; ſeeketh and intermeddleth with all wiſdom.* And it becomes us not only to endeavour the maintaining a gracious frame in all our ſecular Buſineſs, which is proper for the keeping them in due ſubordination, that they may no way obſtruct our better Concerns; but we ſhould, when we go about this, bethink ourſelves, that we are now going to ſeek Communion with God, in his Word, in which he is wont to apply himſelf to the Souls of his People; that ſo we may undiſturbedly hear what the Lord hath to ſay to us: And without that we ſhall be confuſed in our preſent buſineſs. And would we thus do, we ſhould likely find more ſweetneſs in every ſuch Opportunity, than others who are here negligent do. And unleſs we do this, we have no reaſon to expect to find our Hearts fixed, when we are actually engaged in this Duty.

2. *WE ſhould get an Heart duly affected with a deſire after, and delight in ſuch Opportunities.* This alſo is a thing neceſſary in our preparing to attend upon the Word, if we would find the good of ſuch Attendance. And beſides the fixed delight in the Word, which we ought to maintain in us, we ſhould particularly raiſe this delight in us, when we are to engage in this Duty: As *David* could ſay in Pſal. 119. 97. *O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.* So he tells us, Pſal. 122. 1. *I was glad when they ſaid unto me, Let us go into the houſe of the Lord.* And there is great reaſon for this, becauſe whenſoever we addreſs our ſelves to this Duty, if we are right, we ſeek after that intimate Communion with God, which he hath given in his

Word

Word for a Medium of our enjoyment of. And that Soul which conſiders, I am now going to meet and converſe with God, cannot but find ſatisfaction in this thought, if ever he hath taſted the ſweetneſs of it.

3. HENCE more peculiarly in our addreſſing our ſelves to attend on the Word Preached, *we ought to endeavour to have ſuch impreſſions on our Minds as may fill us with an holy awe.* We are too apt to go to it as a common thing, and no wonder then if we loſe the benefit of it We ought therefore to ask our own Souls, ſuch ſolemn Interrogations as theſe: *Whither am I now going?* Is it not to the Houſe of God, to the Place where his Honour dwells, to the ſacred Solemnities of his Worſhip, where he peculiarly declares himſelf to be a jealous God? Who will not be put off with an outſide Worſhip, but requires the Heart, and will curiouſly obſerve whether I carry mine with me or no. *What do I go for?* Or what is my Errand thither? What buſineſs have I at this Ordinance? Surely there is ſome aim or deſign which a reaſonable Creature hath in all its deliberate Actions: But it is too obvious that a great many go to the publick Ordinances, that cannot give a rational account of their ſo doing. Hence we have our Saviour upbraiding of them, Math. 11. 7. *And as they departed, Jeſus began to ſay unto the multitude concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderneſs to ſee? A reed ſhaken with the wind.* How few go that they may hear the Word, and God ſpeaking to them in it; but to ſee and be ſeen, and divert themſelves with vain ſights, or Sleep away the time, or what beſt pleaſes their fancies, with ſomething that may tickle them. *What if I ſhould miſs of the ſpiritual good of this Ordinance; and come away unprofited?* There is danger of it; if my vain Heart, and Satan my great Adverſary can obtain, it ſhall be ſo. What need have I then to be ſerious, & keep a ſtrict guard upon my ſelf; and if I get not good by the Word, I ſhall hurt my ſelf; if it be not a ſavour of Life, it will be a ſavour of Death to me. It may be, *this will be the laſt time*, that ever I ſhall hear the Word, and I muſt give an account of it to God another Day; and if I now looſe the Opportunity, I may rue it for ever. They are the Concerns of my Soul and Eternity, that I am now to be engaged in. Such like Meditations as theſe beforehand, are very proper & neceſſary for us, if we would indeed profit by the Means of Grace, and not looſe the ſaving good of them. And all this is requiſite to our Preparation for the Word, eſpecially when ſolemnly to be diſpenſed; and the neglect thereof will be great damage to us.

3. THE laſt thing here required to this Attention, is *Prayer*. Touching the Nature of Prayer, we may have occaſion to Diſcourſe diſtinctly hereafter. The Conſideration of it in this place, is only ſo far as it is to be uſed, as a neceſſary Medium for our ſo attending on the reading or preaching of the Word, as that it may be effectual for the promoving of our Salvation. The Univerſal uſefulneſs of Prayer, in all that a Chriſtian ſets about will be evident, if we conſider that all our aſſiſtance in Duty, and all the good ſucceſs of it intirely depends on his bleſſing, who hath ſaid that *he will be ſought to*, &c. *Ezek.* 36. 37. And in nothing more is this wanting, than in our attendance upon the Word, which is an Inſtrument, that the Spirit alone can ſo wield, as to reach our Hearts ſavingly thereby, 1 *Cor.* 3. 6. And we are to obſerve, that there are both ſet Prayers, and ſuch as are Ejaculatory, proper to be uſed in this Affair by us. And there are three Seaſons, wherein we are to apply our ſelves to Prayer on this account.

1. *WHEN we go to attend upon the Word, either to read it, or to hear it, in the Houſe of God.* And this is requiſite in order to our right Preparation for this; that we obtain that from him, without which we can do nothing aright; and all the Duties that we before obſerved for a right Attention, muſt here be ſought of God, that he will be with us, and give us this help in order thereto. And here we muſt Pray of him that he will fix our thoughts, and call them off from all their wandrings, to which they are ſo prone, that we may intend the preſent buſineſs. We muſt Pray, that he will open the eyes of our Minds, that we may diſcern the Truth as it is in Jeſus; and may have the gracious diſcovery of the Goſpel Myſtery that is contained in the Word; and may not be left to errors and miſtakes, and to pervert the Truths to our own deluſion, but be inſtructed in the way of Life by them: And that he will enable us to receive his Word mixed with Faith, that ſo we may have the ſaving efficacy of it on our ſelves, and live according to it; and that he will keep from us the power of thoſe Temptations that are now apt to aſſail us. And as we ſhould not abruptly attempt to read the Word, without lifting up our Hearts to God for this, ſo we ſhould do it more ſolemnly, when going to publick Ordinances.

2. *WHEN we are attending on the Word.* For though there is now no room for ſet and continued Prayer, for that would be to turn out Duty, and make one to claſh with another, which will hinder inſtead of furthering our profiting. Nevertheleſs, there is room ſufficient for the darting up of our thoughts to Heaven, in ſudden Ejaculations, which will be no impertinent parentheſis in our hearing; but a proper aid of it, and many things will call for it. If we find our Hearts to wander, as we ſhall if we watch them, it is a time to lift up a requeſt to God, that he will fetch them back again, and a new fix them. If we find the life and vigour of our Grace to fail, and we grow cold & flat in our affections, it calls us to lift up a ſigh to God for new quickning & reviving. If we find any prejudice to riſe in our minds againſt any of the

Truths

Truths that are ſet before us, and we are ready to count them hard ſayings, we ſhould groan under, and beg of God that he would give us the victory over it, that it may not be too hard for us: if there be any thing that is too hard for us, and we cannot ſee through it by reaſon of darkneſs, we ſhould ask of him, to give us entrance into the Word, and reveal his Mind to us, and not ſuffer us to be led into any miſtake: And if we find any Truth come home to us, with the raiſing of our Affections, we ſhould bleſs God for it, and pray that it may have its abiding impreſſions. For we muſt have all this from him if ever we have it.

3. *AFTER we have been reading or hearing the Word, it is very proper and ſeaſonable for us to follow it with Prayer over it.* There is an after-improvement of it, which is required of us; which will come afterwards under our Conſideration: And that we may ſo uſe it, it is our duty to addreſs our ſelves to him who only can teach us to profit. And there are ſeveral Articles of Prayer which belong to this; and a ſenſe of our own frailty and dependance, ſhould put us upon being earneſt in this affair. We ſhould pray to God, that he would write this Law of his on our Hearts, and ingrave it on our inward Parts; that he would help us to hide his Word in our Hearts, that we may not ſin againſt him: That he would make this Word of his to be a Light to our feet, and a Lamp to our paths; and enable us to regulate all our ſteps, all our thoughts, words and actions, according to the directs of it: That we may not go away and forget, and ſo looſe the advantage that we have had; but may make it always the Man of our Counſels. And in this way, and by his gracious Aſſiſtance, and Acceptance of us, we ſhall be helped in our Work, and be made to find that Light and Life in his Word, that ſhall help us ſo to order our Converſation aright, as to ſee his Salvation.

SERMON *CCXXVIII.*

II. THE next Duty of ſuch as would read and hear the Word profitably, is *with regard to the Reception or Entertainment that we are to give to it:* We are to receive it *with Faith & Love.* God hath afforded us his Word to be an Inſtrument of our Salvation. Now that it may ſo be, it is not only requiſite that we ſo hear it, as to ſeek the obtaining of an underſtanding of the meaning of it, and of the great Articles that are contained in it, without which we cannot practice it: Hence that in Hoſ. 4. 6. *My people are deſtroyed for lack of knowledge.* But alſo that we improve it to all the uſes by which it may become ſerviceable to lead us in the right way to Salvation. For which end there is another ſtep intervening, which conſiſts in the manner of the Entertainment which we give it: And this is it that comes under our preſent Conſideration. And here two Things lye before us, viz. 1. The thing it ſelf required; *to receive it.* 2. The right and genuine manner of this; *with Faith and Love.* A few words to each of theſe may ſuffice.

1. THE thing it ſelf required, viz. *to receive it.* The reception here required, ſtands in oppoſition to the rejection of it; complaint whereof is often made in the Scriptures, in regard to ſuch to whom it is offered. It is alſo oppoſed to the putting of it away, and refuſing to imbrace it. Hence we have ſuch Charges made againſt ſome, *Joh.* 1. 11. Act. 13. 46. *Then Paul & Barnabas waxed bold, and ſaid, It was neceſſary that the word of God ſhould firſt have been ſpoken to you: but ſeeing ye put it from you, and judge your ſelves unworthy of everlaſting life; lo, we turn to the Gentiles.* And elſewhere. Nor are ſuch only guilty of this, who turn their backs upon it, or ſtop their ears againſt it, rage at and blaſpheme it, and perſecute ſuch as bring it to them: Which manner of entertainment how often do we find the *Prophets* of old, and the *Apoſtles* in the days of the Goſpel met withal from Men to whom they were ſent to proclaim and open the way of Salvation to ſinful Men: But there are many more who make a fair ſhew, and uſe plauſible pretences, that will be found guilty of this Sin. But this will be more diſtinctly diſcovered, by the right Conſideration of the next thing. Hence,

2. WE may take notice of the right and genuine manner of this; which we have expreſt in two things,

1. *WE are to receive it with Faith.* Not but that it is the duty of all that come within the reach of the Goſpel promulgation, to attend upon the diſpenſation of it; and it will be a moral evil to neglect it: But ſtill, that it may obtain the proper uſefulneſs of it, we muſt exerciſe Faith in receiving it; for we can have no other hand ſo to do, ſo long as we are deſtitute of this. We are for this reaſon told, what was the reaſon why the Word proved unprofitable to them, Heb. 4. 2. *For unto us was the goſpel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.* And it is by unbelief that Men do put away the Word which is declared to them. Unbelief ſhuts up the heart againſt it. We are therefore told, who they were that did receive Chriſt, Joh. 1. 12. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to them that believe on his name.* And in this Faith, there are more eſpecially theſe things contained,

1. *A receiving of the Word with a Divine Credit, as the Word of God.* This is uſually called the Faith of Aſſent; though every aſſent that is given, will not amount to the Faith which is here required at our hands; for it is a Faith that doth not only influence our Underſtanding, but it alſo purifieth the Heart, and works powerfully on the Will

and Affections, *Act.* 15.9. Beſides, that there is a rational aſſent which may be given to many Truths of the Word of God, by the light of Nature, and Convictions of a natural Conſcience, which tells us, theſe things muſt needs be ſo, and that peculiarly in regard of moral Duties, the impreſſion whereof abides in the natural Man, through the relicks of the Law that are in him: As is evident from Rom. 2. 14, 15. *For when the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, theſe having not the law, are a law unto themſelves: Which ſhew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conſcience alſo bearing witneſs, and their thoughts the mean while accuſing, or elſe excuſing one another.* But this is grounded on the Divine Teſtimony, and he receives it as the Word of God, and believes it becauſe God is true. Joh. 3. 33. *He that hath received his teſtimony, hath ſet to his ſeal that God is true.* And it hath this Character on it, that it is Univerſal; he not only believes, becauſe he comprehends the things, and ſees through them; but alſo believes ſuch things as are myſterious, and tranſcend his reaſonings, and that becauſe they are ſpoken by God, who is Truth itſelf: and upon that account he is perſwaded, that it is the higheſt reaſon for him to give a full and indubitable aſſent to them.

(2) *AN entertaining of it, as the only rule of Life.* That it is ſo to fallen Man is certain, as was formerly obſerved. And if we receive it as the Word of God, we do it with a reſpect to it, as it is propoſed to us. Now God gave it to us, that it might be our directory how to live and pleaſe him, and obtain deliverance from Miſery. This was not known till God ſaw meet to reveal it; and this Revelation is made to us in and by the Word. Hence that, Pſal. 147. 20. *He hath not dealt ſo with any nation; and as for his judgments, they have not known them: Praiſe ye the Lord.* And *Joh.* 5. 39. And except we believe it to be ſuch, and accordingly apply our ſelves to it for that end, and truſt to the conduct of that, and of no other Rule, to guide us in the way Everlaſting, (but truſt to other Rules,) we do indeed reject it: and whatever credit we give to it, yet if we do not count it the only unerring Platform of Faith & Obedience, we receive it not in truth or ſincerity. He therefore acknowledgeth, Pſal. 19. 11. *Moreover, by them is thy ſervant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.*

(3.) *AN entertaining of Chriſt himſelf, as he is exhibited and offered to us in it.* The great end of the Word, is to reveal Chriſt to us, as the Author of Eternal Salvation, and conſequently the Object of our Faith & Reliance So that evermore, together with the Credit which we give to the Word, we adventure upon him ſo revealed, and reſt our whole hope on him; Affiance as well as Aſſent is inſeperable from this Faith; for we are aſſured that, &c. Pſal. 9. 10. *And they that know thy name will put their truſt in thee: for thou, Lord, haſt not forſaken them that ſeek thee.* And they that do not entertain Chriſt in the Word, do not cordially entertain that. And not only ſo, but alſo we take all the Meaſures of our believing in him, from the Word: by that we underſtand what manner of a Perſon he is, what Offices he is inveſted withal, how able he is to ſave, in what way we may come to a title to him in order to our receiving this Benefit from him: All this belongs to the Revelation of the Word, nor, can we be ſaid to accept of that, unleſs we do together with it, embrace him with all our Souls, as the Author of Eternal Life: and adventure the whole weight of our Confidence on him.

(4.) *A firm and reſolute adherence to the Word, and adventuring of ourſelves for Eternity upon it.* The Juſt is ſaid to live by his Faith; and as the word of Revelation is that which informs us in the matters which we are to believe, ſo the word of Promiſe is to confirm us in our expectation of the Life which we hope for; and for this reaſon it is called the Word of Life: when therefore, together with the Revelation of Chriſt in his Alſufficiency, on which we believe him to be able to ſave us to the uttermoſt, we receive him as offered to be ours in the promiſe, and ſo take him at his word, as to reſolve to truſt in him forever, and look no whither elſe for Eternal Life; and all of this properly belongs to that Faith which is neceſſary for our true Profiting by the Word; and till we have gained ſuch a Faith, we cannot draw the vertue out of the Word, which will make it ſaving to us. Though ſtill it is a Duty to wait for this Faith in our attendance upon the Word.

2. WE are to receive it with *Love.* Faith and Love are exhibited in the Goſpel, as comprehending the whole Religion of fallen Man under them, 2 Tim. 1. 13. *Hold faſt the form of ſound words, which thou haſt heard of me, in faith and love which is in Chriſt Jeſus.* Now in the Word of God which is delivered to us, there are the Credenda and the Facienda: and accordingly, the Spirit of God puts theſe Graces into ſuch, to whom he will Bleſs the Word, ſo as to be effectually an Inſtrument of their Salvation; and theſe are infuſed into us, as he pleaſeth, as Principles by the exerciſe whereof we may rightly entertain the Word. As therefore we give a ſuitable reception to the *Credenda* by *Faith*, ſo we are diſpoſed to proſecute the *Facienda* by *Love.* *Love* in its proper Signification, intends the *Primitive cloſing Affection*, which in a Reaſonable Creature is an Inſtrument of the Will, in the performance of its Imperate Actions: and ſo it ſtands in direct Oppoſition to hatred, which is the Prime ſeparating Affection, which alſo ſerves the Will in its rejecting that which is ingrateful to it; and for this cauſe, it is frequently uſed in the Scriptures Metonymically for the whole of that New Obedience which God requires of Men in and by the Goſpel; and that becauſe this Sincere Love

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is the root and ſpring from which all true Obedience derives, and without it, all that Men pretend to, is Superficial and Hypocritical. Now, in as much as the Word of God is the Rule of this Obedience, there is a Love of it which is neceſſary in order to its obtaining of this, deſign in us and by us. And this Love always purſues that Faith which we before conſidered: for as we cannot Love a thing without an Apprehenſion of the Aimiableneſs of it, ſo we cannot rightly apprehend it, unleſs we exerciſe our Faith about it.

NOW to our receiving of the Word with Love, there are theſe things requiſite,

(1.) *A Cordial delight in thoſe Means & Ordinances, by which God imparts his mind to us, which is declared in his Word.* It is in the Word that all ſaving Truths are contained. But for our better being acquainted with them, he hath appointed as our diligent reading of it, ſo thoſe Ordinances in which we are to be Inſtructed in the mind & meaning of it, and by which we may be called upon, counſelled, quickened and directed in the right Improvement thereof. If then we have a Love for the Word itſelf, this will kindle in us a Love to thoſe means; if ever we did receive any ſpiritual good by it, the ſenſe of that, will fill us with precious tho'ts of theſe means, by which we receive it. Theſe will thus be made precious to us, and we ſhall count it a ſpecial and diſtinguiſhing favour of God that he hath ſeen meet to indulge us with theſe things. By this the Pſalmiſt proved his ſincerity on this account, Pſal. 26. 8. *Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy houſe, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.* We ſhall look upon our ſelves as more highly Priviledged by this, than if we had all the Worlds deſirables; and accordingly, it will make us joyfully to attend on the Opportunities of waiting upon theſe Ordinances, and make the Word very ſweet & pleaſant to us: As he, *Pſal.* 119. 72, 103. It will cauſe us to chuſe to go to an Ordinance, rather than to the moſt deſirable worldly Diverſion; for it is certain, that the Object of Love is Attractive, and we are moſt pleaſed when we are moſt Converſant with that which hath the greateſt room in our hearts; and we ſhall be able to make the profeſſion of him, *Pſal.* 84. 4. & 65. 4.

(2.) *A cheerful Acquieſcence in all thoſe things that are made known to us by the Word.* We then Love the Word aright, when we love it for the matter of it; not for the Language or Phraſe of it, but for the things that are contained in it. A rational Love is proportioned to the Excellency we diſcover in the Object: and it is for that which we value the Word before all other humane Writings. It is the great things of the Law that commend it to our deſire and choiſe, and if we diſcern not the greatneſs of them, we ſhall undervalue them, Hoſ. 8. 12. *I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a ſtrange thing.* It is the goodneſs of any thing that makes it lovely, and therefore, as if we Love the Law, we love all that is in it, ſo the reaſon why we ſo do, is becauſe we account it to be all lovely. And except we Love the whole Word, we do not truly Love any of it, for there is the ſame ſtamp of Lovelineſs upon it all. Now in the Word, there are Precepts, Promiſes, Threatnings, Diſcoveries of Man's Miſery by Nature, and of the way to recover true Bleſſedneſs. Now all theſe are precious to ſuch as Love the Word, whereas others may have a carnal liking to ſome, but are as much prejudiced at others. Whereas there is a preciouſneſs in all, and he who Loves the Word for its own ſake, and as it is the Word of God, becauſe he ſees a Beauty and Glory in it all; and he finds, that the Precepts as well as the Promiſes, the Diſcovery of Man's Miſery, as well as thoſe of the way of Life, are made ſervicable to the Advancing of the ſame end, the Glory of God, & our Salvation.

(3.) *A Compleat ſatisfaction in Chriſt, as he is diſcovered to us in and by the Word.* It is none of the leaſt excellencies of the Word, that in it Chriſt is made known to ſinful Men, as the only Redeemer & Saviour of Sinners. And as this commends the Word to our eſteem, becauſe it ſhews us a Chriſt, who elſe had not been known by us, ſo in it we have him repreſented to us in Orient Colours, in which he is exhibited as one that is altogether Lovely; and it is certain, that the more we diſcern of Chriſt, with a Spiritual diſcerning, the more will our Hearts be raviſhed with him. Let us then enquire for Chriſt in every Page, and ſo fix our Contemplations upon him, as to be raviſhed with the ſight of him; ſo as to deſpiſe all the raviſhing Glories of the World, in compariſon of him; and then we may be aſſured that we have a genuine Love for the Word, when our Love to him, is by it raiſed into an Unquenchable flame; and we are enabled to ſay, Cant. 2. 3. *As the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, ſo is my beloved among the ſons. I ſat down under his ſhadow with great delight, and his fruit was ſweet to my taſte.*

(4.) *AN entire reſignation to the Conduct of the Word, as the Rule of our Obedience.* We obſerved, that Love is, in Scripture Language put for Obedience, becauſe it is the inward Principle from which all ſincere Obedience is acted. Now as this is the Principle, ſo the Word is the Rule of it; and our Love to it is that reſpect we bear to it as ſuch: Hence that, *Pſal.* 119. 6. So that then only do we entertain it with a right Love, when we lean not to our own Underſtanding, nor ſubject ourſelves to the Conduct of any other Rule either in whole or in part; but in all things make it our Counſellour, and walk always in the light of it, as that which only can guide our ſteps in the Paths of Peace, & can truly ſay of it as Pſal. 119. 105.

III. *THE laſt Duty mentioned as required of ſuch as would Read and Hear it Profitably, is*

with regard to the Improvement that we are to make of it. And this alſo comprehends two things in it, *viz.* that we *lay it up in our Hearts*, and *practice it in our Lives.* The Word of God contains in it, the Rule of the Chriſtian Religion, which is to ſhew us how we may Pleaſe God, and obtain Eternal Salvation; and theſe things are truly practical. And although it contains in it many Theoreſtical Truths, which are diſcovered by it, and but for it had never been known, yet all theſe are leading to Practice, and not one of them terminates in Theory, but every Rule of it is a Rule of Life, and points us how we may Live and Pleaſe God. And tho' we muſt Know in order to our doing, yet our true Happineſs centers not in our knowing, but in our doing according to it; *Joh.* 13. 17. And indeed, that without this, will be ſo far from advancing our true Bleſſedneſs, that it will aggravate our Miſery; *Luk.* 12.47. Now we are here informed, that there are two things to be attended by us, if we would rightly make the proper improvement of the Word.

1. *WE muſt lay it up in our Hearts.* This is neceſſary in order to that which follows, we muſt *lay up* if we would *lay out.* This is therefore frequently urged in the Scriptures, *Prov.* 2. 1. 7. 1. and elſewhere; and the Pſalmiſt makes that Declaration, Pſal. 119. 11. *Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee.* It is a Metaphor taken from ſuch as have a thing, which is to them of great worth, they lay it up ſafe, that it may not be loſt, and reſerve it for their uſe, as a thing moſt precious, and which they cannot do without. The Word of God is a rich Treaſure, and ſo every gracious one accounts it; it *is life*, as, Deut. 4. 13. And there are thoſe Adverſaries who would rob him of it, if poſſible; He is therefore concerned to be very careful in preſerving of it. The Phraſe alſo intimates, that it is not enough to Read or Hear the Word, but we muſt have a Repoſitory for it; and there is nothing ſo meet for it, as the Heart is. Now this laying it up in the Heart, implies ſeveral things in it. The word Heart is uſed for the Soul, and ſo either for all faculties and powers of it, or for any one of them ſeverally. And we may here take it moſt extenſively, and ſo there are theſe things included in it.

(1.) *A getting of it into the Underſtanding.* And this is done by uſing of endeavours to know the mind & meaning of it. And this is not only by a meer knowledge of the Grammar and Logick of it, which a Man may have, and yet not underſtand the Word, as it is a rule of Life; and yet it is our Duty to labour to have a clear diſcerning of the form of ſound Words, 2 *Tim.* 1. 13. and to have a firm perſwaſion of the Truth, and to know the Truth as it is in Jeſus; and the ſeat of this is the Underſtanding. And this is the proper fruit of our right Attendance upon it, whereby our ſanctified Underſtanding is furniſhed.

(2.) *A laying it up in the Will by a free cloſure with it, in an intire Approbation and Choice.* When the Excellency of it is diſcovered, it raiſeth in him an high Opinion, cauſing him to prefer it above Gold and Rubies, and accordingly to fix his Choice of it, and take it for an Inheritance, Pſal. 119. 30. *I have choſen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me.* And *ver.* 72. 111. And this is done when we have ſubmitted our whole Soul to the Direction and Command of the Word in all things. We then entertain the Word in our Wills, when we lay aſide our own, and allow it the throne in our Hearts, and reſolve that we will yield full Obedience to it.

(3.) *A cloſe union of our Affections to the Word of God:* Whereby we make the neareſt application of it to our Hearts. When the Word of God is gotten intirely into the Affections, it is then laid up in the Heart, and this is a proper influence from the former. When the Will hath entertained ſo high an Opinion of a thing, as to make a full choice of it, it opens it ſelf by the Affections, to let it in: for by the cloſing Affections, the Soul is glewed to its Object; and the Word of God is ſo much in our Hearts, as it finds a room in thoſe Affections, which do imbrace, and as it were incircle it. And this appears partly by a longing deſire after it, which goes out to fetch it in. Hence that, Pſal. 119. 20. *My ſoul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times.* Partly by an exuberance of Joy and Contentment, when it hath it in poſſeſſion, wherein it declares the fulneſs of ſatisfaction which it takes in it, Pſal. 119. 162. *I rejoyce at thy word as one that findeth great ſpoil.*

(4.) *A laying it up in the Conſcience*: Which is by making it the Judge of all our Actions; of our Thoughts, Words and Deeds. He that hath reſigned up his Conſcience intirely to the Word of God, to be regulated by it, hath laid it up in his Heart: And it is then ſtored in the Conſcience, when we Conſciencioufly refer our whole Converſation to it: When we make it the rule to meaſure all Actions by, and reſolve to lay every thing by it, and bring it to the Teſt of it, and to receive or reſent it according as, upon Examination, it agrees to it, or diſagrees with it: As Pſal. 119. 105. *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my paths.*

(5.) *A laying of it up in our Memory.* This is called a keeping a thing in the Heart. The Memory in Man, tho' reckoned to the ſenſible part, is a uſeful Inſtrument of the rational Soul, to lay up thoſe things in for our uſe, and is therefore reckoned to the Heart. It is the Conſervatory of things, but for which Inſtruction would be uſeleſs, and what we remember not, we do not know practically: If a Man read or hear never ſo much, yet if he forgets it, it is to him as if it had never been. Hence, Pſal. 119. 16. *I will delight my ſelf in thy ſtatutes: I will not forget thy word.*

(6.) HENCE

(6.) *HENCE the reſultancy of this, is a frequent reflection on, and meditation of the Word, ſo read or heard.* He that keeps a thing in his Thoughts, keeps it in his Heart, and the more frequently we call thoſe things to mind, and ruminate upon them, the more ſecure we are againſt the danger of forgetting them. This is the way to have them ſunk deep into our Hearts; this freſhens the Memory, and enlivens the Affections: Whereas ſeldom thinking on things, is the ready way in a while to loſe them. We therefore find that *David* took this courſe, to keep the Love of God freſh on his Heart, Pſal. 119 48. *Mine eyes prevent the night-watches, that I might meditate in thy word.* And *ver.* 97, 98, 99. And one great end of our laying up the Word in our Hearts, is that it may be near us, and we may maintain a conſtant familiarity with it.

2. *WE muſt practice it in our Lives.* And this is the great end to which all the things that went before are to ſerve, and without it the benefit of it will be loſt. Tho' knowledge is neceſſary in order to practice, yet bleſſedneſs is entailed upon doing: As, Joh. 13. 17. *If ye know theſe things, happy are ye if ye do them.* And this ariſeth neceſſarily from the nature and end of the Word. It is a Rule to direct us in the way to bleſſedneſs. Now a Rule can no further influence our felicity, than as it is improved in the Life, and conformed unto. And though it is uſually diſtributed into things to be believed, and things to be done, yet in the Faith it ſelf there is ſomething to be done; for there is an application of our ſelves in it, to conformity to the Precept that is given us to believe, and that is practical. Now to this Practice, there are theſe things that do appertain,

(1.) *A proving of all things by the Word, in order to Practice.* All humane Actions are under the Cognizance of ſome Law, with reſpect to which they are either right or wrong, and the Man either ſerves God in them, or ſins againſt him. For tho' ſome things are in themſelves matters of liberty, yet in our application to them, our action about them is not indifferent, but God is either known or diſhonoured thereby. The Word of God is that to which we are to reduce theſe; and either do or abſtain from doing according as that directs us. If we inquire not, we cannot act aright, and if we inquire at any other Oracle, we ſhall be in hazzard to be miſtaken. Hence that, Iſai. 8. 20. *To the law and to the teſtimony: if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them.* When we go about to do any thing, we ſhould ask, Shall I pleaſe God or diſpleaſe him in caſe I do it? And this muſt be reſolved by the Word of God. Our carnal reaſon is depraved and calls good evil, and if followed will miſlead us; and he that leans to his own Underſtanding is not wiſe. Man hath in him a power of deliberation, and God hath given us his Word to be the Man of our Counſel, and it is the only way of ſafety to keep cloſe to it. And for us to expect extraordinary Impulſes, and take our meaſures from them, without referring them to the Word of God for the Tryal of them, is the way to be miſled.

(2.) *A trying of all that we have done by it, in order to our right judging of ourſelves.* There is ſo much of Sin abiding in us, and through darkneſs and inadvertency we often miſtake, and take wrong ſteps, which ought to be rectified; and if we have done that which is right, is proper for us that we be ſatisfied in it, that we have the Conſolation of it. And Conſcience is put into us, not only to direct our way, but alſo to reflect upon it, and make a Judgment of it, and unleſs we thus improve it, we muſt needs walk very blindly. Now this muſt be done by applying of the Word to our Actions, and trying of them accordingly. Hence that, Pſal. 119 59. *I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy teſtimonies.* And there is no other Rule that will be ſufficient to determine us in this caſe, but we ſhall be expoſed to error. There is a Repentance to be carried on in the People of God, as well as to be laid in the Unregenerate. It is our Duty to turn from Sin, and arm againſt it for the future, and every Sin that we are overtaken by, calls for it; and would we know how to do this, we muſt take the Word for our Admonition. Hence that is one Commendation of it, Pſal 19. 11. *Moreover, by them is thy ſervant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.*

(3.) *A quickning of ourſelves to Duty, and the reſiſtance of Sin by it.* As the Word of God is the Rule of our living, ſo it is the great motive to excite us to our work, and caution us againſt the neglect of it: in it therefore are the motives offered to encourage us in the doing of Duty, and avoidance of that which is ſinful, and thoſe ſuch as are no where elſe to be found. If we conſult Fleſh and Blood they will tell us the ways of Godlineſs are Difficult, Unpleaſant, Dangerous, and the way of Sin Pleaſant, Eaſy and Profitable. But the Word of God aſſures us, that the way of Holineſs is the only way to Safety here, and to Glory hereafter. And that the way of Sin, tho' broad and eaſy, yet will lead to Deſtruction, and leave us Miſerable forever. And what greater incentives can be thought of, to move a reaſonable Creature, to quicken & awe him, than ſuch as have an aſpect on Eternity?

(4.) *THE arming of us againſt all Temptations that we are liable unto.* We live in the midſt of Snares and Traps that are laid in our way, and that ſecretly to enſnare us and lead us into Miſchief, and they are very cunningly offered, and attended with all flattering inſinuations, which are too ready to deceive us, and impoſe on our Credulity: But the Word of God, is here alſo to be uſed, if we would be able to diſcern the wiles, and withſtand the offers, and overcome. This was the Armour which Chriſt himſelf made

made uſe of, & with which he reſiſted & vanquiſhed Satan in his Aſſaults, *Matth.* 4. And there is no Sword like it: it cuts aſunder at once, the carnal Arguings of the Fleſh, by ſhewing us that this is the mind of God, which he expects our conformity to: And it at once cuts the throat of that plea from the carnal delight in it, by aſſuring us that we Sin if we do it, and what we are to expect if we do ſo, Gen. 39. 9. *How then can I do this great wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God.*

USE. *LET this quicken us all, to take heed to our ſelves, how we read and hear the Word of God.* And accordingly, let us take the hint of the Directions given us in the Premiſes. And let us remember, that there is an awful Account that we ſhall ere long be called unto for the Word afforded us, and what Improvement we have made of it. By our enjoyment of it we are advantaged with the proper Means of Salvation, which thoſe that have it not are without. But if we do not thus carefully improve it, it will not profit us; and this very Word will riſe up againſt us another Day to our Condemnation.

SERMON *CCXXIX.*

QUESTION XCI.

HOW do the Sacraments become effectual means of Salvation?

ANSWER.

THE Sacraments, become effectual means of Salvation, not from any vertue in them, or in him that doth adminiſter them; but only by the Bleſſing of CHRIST, and the Working of His SPIRIT in them that by Faith receive them.

WE have taken an account of the firſt of theſe Outward and Ordinary Means, whereby Chriſt communicateth to the Elect, the benefits of Redemption, viz. the *Word*; it now follows that we paſs to the ſecond, which is the *Sacraments*. I muſt confeſs, that the Method followed by the Authors of the Catechiſm, ſeems to be Cryptical. Out of doubt, the natural Order of things requires, that we firſt inquire into the Nature of the thing, and know what it is, in order to our further Satisfaction about the nature and manner of its Operations. Here therefore for the better reſolution of the matter before us, it is neceſſary to offer ſomething Preliminarily, tho' we reſerve the more full Diſquiſition of this matter for the next Enquiry.

AND here, touching the Word *Sacrament*, it is acknowledged, not to be uſed expreſly in the Word of God, but hath been made uſe of in the Church, to expreſs ſomething which is pointed to in the Word of God; and it hath been ſo improved time out of mind; as there are other words that are not in the letter in holy Writ, but are by cuſtom made neceſſary to be improved, the better to communicate to us the things which they are uſed for. But the word it ſelf hath been ſo uſed by the *Ancients*, and ſo abuſed by the *Papiſts*, that it needs a diſtinct Conſideration. The *Fathers* ſometimes uſed it more laxly, and ſo they called every Myſtery in Religion a Sacrament; and on that account the Vulgar Tranſlation, where-ever the word Myſtery is uſed, do render it *Sacramentum*; which hath introduced great Errors into the Viſible Church. But we know that the Primitive Fathers were alſo wont to put a more narrow ſenſe upon the Word, and uſed it, for the *Seals of the Covenant*. The word is borrowed from the Ancient Romans, and refers to the Military Oath that was given to their Soldiers when they were liſted in the Army, which they called *Sacramentum*; in which, together with their ſolemn binding themſelves by Oath, to be true and faithful to their Service & Subjection, they laid down a Pledge, or performed a certain Rite, for the Confirmation of it; and from this it is applied by Chriſtians, to ſignify the outward Signs and Seals of the New Covenant, together with the Spiritual meaning of them: And this is the thing which now comes under Conſideration; a more full Explication whereof will come afterwaid. We may therefore take a brief account of the matter contained in the Anſwer. And here,

1. *IT is ſuppoſed that theſe Sacraments are Means appointed for the promoving of the Salvation of ſinful Men.* As God hath ordained ſome of fallen *Adam*'s Poſterity, to obtain Eternal Life by Jeſus Chriſt, ſo he hath laid out the Means that are to be uſed in order to the bringing it about. And as the Salvation of Sinners depends on him, ſo the way wherein it may be obtained by them depends on his good pleaſure. This then is one of thoſe Media. And this ſeems to acquaint us for what purpoſe theſe are to be uſed by us; as alſo what Obligation all that would nouriſh a good hope of Salvation in them, are under, to make uſe of theſe Means in order thereto. And if this uſe be neglected, all other pretences about them will be vain.

2. *IT is alſo ſuppoſed that theſe Sacraments, as Means, are made effectual for Salvation*: That there is ſuch an efficacy which accompanies them, as produceth this effect in the Subjects of participation. And it would be an impeachment of the Wiſdom of God, if he ſhould appoint Means for an End, to which they are no way ſerviceable. And the whole Service

Service of Means, as ſuch, is to promote the end they were deſigned for. We are not to ſuppoſe, that they muſt attain this end, in all with whom they are uſed, or elſe God muſt loſe the Glory of them: And it is evident, that many that have them are not ſaved by them, and yet there ſhall a Glory redound from that alſo unto God, 2 Cor. 2. 15, 16. *For we are unto God a ſweet ſavour of Chriſt, in them that are ſaved, and in them that periſh. To the one we are the ſavour of death unto death, and to the other, the ſavour of life unto life.* But as this was the prime reaſon of God's appointing the means, becauſe he had purpoſed the Salvation of Sinners, and would uſe them for that end; ſo except there be thoſe to whom theſe are ſerviceable unto Eternal Life, this end is wholly loſt.

3. WE may obſerve, *that as the purchaſing of Salvation for us belonged to Chriſt alone. ſo the Application of it to us, belongs to the Holy Spirit.* In which Application there are two things to be conſidered, viz. the putting of them into a ſtate of Salvation by Converſion, and the preſerving of them in this ſtate unto perfect Salvation. And we ſhall find that there are the Means appointed by God, for both of theſe; and indeed, there are none of the Means, but are uſeful to each of theſe purpoſes, among a profeſſing People: Altho' it muſt be confeſſed by all, that the Sacrament of the Supper is no Converting Ordinance, for the bringing over of a Gentile People to the Chriſtian Faith; and in no other ſenſe can that Aſſertion be truly underſtood.

4. WE may obſerve, *that the Sacraments, as Means, are to be conſidered, not as Separate from, but as in Conjunction with the Word to which they are annexed.* We before obſerved, that the principal Medium of this, is the Word of God; by which we are ſaid to be begotten, and by which we do grow. And here it is very certain, that the Sacraments are given to confirm the Covenant of Grace, and to ratify the Articles of it, and are to that end to be improved, if uſed aright: for which reaſon they are to be uſed in Concomitancy with the Word, in which the Covenant it ſelf is exhibited, and by which alone we can know what it is that is Sealed in the Sacrament.

5. HENCE it follows, *that the Efficacy of them to Salvation, is by eſtabliſhing & confirming us on that Covenant, and promoting of the Grace of it in us.* And becauſe Sacraments are Seals of the Covenant, they preſume that there is ſuch a Connection, and that the Perſons ſo Sealed are under that Covenant which is by this confirmed. But then, that we be not miſtaken, we muſt obſerve, that as there are ſome who are only in the Covenant by an external Profeſſion, ſo there are others who are in it alſo, by a cordial Reſignation. Hence we have that diſtinction, Rom. 9. 6. *Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Iſrael, which are of Iſrael.* Now, how far the Sacraments may be made effectual on the former for their Converſion, by the Co-operation of the Spirit, I ſhall not here inquire: But our preſent Inquiry is only about the way and manner of their Operation on God's Elect, for the bringing of them to Eternal Life. That they are thus made effectual to God's Choſen, is denied by none that call themſelves Chriſtians, but ſuch as are gotten in their vain conceit above Ordinances and Means, and pretend only to immediate Inſpirations. But about the manner of this there are no ſmall debates between us and our Popiſh Adverſaries. I deſign not to enter the Liſts here, but only to eſtabliſh the Truth of this matter, according to the Rules laid down in the Word of God. And all that is requiſite to be ſaid to this, is fully comprehended in the words of the Anſwer which we have before us. And this is laid down both Negatively, and Affirmatively: Which may be conſidered,

1. *NEGATIVELY:* And this expreſt in two Things,

1. *NOT by any Vertue in them.* The meaning of this is, that the things themſelves, or the Signs or Elements appointed have not any natural Vertue in them as ſuch, that is ſuited to the producing of ſuch an effect in the Subject recipient. There is no natural connection between Water, Bread, and Wine, or any of thoſe things that were made uſe of in the Old Teſtament, to produce or promove ſaving Grace in him that receiveth them. And here we are to diſtinguiſh between a vertue *in them*, and a vertue *accompanying of them:* The one is Natural, but the other is Supernatural, the one is Phyſical, the other Moral. Now, as it is certain, that all the Means which God uſeth for the Converſion and Salvation of Sinners, have not that in themſelves alone, which will produce this effect, no not the Word it ſelf, ſo more peculiarly is this to be applied to Sacraments; and that becauſe they are only Signs and Seals, whoſe Operation cannot be *natural*, but only *moral.*

AND it is certain, that the Grace of the New Covenant, is not ſo united to the Sacraments, that every one that receives them muſt needs with it participate in that Grace, the contrary to which is abundantly evident in Multitudes to whom they become Inſtrumental of their Damnation. And we know, that all the Elements that are uſed in the Sacraments, are Corporeal things, which cannot have any power in themſelves to confer Grace, which is of a ſpiritual nature. Beſides, that the Elements ſo uſed & ſeparated, are the ſame in kind, and of an equal natural vertue, with the reſt of the kind; and if it were from the nature of the thing, common Water, Bread, and Wine, would as well ſerve to this end, as that which is Conſecrated, which no Man of ſenſe dare to affirm. Moreover, if the uſe of theſe under the conſideration of their being Signs and Seals, is of an arbitrary Inſtitution, they muſt have their

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uſe from that ſeparation and dedication, whereby they are arbitrarily diſtinguiſhed from other things, which properly belongs to arbitrary Signs. And to add no further here, the Subjects of the Adminiſtration, is ſuppoſed to have already the Grace, to which it is a Seal. And hence when this Vertue is at any time aſcribed to the Sacraments, it is a Sacramental ſort of Language, frequently uſed in the Scriptures. And tho' the Grace is ſet before Men in theſe Signs, yet it is ſo only objectively, and morally to excite them to receive it; which is a thing very different from their doing of it naturally.

2. *NOR by any Vertue in Him that Adminiſtreth them.* Here alſo there is much noiſe made to no purpoſe. But we may take the account of this matter in two Particulars,

(1.) *IT doth not depend upon the State of the Perſon Adminiſtring.* Too many make a great deal more of this than they ought: For tho' it is true, that all good Chriſtians will deſire that their Miniſters ſhould be Godly Men, and ſuch as are notoriouſly Scandalous, ought to be put by from the diſpenſing of the Holy Things of God's Houſe; yet the Vertue of the Ordinances diſpenſed by them, hath not its dependance upon their being Gracious: if it did, no Chriſtian could exerciſe his Faith for the benefit of any Ordinance, but muſt abide in ſuſpenſe, whether it doth him good or no; and that becauſe, tho' he may have good grounds of Charity to believe that he is a truly Godly Man, yet he may be miſtaken in thoſe grounds, and he may be for all an Unregenerate Man. But as, if he were the moſt gracious Man on Earth, and did moſt heartily deſire to impart ſaving good to thoſe he diſpenſeth to, yet he can do nothing of it, 1 Cor. 3. 5,6,7. *Who then is Paul, and who is Apollo, but miniſters by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollo watered: but God gave the increaſe. So then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth: but God that giveth the increaſe.* So if he be the moſt unworthy, and himſelf a ſtranger to the Grace of God, yet this cannot hinder the Operation of Grace by and with the Ordinances, though the outward act of it comes through his hands.

(2.) *NOR is it from the actual Intention of the Perſon who Adminiſtreth.* It is true, it is the duty of all Goſpel Miniſters to carry this deſign in all their Miniſterial acts, that God may be glorified, and Souls may be furthered to Salvation; and any further than they do ſo, they will not be accepted with God, but condemned. But this, tho' it may hurt them, yet it ſhall not hinder, but God will promove the intended Benefit thereby. Our Adverſaries indeed place much upon this, and would perſwade us, that if he that Adminiſtreth, hath not a cordial Intention to Adminiſter it for the end that Chriſt Inſtituted it, that Sacrament ceaſeth to be a Sacrament. But this is to make it to depend on the preſent frame of the Man, ſo that tho' in all the Externals of it, he Adminiſters according to Goſpel-Inſtitution, it is void, and can do no good, for want of this Intention. But this labours of the ſame fault with the other, and falls under the ſame Exceptions, and it is alike pernicious. It gives more to Man than is his due, and ſo far allows him the diſpoſal of Grace, as that it muſt depend on his Intentions; by which we may make void an Ordinance of Chriſt, which is abſurd. And by this means, no Chriſtian can ever tell, whether he hath been at an Ordinance or no; for how ſhall he know the heart, thoughts, and deſigns of him that diſpenſeth it. *Paul* ſeems to be quite of another mind, when he uſeth thoſe words, Phil. 1.15, &c. *Some indeed preach Chriſt even of envy & ſtrife, and ſome alſo of good will.* But theſe Things will farther appear in the next. Hence,

2. *AFFIRMATIVELY.* And here we are to obſerve Three Things that do concur to the rendring of the Sacraments effectual, for the Advancement of this great end of it.

1. *IT derives from the Bleſſing of Chriſt.* This is to be underſtood generally with reſpect to the Sacraments themſelves. There are many that deſpiſe them *profeſſedly*, and that becauſe of the carnal Elements uſed in them, and caſt a great deal of ſcorn upon them, and count them only to the more Earthly Diſpenſation of the Old Teſtament, preſuming a more Spiritual one, under the New Teſtament. And others do ſo *practically*, by a neglect of ſeeking participation in them, but are content without them. But we here underſtand, that whatſoever is their own vertue, yet being under Chriſts Bleſſing, they muſt have their Efficacy. Here then, by the Bleſſing of Chriſt, we are not to underſtand the Application of this Grace by which they attain their end, for that will come under the next; but his Inſtitution or Appointment of them for this end and purpoſe, and giving us a Precept about them. And here we muſt, by way of Anticipation, briefly obſerve, which will afterwards be more diſtinctly inſiſted on, viz.

THE *Sacraments* themſelves, *are parts of Inſtituted* and not of Natural *Worſhip: And they intirely depend upon the Sovereign Pleaſure of the Inſtituter.* It was at his liberty whether to appoint them or no, and if he had not ſo, they had not been ſpecial Means of Salvation. That the things choſen by him, as Elements, are meerly Arbitrary, as to the number, kinds, and uſage of them. That hence the Sacramental uſe and efficacy of them depends on his Inſtitution, by vertue whereof they are Authorized. And that he had ſuch an Authority, he himſelf aſſerts, Math. 28. 18, 19. *And Jeſus came, and ſpake unto them ſaying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghoſt.* And hence if this Seal of his Authority be

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ript off from them, they become weak & beggarly Elements, as the Old Teſtaments Sacraments are in Goſpel times. And that when Chriſt Inſtituted theſe Sacraments, he left a Bleſſing on them, which is included in the Inſtitution, becauſe he not only Inſtituted them, but for ſuch an end, and Sanctified them to it; that they might obtain it: and accordingly there was a *Promiſe of Bleſſing* annexed, Mat. 28.20. *Teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world. Amen.* Exod. 20. 24. *In all places where I record my Name, I will come unto thee, and I will bleſs thee.* And this ſhews us a vaſt difference between Ordinances of Men's Inſtitution, and them which Chriſt himſelf hath appointed; he hath promiſed his Bleſſing with theſe, but not with thoſe; theſe therefore may be uſed in Faith, and not the other.

2. *IT derives alſo from the Working of the Spirit of God.* Thus we formerly obſerved it is in reſpect of the Word: and indeed, all the Ordinances of God's appointment, are but Inſtrumental, and can do no more, than he who only can wield them, is pleaſed to do by them; an Inſtrument cannot do any thing of itſelf, for then it would be an Agent. Now that there is ſuch an Operation of the Spirit on every one who is ſavingly benefited by the Sacraments, will appear in that,

(1.) *THERE muſt be a Prime Efficient, elſe they would do nothing at all.* If they have no Natural Vertue in them for this, as hath been already obſerved, there muſt be ſome Vertue coming from Abroad to give them their Operation.

(2.) *NO other, or Inferiour Agent, is able to do it by them:* The Subject recipient of theſe cannot do it for himſelf; ſome cannot underſtand the meaning of the Signs, how then ſhould they Morally apply it to themſelves; this is notorious in *Infants*, when they are Baptized; and as to others, they cannot Work Grace in the Unconverted, nor Advance it in the Converted, but there muſt be a Superiour Power to do it, Phil. 2. 13. *For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleaſure.* Not the Adminiſtrator, for his good will is incapable of Working this, and if it could, a Godly Miniſter would certainly ſave all whom he diſpenſeth to. We are therefore told, Joh. 1. 13. *Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

(3.) *THE Working of Grace in any, muſt proceed from Almighty Power.* Nothing leſs is able to do it: Regeneration is from Above; and he that begins muſt alſo perfect the Work of Grace, if ever it be done; and though he doth it with means, yet he muſt do it, Heb. 12. 2. *Looking unto Jeſus the author and finiſher of our faith, who for the joy that was ſet before him, endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down at the right hand of the throne of God.* Phil. 1. 6. He only who raiſed Chriſt from the Dead, can do this for Men, *Eph.* 1. 18, *&c.*

(4.) *THIS Work of Application, belongs to the Spirit, as his part in this great Work.* Not that he acts ſeparately from the other Perſons in the Sacred Trinity, but that it is Aſſigned to his order and manner of Working: Chriſt therefore, when he had done his peculiar Work in purchaſing Redemption for us, ſent his Spirit to purſue it in the Application of it, Joh. 16. 13. *Howbeit, when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he ſhall not ſpeak of himſelf: but whatſoever he ſhall hear, that ſhall he ſpeak, and he will ſhew you things to come.* Now becauſe he hath ſeen meet to make uſe of the Ordinances, and among others the Sacraments in this Work of Application, he doth for that end ſet in with them, and Communicates his incohcomitancy therewithal, by which they become effectual: and hence the fruit is according as he is pleaſed to come home with Power to the Soul: If he comes not thus, they loſe all their Efficacy, *i. e.* have none that is ſaving: and it is very Obſervable, that the ſame Sacraments individual have contrary Operations on divers ſubjects.

3. *THIS Vertue and Efficacy is derived, thro' their receiving of them by Faith.* For when he here deſcribes the ſubject of this benefit, by his entertaining the Sacraments, with the exerciſe of Faith about them, he thereby points at the manner of their Operation: And herein alſo do the Sacraments agree with the Word, and every Ordinance of Chriſt's appointment. Now we are told what was the reaſon why the Word did not profit all that heard it, Heb. 4. 2. *For unto us was the goſpel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.* And how Baptiſm comes to be ſerviceable to Men, 1 Pet. 3. 21. *The like figure whereunto, even baptiſm, doth alſo now ſave us.* It is true, this Faith, both as to the Principle, and the exerciſe of it, derives from the Spirit as the Author and the Upholder of it.

AND as it is his Gift, ſo whenſoever, and whereſoever it applies itſelf to its Object, it is by his influence: But it is here inſerted to give us to underſtand of what ſpecial uſe it is for our getting the ſaving good of the Ordinances, for which reaſon an Evangelical Life is called a Life of Faith: and the ground of the Neceſſity that all that get ſaving good by the Sacrament, muſt receive them by Faith, will appear, if we conſider,

1. *THAT in them are exhibited to Men, Chriſt himſelf, and all the ſaving Benefits that are purchaſed by him for Sinful Men.* That indeed which is herein offered to our ſenſes, is ſome ſenſible Objects; and that which we are to apply theſe Objects to, is our ſenſible Powers. But there is ſomething elſe that is repreſented under theſe to our Moral Powers, as ultimately aimed at by the former; and this is that which renders them Sacramental. Now the Scripture aſſure us, that the great Object which is offered under theſe to the Eyes of

our minds is *Chriſt*, on which account he is called the *Rock*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 4. and the *Paſſover*, *Chap.* 5. 7. and theſe ſaving benefits that flow from him, are ſhadowed under the Elements themſelves, and the uſefulneſs of them for our outward Man.

2. *THAT the Vertue and Benefit of theſe, derive to us according as they are received by us.* They have the Vertue in themſelves, whether we get good by them or no; but if we receive them not, they do us no kindneſs, nor are we bettered by them; but if we do, Vertue comes with them, and they become helpful to our Salvation. Hence that in, Joh. 1. 12. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to them that believe on his Name.*

3. *IT is the Vertue and Property of Faith thus to receive them.* That all who are waſhed with the Water of Baptiſm, are not by it cleanſed from the Guilt and Filthineſs of Sin, is undeniable; nor all that come to the Lord's Table, and there take & eat the Bread, and drink the Wine, that have been ſet apart for a Sacramental uſe, are not nouriſhed to Eternal Life, is alike evident: And who are they that miſs of this? But thoſe who bring not, nor exerciſe Faith in it; for Unbelief ſhuts him out. Whereas Faith in exerciſe, is the hand that receives Chriſt and his Benefits together with the outward ſigns: this diſcerns Chriſt through the ſigns, apprehends him and his Benefits as exhibited in them, and thus entertains him in the Heart, and derives from him all that good, which an Unbeliever hath no acquaintance with; but like a *Capernaite*, tarries at the other things which profit not.

USE. *THIS may ſerve to direct us, what uſe to make of the Sacraments, if we would derive from them, the ſaving good, which is offered us in them.* We muſt not deſpiſe or neglect them, for by ſo doing, we put wilfully from us the benefit which we might otherwiſe derive to ourſelves by them. And we muſt not reſt in them, as if they were Charms, and content ourſelves with the outward participation in them, as if they would communicate Grace to us, by the meer Operation of them; for ſo we ſhall deceive ourſelves, and do ourſelves more harm than good, by our partaking at them. But we muſt look upon them as Spiritual Ordinances, and labour to underſtand the meaning of them, and accordingly apply ourſelves to Chriſt, who is the Author of them, for his Bleſſing to accompany them to us; and wait for the Spirit to come in with them to our Hearts, and give them their efficacy upon us; and look upon them with an Eye of Faith, and receive them as the Pledges of the Love of Chriſt to us; and thus ſhall we derive that by them, which ſhall give us cauſe to Bleſs God for them while we Live, and forever.

SERMON CCXXX.

QUESTION XCII.

WHAT is a Sacrament?

ANSWER.

A Sacrament is an holy Ordinance Inſtituted by CHRIST, wherein by ſenſible Signs, Chriſt, and the Benefits of the New Covenant, are repreſented, ſealed, and applied to Believers.

UNDER the former we took an account, how, or in what way the Sacraments become ſerviceable to the furthering of the Salvation of ſuch as God hath in Chriſt choſen to it. And tho' it come in ſomething immethodically, and occaſion ſomething to be ſaid by way of Anticipation; yet we muſt take things up in the order laid before us. And now we are to paſs to make a more diſtinct Inquiry into the Nature of a Sacrament in general: And accordingly we have a deſcription here given us.

TOUCHING the Word Sacrament, nothing farther needs to be ſaid than what was noted under the former Inquiry. And if we are agreed about the thing, it is needleſs Curioſity to diſpute about the Word uſed to expreſs it by. And in vain do the Papiſts firſt make the Word Myſtery & Sacrament of equal extent. And becauſe they tranſlate the Greek word *Myſtery* where-ever uſed, by *Sacramentum*; hence to make every thing that hath that Word uſed of it, to be a Sacrament of the New-Teſtament; which hath occaſioned their extending them to Seven; the vanity whereof may hereafter be conſidered.

WE may now go upon the Inquiry into the Deſcription, which we had need to be the more diſtinct in, becauſe there are ſo hot diſputes in the World, upon every part of it. And the World hath been filled with doleful Tragedies on account of it. Here then,

1. WE have the general Nature of it; *A Sacrament is an holy Ordinance Inſtituted by Chriſt.* In this all Sacraments do agree. A Sacrament alſo in this agrees with all the other Ordinances, which belong to the Diſpenſation of the Covenant of Grace. And there are ſeveral Things included in this, which may be a little Explained.

1. *IT is an Ordinance.* An Ordinance in the general notion and uſage of the Word, is an Edict given forth by Authority, enjoyning Perſons to the doing of ſomething that is commanded by it: And in Divinity it is underſtood to be a part of Divine Worſhip.

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And called an Ordinance, because it was ordained by God, and hath the stamp of his Authority upon it, which obligeth all that profess the true Religion to yield conformity unto it. It is given for the regulating of the Man in the Service of God, and so to be a Medium of Communion between God & him. There is a Worship due to God from the reasonable Creature, which ariseth from the Nature of God and Man, and the relation between them, *Psal.* 100. 2, 3. And there is a *way* in which God is to be Worshipped by Man, and whatsoever God reveals his Pleasure in upon this account is called an *Ordinance*. And that the Sacraments are such Ordinances is evident from the Scriptures, in which these Injunctions are laid down. And hence, Men cannot neglect these, but they are guilty of Disobedience to God's Authority.

2. *IT is an Holy Ordinance.* And this distinguisheth it from all such Ordinances, as refer to common things. A thing is then said to be *holy*, according to Scripture language, when it is *separated from Common, and consecrated to Divine use*. Hence we have the Expression of *Holiness to the Lord*. And though there is an Holiness which is to be endeavoured by us in all that we do, because we ought to do all to the Glory of God; yet there is a peculiar separation of some Duties and Ordinances, which do therefore properly belong to his Worship, and are accordingly to be referred to the first Table, in which Holiness is required, as Righteousness is in the second; and hitherto the Sacraments belong, and are not to be made use of but in the Worship of God. And hence we read of the *holy Commandment*, 2 Pet. 2. 21.

3. *IT is Instituted.* This gives a more particular Specification of the thing. The Word Ordinance, is sometimes used generally, as comprehending all the Duties in which Men are enjoined, whether by the Law Moral or Positive, tho frequently it is restrained to the latter. Here then we may consider, that the Laws of God are ranked under two Heads, the Law of *Nature*, and the Law *Positive*. The Law of Nature is the same for Substance with the Law Moral, and it contains such Commands in it as Nature itself teacheth Men to be Duty; or the reason of the Law is grounded in the thing commanded; the sum whereof was put into the two Tables, or Ten Commandments; in the first of which Tables are the Duties of Worship directed to, in which Natural Worship is required in the First Command, and Positive in the Second. And those Positive Precepts which are given with respect to Worship, as to the way and manner of the performance of it, are called Institutions. And the reason why they are so called, is because the Obligation of them is laid in the Arbitrary Pleasure of God so to enjoyn them; for although God useth his Wisdom in appointing, and adapting of things to the end and use of them, yet he also asserts his liberty in the Injunctions themselves: If he had not appointed them, they had not been Duties, and if he repeal that Injunction, they cease to be so any longer. And such are the Sacraments; such were those under the Old Testament, which also were on Christ's coming and accomplishing the things pointed at in them, made void. And of the same Nature are those under the Gospel. They are Sacred Ceremonies, and are of the same force now on Christians, as the other were on the Jews, under the Mosaical Pædagogy, which were given under awful Sanctions, severely threatning those that despised them.

4. *IT is Instituted by Christ.* In this we are directed to the Author of them. If they are Ordinances, they must then come forth with Authority, else they could not be binding; nor would it be a transgression to neglect them; and because they are *Divine Ordinances* binding the Conscience, they must be given by *Divine Authority*; for God alone is the Lord of the Consciences of Men. And hence it follows, that neither Angels nor Men, can lawfully institute a Sacrament, but it must be an usurpation upon God's Prerogative; neither have they Authority to make void any which God hath commanded. Hence there is a threatning against both, Rev. 22. 18, 19. *For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophesie of this book. If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophesie, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.* And when it is said they are Instituted by *Christ*, it not only supposeth his *Divine Power*, but also intimates that they belong to the *New Covenant*, or the Dispensation of Grace to fallen Man. There are the Institutions of the Trees of Life and Knowledge given in the first Covenant to Man in his Integrity, but these came from God as Creator and Governour; but all that are given to fallen Man proceed from *Christ as Mediator*, who was ordained Mediator to dispense the Treaty between God and Man, considered as Apostate; and one Office which he bears in this, is that of a King, in which a dispensatory Power is committed to him, *Mat.* 28. 18. And to this belong all the Sacraments given to the Church, from *Adam's* fall, till the end of the World, and therefore they must needs have a bottom design of Grace in them. And hence we have that expression of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 11. 23. *For I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you.*

II. WE have the special Nature of a Sacrament in the remainder of the Answer: *In which by sensible Signs*, &c. And herein they are differenced from all other Ordinances or Institutions that are appointed; there is an Institution for Preaching the Word of God; and Institution for Orders and Offices in the

Church of God; an Inſtitution for the Adminiſtration of Diſcipline in the Church. But a Sacrament differs from all of theſe: And the main differences are grounded in the ſpecial Nature of theſe. And the Subſtance of this may be reduced to two Heads, viz. the *parts of a Sacrament*, and the *Union there is between theſe parts:* Under which latter we may conſider the end and uſe of it. The former of theſe is uſually called the matter of a Sacrament, the latter, the form of it, or that which conſtitutes it a Sacrament.

1. *WE are acquainted with the Parts of a Sacrament, or the Matter whereof it conſiſts:* And theſe are two; which we uſually diſtinguiſh into a Sign, and the thing ſignified by it. A Sacrament doth not conſiſt of one thing, but there is ſomething Concrete and Complicate in it. And thoſe things which conſtituted the matter of it, are vaſtly different in their Natures. Theſe parts of matter do therefore conſiſt of a Sign, and the thing which is ſignified by it. And it belongs eſſentially to a Sacrament, that there are both theſe things in it,

(1.) ONE part of the matter whereof a Sacrament conſiſts, *is a ſenſible Sign.* This is uſually the External and Viſible part of it; and without ſuch a thing there can be no proper Sacrament. And we are to obſerve, that it muſt be a Sign, or elſe it cannot be Sacramental; it is not from the Nature of the thing itſelf that it is ſo, but from its being uſed as a Sign of ſomething elſe. Now the Nature of a Sign is to hold forth and intimate ſome other thing than itſelf, and to carry an intimation of it with it, or to acquaint us, that ſuch another thing, is or ſhall be; for a Sign, is either to point us to a thing, or elſe to confirm us about a thing, that it ſhall be. And is very frequently uſed in Contracts, or Obligations and Covenants, when they are Subſcribed and Sealed. And on this account the Sacraments are called *Signs*, particularly Circumciſion, Gen. 17.11. *And ye ſhall circumcife the fleſh of your foreskin, and it ſhall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.* And the Paſſover, *Exod.* 12. 13. Now Signs, are ſome Natural, and carry the ſignification in them of ſomething elſe from the very properties of them; and ſo the break of the Day is a Sign of the approaching of the Sun: Others are Arbitrary, and there is no neceſſary Union between them, and the thing that they ſignify, but it is according to Agreement or Appointment. And were it not for ſuch an Appointment, they would be no Sign at all of the thing; and ſuch are all the Sacramental Signs appointed by Chriſt; He is pleaſed to put this ſignification on them; and though he hath pleaſed to adapt theſe ſo, as that in the Nature of them, we may be Inſtructed about the thing they repreſent, there being ſome Analogy, though very dark; yet that is not the thing that makes them to be Signs; but only the Inſtitution that they are under: and it muſt be a ſenſible Sign, *i. e.* it muſt be ſomething which we muſt be able to diſcern by our Senſes, and receive inſtruction from it through them. And the Senſes that are here moſt peculiarly concerned, are the Sight, and the Feeling, and the Taſte; and moſt of all the Sight. It is not enough that we hear of a thing, to make it a Sign; but we muſt have it objectively before our Bodily ſenſes, elſe it is not properly a Sign. God hath pleaſed to annex Sacraments to the Word, not that they offer any other thing to us; for in the Word, the whole Covenant of Grace is expreſt: but he in the Sacramental Signs, helps us in our ſpiritual diſcerning of the thing offered in the Word, that we may, as it were, ſee and hear, and handle the Word of Life: As alſo by theſe Signs he is pleaſed to ratify to us all the Promiſes of the New Covenant, as by Viſible Signs; as will be more particularly conſidered. Now to theſe Sacramental Signs are annumerated, both the *External Symbals*, or the ſenſible things which are made choice of to ſignify ſome other thing to us, and the *Ceremonial Rites or Actions* to be uſed in the Adminiſtration of them, that carry a ſpiritual ſignificancy in them; for whatſoever in a Sacrament, hath an Inſtituted ſignificancy put upon it, is Sacramental; and belongs to the Sign: tho' primarily, and moſt peculiarly this denomination is put upon the outward Elements which are uſed in it. Thus particularly in the Supper, the breaking the Bread, the giving it, the taking, the eating, have all their ſignification, and point to ſomething that is Spiritual.

(2.) THE other part of the matter of a Sacrament, *is that which is ſignified by the former.* As where there is no Sign, there is no Sacrament, ſo a Sign and the thing ſignified by it are Corrolates: and as the former was ſomething *Senſible*, ſo is this ſomething *Spiritual*; and as there were ſenſible actions belonging to that, ſo there are ſpiritual actions, which are pointed at under them. Now this we are told, *is Chriſt, and the benefits of the New Covenant*, or the Covenant of Grace; and as the Perſon of Chriſt is here exhibited, ſo he is ſet forth under the Conſideration of a Mediating Redeemer; and ſo he is exhibited under the conſideration of all that he hath done for us in that ſtate, and ſo comprehends under it all the benefits which he hath purchaſed to beſtow on his Redeemed. On this account we before obſerved that the Rock is ſaid to be Chriſt, and he is called our Paſſover; which expreſſions are Metonymical, and ſerve to let us underſtand, that theſe were the Types whereof he was the Antetype; and in like manner in the Supper, the Bread is ſaid to be his Body, and the Cup his Blood; which in no good ſenſe can be otherwiſe underſtood, than a Sacramental Sign & Repreſentation; Now it is certain that he is in every Sacrament exhibited and offered to us for our Advantage, ſo that there muſt be ſomething of Chriſt that we are invited to participate in, by our receiving this Ordi-

nance;

nance: and that muſt be all the good that is laid up in the New Covenant; and for that reaſon is Circumciſion Tropically called *the Covenant, Gen.* 17. 10. viz. becauſe it was to be a token of it: So that all the good that comes by Chriſt, and is laid up in him for ſinful Men, and couched in the Promiſe, is with him contained in the Spiritual part. God hath ſeen meet in this Covenant to offer his Grace to ſinful Men, which Grace, as it was firſtly confirmed to Chriſt in the Covenant of Suretiſhip, ſo it derives to us through him, in the Covenant of Grace: and as he was the purchaſer of theſe for us, ſo in the offers of them to us, he himſelf is to be embraced by us, that ſo he may be all that to us which God hath made him, 1 Cor. 1. 30. *But of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus who of God is made unto us wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption.* And for this reaſon God is ſaid to give all theſe things with him, *Rom.* 8. 32. And ſo in having of him, we come to have them, as 1 Joh. 5. 12. *He that hath the Son, hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life.* Hence both of theſe are eſſential to a Sacrament; both of theſe are offered conjunctly, and unleſs we ſo receive them, it is no real Ordinance to us.

(2.) *WE are alſo here acquainted with the Union there is between theſe parts, which is uſually called the form of it:* And this properly conſiſts in the near and intimate Relation which there is made between theſe ſigns and things that are ſignified by them: this is expreſt in thoſe words, that by the former the latter is *Signified, Sealed and Applied to Believers.* And that we may take this up aright, Obſerve,

[1.] *THAT though there may be a Similitude of Nature between the ſign, and the thing ſignified, yet that doth not conſtitute the Sacramental Relation between them.* For ſo every Similitude between a thing Carnal and Spiritual, muſt preſently paſs into a Sacrament, which were very abſurd, and Seven would be a poor Number to confine them to. There muſt therefore be more to go in to Conſtitute a Sacrament, which muſt be conſidered if we would not ere in this point.

[2.] *NOR doth any meerly Humane appointment, make it to be ſo.* It belongs to the Efficient or Author of a Sacrament, that it have a *Divine Inſtitution*; and the very Nature & Deſign of it, make it evident, it being an appointed Medium of our Salvation, which none but God can make it to be: Men indeed, may, and do too much eſſay to appoint things to be uſed as outward ſigns of Spiritual Things, and ſo to be uſed as means to help forward their Grace, to which head all Ceremonies uſed for ſuch an end, and enjoyned by Men, do belong, in which Men uſurp upon the Divine Authority, and there wants nothing to make them Sacraments, but a ſtamp of God's Inſtitution.

[3.] BUT *it flows from the Relation, which God's Appointment hath put between them.* God being pleaſed to make uſe of ſenſible things, for the furtherance of Spiritual Good to the Children of Men; hath appointed theſe things to be uſed by us for that end, and hath therefore ſanctified them, and put his Bleſſing upon them: and ſo they become as glaſſes, in which we are to ſee Chriſt, as Seals by which our Faith is to be confirmed in him, and his Benefits ratified to us: all this flows not in the leaſt from the Nature of the ſigns, but meerly from the Bleſſing of God.

[4.] HENCE it follows, *That this relation, is not in the things themſelves, but in the uſe of them,* beyond which it ceaſeth. God hath choſen ſuch things to be Signs in the Sacraments, as are in themſelves common, nor is the whole kind ſeparated from this, but ſuch a portion as is to be uſed for this ſpecial purpoſe, and this is done Arbitrarily; ſo that when it hath been improved for this ſervice, and the Ordinance is over, whatſoever remains of it is common, and there abides no Sacredneſs in it. And to put any other reſpect upon the Elements than this, is Superſtition: And the Conſecrated Holy Water, Oyl, and Cream, and the Conſecrated Hoſt, reſerved by the Papiſts for Religious uſes, are no better. Now there are three things in which this Relative Union between the Signs, and the things Signified, is expreſt in the Anſwer,

1. *THESE Spiritual things are repreſented by thoſe Temporals.* And this is the firſt and moſt proper uſe of a Sign, *viz.* to Repreſent the thing that it is uſed for, to thoſe that are concerned in it: and this is common both to Natural and Arbitrary Signs. And it is upon this account, that thoſe who partake in the Euchariſt, are ſaid *to ſhew forth Chriſt's Death,* 1 Cor. 11. 26. Hence we have that expreſſion, Gal. 3. 1. *O Fooliſh Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you ſhould not obey the truth, before whoſe eyes Jeſus Chriſt hath been evidently ſet forth, crucified among you?* Which ſeems to have a peculiar reſpect to the Sacrament, and cannot ſo properly be aſſigned to the Word Preached. On this account, Circumciſion is called a Sign, as was before obſerved: And for this reaſon there is ſomething of a ſimilitude between the one and the other, though the diſtance between Temporal and Spiritual things is ſo great, that they hold no proportion, and ſo the ſimilitude is obſcure, yet ſufficient by the Word, to which it is annexed, to be inſtructive and helpful to inform our Underſtandings.

2. *BY theſe Signs, Chriſt and his Benefits are Sealed to us:* i. e. They are *Ratified and Confirmed*: They not only point to the things themſelves, but they are to make them ſure; they are not only Signs, but contract Signs. And hence alſo Circumciſion is called a Seal, as Rom. 4. 11. *And he received the ſign of circumciſion, a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of the faith which he had yet being uncircumciſed; that he might be the father of all them that believe,*

though

though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also. i. e. It confirmed the Article in the Covenant, wherein the Righteousness of Christ was secured to such as believe in him. Thus was the cutting the Calf in twain, and passing, &c. *Jer.* 34. a solemn ratification of the Covenant there made. And there is a like reason with regard to all other Sacraments, for they are all connected with the Promise of the Covenant, not to give any more certainty or stability to the Word of Promise, but to establish our reliance upon it.

3. *BY these also there is Application made of Christ, and the benefits of the Covenant to us.* For this cause Divines do usually call them Instruments, because in and with them there is some real saving good conveyed to the Subject recipient. They are appointed, and are improved to help the Graces of the People of God; and not to be meerly naked Signs, but have the real Operation. Not that they do this by any inherent quality put into them, or more than there is into the Word Preached; but there is together with the External and Ministerial part, in consecrating the Sign, and giving it to us, and our receiving of it, the Work of the Holy Spirit, who applies the thing signified, on which the efficacy of these, as well as of all the other Ordinances doth depend: So that it is not every one that partakes in the outward Sign, who hath the spiritual Benefit of it, but only those to whom the Spirit so imparts it.

3. HENCE we are told, who they are, to whom it thus becomes a real Sacrament, viz. *Believers.* It is only in these that this relative Name is made. And we have this given as a reason why the Ordinance did not profit all that did partake in the outward Sign, but only some, Heb. 4. 2. *For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.* Now Believers are of two sorts, *viz.* such as are only so by an outward Profession, or such as are both outwardly and inwardly so: Which distinction is expresst, Rom. 2. 28, 29. *For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God.* The former receive only the external part, and so seperate the sign from the thing signified; and so cut themselves off from the saving good of the Ordinance; whereas the latter do receive both, and so it becomes saving to them, and that according to the Promise of the Covenant. Now these must be true Believers, and no other, because where Faith is not, it cannot be exercised, and without it a Sacrament cannot be truly received, nor can the duty be acceptable to God, Heb. 11. 6. *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* The Elements are represented to the bodily senses, but Christ and his Benefits are only exhibited to the eye of Faith, which alone can discern them through the other.

SEVERAL Inferences might be drawn from the Premises, but I shall only mention these,

1. *WE see here the ground of the Necessity of our partaking of the Sacraments, and how far it extends.* Some despise them, and others are Superstitious about them, who are both to blame. There is a double necessity, the necessity of a Precept, and the necessity of a Medium. Now the Sacraments are necessary because God hath commanded them: And to neglect them willingly, is to despise the Command of God. But tho' God hath appointed them, to be Media of our Salvation, and hath blessed them to this end, nevertheless he hath not annexed Salvation necessarily to them, so as the want of them, puts a necessity of Mens missing of Salvation. Elect Children may die before Baptism; and Persecution, or some other thing may deprive a Godly Man of the use of the Supper. They have therefore no reason to despair, who are so Providentially debarred: Though such as may enjoy these, and willingly neglect them, have reason to call their truth in question.

2. *WE here see their Error, who will have the Sacraments to be the outward Notes and Tests of a Profession, and not to be the Signs and Seals of the Grace of God.* For though we do not deny that it is a note of the Visible Church, that in it the Word is regularly dispensed, and the Sacraments regularly administred; yet this is not the summary design of them, but to be used as Instituted as Media of our Communion with Christ, and partaking in all the glorious Benefits which he hath purchased for us. And if we only boast of our being Christians on this account, and value our selves upon it, and neglect to use them for our spiritual growth in Grace and Holiness, we shall so hurt our own Souls, and miss of the great end & design of Christ's Instituting them.

SERMON CCXXXI.

QUESTION XCIII.

WHICH are the Sacraments of the New Testament?

ANSWER.

THE Sacraments of the New Testament, are Baptism, and the Lord's Supper.

WE have taken a brief Account of the Nature of a Sacrament, according to the usage of the word in the Church of God, about which there are many hot disputes in the World, which I omit to Discourse distinctly of; tho' there are some that may be considered in the sequel. That which now lies before

fore us is the Number of them, about which alſo there are no ſmall Diſputes between us and our Popiſh Adverſaries. And it is to be obſerved, that our Divines have altogether omitted to Diſcourſe of thoſe of the Old Teſtament; ſome of which were Ordinary, others Extraordinary; but whether they were more or fewer, they all of them ceaſed with the Abolition of the Moſaical Pædagogy. Whereas they were all deſigned to look forward to a Chriſt to come, He being come, who was the End of them, they have ceaſed to be Ordinances to Chriſtians: Hence that in, Heb. 9. 10, 11. *Which ſtood in meats and drinks, and divers waſhings, and carnal ordinances impoſed on them until the time of reformation. But Chriſt being come*, &c. Now it is neceſſary for ſuch as would ſerve God with Underſtanding, to be well acquainted with what are to be reckoned to be Sacraments under the New Teſtament, and how many there are of them; eſpecially ſince our Adverſaries have endeavoured to impoſe on us the round Number of *Seven*. And it is dangerous for us to be miſtaken in this; ſince the Sacraments are given us to be helps of our Grace, and trials of our Obedience to God, which we are not to admit of blindfold, but to prove them by the unerring Rules of the Goſpel. And the conſideration of the Deſcription before given us, will be a good help for us in this matter, ſince nothing that will not agree with it can be allowed. And if we take this Rule, it will cut off all the ſpurious Sacraments which have been introduced by the vain Imaginations of Men. The matters that lye before us for our Diſquiſition, and are contained in the Anſwer, are theſe, 1. That there are Sacraments appointed by Chriſt under the New Teſtament, as well as there were under the Old. 2. That there are but Two in Number; viz *Baptiſm* and the *Lord's Supper*. 3. That theſe are Sacraments. 4. That there are no other but theſe.

1. *THAT there are Sacraments appointed by Chriſt, under the New Teſtament, as well as there were under the Old.* This is ſuppoſed in the very Queſtion before us, for we are not to ſuppoſe that our Divines would ſpend time in Diſputing or Diſcourſing about a thing that is not; and if there be *no* Sacraments at all under the Goſpel, it is vain for any to aſſert that there are *two*, and it would be a contradiction. And there is occaſion to Diſcourſe of this, becauſe the *Enthuſiaſts* of our Age, as well as of former times, have rejected all external Ordinances, as inconſiſtent with the ſpiritual Diſpenſation of the Goſpel times, and have therefore made a ſtout of *Water Baptiſm* and *carnal Bread & Wine*, as they call it; and tell us, that ſuch things only belonged to the legal State of the Church, and were ſhadows that muſt paſs away, when the ſubſtance came; and no more ſerviceable to Men who are called to ſerve God in Spirit and in Truth. Nor need we to ſpend time in ſhewing the Vanity of this Allegation of Men againſt this: for tho' the Goſpel be a more ſpiritual Diſpenſation than that of the Law in ſeveral reſpects, yet this is a great Truth, that there is this difference between God's diſcovering of himſelf to his People in this Life, and that which is to come; that here it is Mediate, and there it will be Immediate: Here we muſt ſee *through a glaſs darkly, but then Face to Face*; 1 Cor. 13 11. And that all Chriſt's Inſtitutions which he left with his Diſciples, are to continue to the end of the World, is a juſt Inference from, *Matth.* 28 19, 20. And *Baptiſm* is there expreſly mentioned as one of them. Beſides, There is as much uſe of them now, as there was before, inaſmuch as our Faith and other Graces do ſtand in need of being ſupplied with that which may corroborate them; and theſe are adapted to our preſent State. God could have ſaved them of Old without them, and ſo he can now; but he choſe this way, as being accommodable to our preſent ſtate of Imperfection. But,

2. THIS will further appear, if we conſider, That *there are Two of theſe, and no more; and that they are Sacraments*, viz. *Baptiſm* and the *Lord's Supper*. And here three things will come under conſideration, *viz.*

1. *THAT Chriſt hath appointed Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper as Ordinances to be attended on by Chriſtians, in the Days of the Goſpel.* Touching the *Names* of them, we have them expreſt more than once in the Goſpel; and they are enjoyned by Chriſt. It belonged to the Commiſſion of the Apoſtles and their Succeſſors, that where they Preached the Goſpel, they ſhould Adminiſter Baptiſm to thoſe that were Diſcipled; *Matth.* 28. 19. And when Chriſt celebrated the Supper, he commanded that this Ordinance ſhould be kept up in the Church in remembrance of him, *till he come*, i.e. Till the great Judgment ſhould commence, 1 *Cor.* 11. 26. Theſe Ordinances therefore we find in the Hiſtory of the New Teſtament, were uſed by the Apoſtles every where, where they Preached the Goſpel. Of the *Nature* of each of theſe, we may come to conſider afterwards; but of the *Injunction* of them it is evident.

2 *THAT theſe were Sacraments.* If once we grant them to be Goſpel Ordinances, we can reduce them to no other Head but this. And that they are Sacraments is evident, becauſe the Deſcription of a Sacrament agrees to them; and that is a proper Rule of our Judgment about the Nature & Kind of things; ſo that if there be nothing which belongs to a Sacrament in general, but what is to be found in them, they muſt needs be ſuch. Tho' it is true, that every Sacrament hath it's ſpecial differences, in which it is diverſe from others. And here obſerve,

(1.) *IT is an holy Ordinance, appointed for holy Ends, and to be adminiſtred to holy Perſons.* A thing is then ſaid to be *Holy*, when it is ſet apart from *common*, and conſecrated to *ſacred* Uſe: And that theſe two are ſuch is evident, becauſe they were to be Adminiſtred to the People of God, and *no other*. They are to put a difference between the Clean & Unclean;

clean; and this were the Miniſters of the Sanctuary to look carefully to, and ſo are the Miniſters of the New-Teſtament. It is true, there is a *Sacral Holineſs*, on ſuch as are ſeparated from the World & devoted to Chriſt, whom he will have acknowledged as his, and they are to be ſealed for him; but ſuch as are not thus of the Viſible Church, but ly out from it, are not to be admitted to this Privilege; for Children's Bread is not to be given to Dogs.

(2.) *THEY are both of them Inſtituted by Chriſt.* They are not the Inventions of Men, nor fetch their Authority from human Inſtitution, but they fetch their Original and Authentickneſs from the Power or Authority of Chriſt, who appointed them. This we have fully expreſt concerning *Baptiſm*, *Matth.* 28. 18, 19.-and concerning the *Supper*, in 1 *Cor.* 11. 23. And we are to obſerve, that *Paul* brings this in, for reducing of the Diſorder that had crept into the Church, in the Diſpenſation of that Ordinance, to the Primitive Inſtitution

(3.) *THERE are in them ſenſible Signs appointed.* There needs no more to make this good, than to enquire into them; in ſearch whereof theſe are to be found. There is ſomething external and ſenſible in either; of *Water* in one, *Bread* and *Wine* in the other; nor can they be omitted, without a treſpaſs upon the Ordinance it ſelf; as will further appear, when we come to treat of them ſeverally.

(4.) *CHRIST and the Benefits of the Covenant of Grace are herein repreſented and applied to Believers.* It is true, all that partake in the outward Signs do not diſcern theſe; but herein they make the Sacrament void of them, and loſe the Good of it. But Believers have this Benefit by them; and it muſt needs be ſo, becauſe they are appointed Means, for the Salvation of God's Choſen, and the promiſed Bleſſing is annexed to them, in regard of ſuch as are ſpiritually entituled to the New-Covenant. Hence *Baptiſm* is called a *putting on of Chriſt*, Gal. 3 27. And partaking of the *Lord's Supper*, is called, *the Communion of the Body and Blood of Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 10. 16. And ſuch Sacramental Phraſes as theſe, wherein the thing ſignified is applied to the Sign, give us to underſtand the cloſe connection there is between theſe two, in all thoſe that do worthily Partake.

3. *THAT there are no other Sacraments but theſe, appointed in the New Teſtament.* Our Adverſaries do acknowledge theſe, but they have tacked *Five more* to them, for which they have no warrant in the Goſpel. We acknowledge that there were diverſe Ceremonies in the Days of the Old Teſtament; but that all the Sacraments and Ceremonies of that Diſpenſation are ſuperceded, and have loſt their Authentickneſs, is certain, and the ſpiritual Vertue of them is gone; and thoſe who ſtand to uphold them, do therein what lies in them, to make the Goſpel void, *Gal.* 5. 2. Now,

1. *IT is certain that Chriſt Inſtituted no more but theſe Two, under the Goſpel.* This being a Negative Aſſertion there needs nothing more for the Proof of it, than to challenge thoſe who deny it, to produce the Charter for any other; and till they can, it muſt ſtand good; for we are aſſured, that if any ſuch be, there muſt be His Authority for it; and this is no where elſe to be ſought but here. He bad his Diſciples to do *whatſoever he commanded them*, Matth. 28. 20. And without his Command, he will ſay to Men, *Who hath required this at your hands?*

2. *THOSE Five which Papiſts have added, do want, if not all, yet ſome of the things that are eſſential to a Sacrament, the want whereof makes them not to be ſuch:* Either the ſenſible Sign is wanting, or the thing ſignified in a Goſpel Sacrament is not to be found, as hath been abundantly made good by ſuch as have laboured in this Affair; and to make every thing to be a Sacrament, which hath a Myſtery in it, proceeds from Ignorance, and hath no warrant for it in the Word of God.

3. *THERE were but Two Ordinary ſtated Sacraments, under the Old Teſtament*, viz *Circumciſion* and the *Paſſover*; *in the room whereof theſe Two under the New Teſtament are ſubſtited.* It is true, there were others *extraordinary*, viz. the *Rock*, and the *Cloud*, and the *Manna*; but there were none but theſe, which were *inſtituted Ordinances* in the Church of Iſrael, as the Hiſtory will ſatisfy us. Now, theſe were not Types of the Sacraments of the New Teſtament, but Repreſentations of the ſame Grace, and the other came in their room: Chriſt therefore finiſhed the Paſſover with bringing in the Supper; and when he ſent forth his Apoſtles to the Gentiles, they were prohibited Circumciſion, and enjoyned Baptiſm. And as for their Sacrifices, they were not Sacraments, for they were offered to God, whereas theſe are given to Believers.

4. *THERE need no more, for theſe anſwer the whole deſign of Sacraments.* They are viſible Signs and Seals of the New-Covenant, and all the Benefits that are to be enjoyed by ſuch as are entituled to it: And there are but two things which need to be Sealed up to us in the Covenant, *viz.* our *Initiation* or Entrance into it, or our being taken into Covenant with God; and this is ſigned and ſealed in *Baptiſm*; and our *Continuance* in the Covenant, our growth in Grace, and perſeverance in it to the end; and this is ſigned and ſealed in the *Lord's Supper*: And he that is put into Chriſt, and ſhall abide in him, and his Grace, is ſecured to grow up to Glory, & is in a ſafe and good Condition.

QUESTION XCIV.

WHAT is Baptiſm?

ANSWER.

BAPTISM is a Sacrament, wherein waſhing with Water, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy-Ghoſt, doth ſignify and ſeal our ingrafting into Chriſt, and partaking of the Benefits of the Covenant of Grace, and our engagements to be the Lord's.

WE

WE have already been conſidering the Nature of a Sacrament in general, to which every particular Sacrament is to be reduced; and can be no farther acknowledged to be ſo, than as it agrees with the Deſcription given of it; which will therefore facilitate our conſideration of the particular: Nevertheleſs, there are the differences between the one and the other, which will need a particular Diſquiſition, which we are now to paſs to. We obſerved, that under the New-Teſtament, there are Two and no more; and the firſt of theſe, which now comes under our Conſideration, is *Baptiſm*: And that this is the firſt in Order will be evident, if we conſider, what it is nextly a Sign and Seal of, and that is the *New Birth*, or our entrance into Covenant with God; whereas the other points to our *Growth*, or our Eſtabliſhment in the Covenant. Now an Infant muſt be Born, before it can Grow; it muſt have Life, in order to it's receiving of Nouriſhment; we muſt be United unto Chriſt, before we can have Communion with him in all his Benefits. Here then, we may make ſome little enquiry into the Nature of this Ordinance. Concerning the word *Baptiſm*, there need not much be ſaid, tho' there are hot Diſputes about it. The word it ſelf is uſed either in a proper, or a tranſlatitious ſenſe. Properly it ſignifys two things indifferently, viz. to *Sprinkle* and to *Immerge*; either to caſt water upon a thing, or to Plunge it into it; and is uſed in both ſenſes in Greek Claſſick Authors; and hence from the Etymon of the word, there can be no Argument made for the one, more than the other. In a tranſlatitious ſenſe, it is uſed ſometimes for the ſuffering grievous Afflictions, and for the communication of the extrordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt: But here we are to underſtand it *properly*; and thoſe that would have it meerly *Metaphorical*, do err, not knowing the Truth, or ſeeking to pervert it. We have therefore the true Nature of this Ordinance laid before us in the Deſcription given; where obſerve,

1. THE *general Nature of it*; it is a *Sacrament*: And that it is ſo will appear in the laying open of the Deſcription; in every part whereof it agrees with what hath before been ſaid about the Nature of a Sacrament; as to the Inſtitution, Parts, and Deſign of it.

2. WE have *the ſpecial Nature* of it; containing the things in which it is differenced from the other. And here we are to conſider,

I. THE *outward Sign, the waſhing with Water.* And here,

1. *THE Element it ſelf which is to be uſed in the Adminiſtration of this Ordinance*, viz. *Water.* Some obſerving a difference between external and internal Baptiſm, do conſtitute two Sacraments of them, but very abſurdly; for theſe only point out the two parts material, *viz.* the Sign, and the thing ſignified by it; or the external act Miniſterial, and the internal Act of the Spirit of God: ſo then the Element is Water; and no other thing is to be uſed inſtead of it: This is the Sign, and is not Natural, but Arbitrary, and depended on his Pleaſure. And this is expreſly ſet down in the Goſpel: Hence that, Matth. 3. 11. *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after, is mightier than I, whoſe ſhoes I am not worthy to bear: he ſhall baptize you with the holy Ghoſt, and with fire.* Acts 3. 36. *And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch ſaid, See here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?* *John* the Baptiſt uſed Water; and for that reaſon he choſe places to Baptize, where there was a ſufficiency for it. As to thoſe that make additions and mixtures of Salt, Spittle, Oyl and Honey, they are Superſtitious, and do ſo far recede from the Primitive Simplicity of this Ordinance. And the reaſon why Chriſt choſe this Element, was doubtleſs from the aptitude of it, to repreſent and ſignify the thing aimed at in it, and that is our *Regeneration*, in which we are waſhed and cleanſed: And for this reaſon the Spirit is frequently compared to Water; and the Promiſe of Regenerating Grace is expreſſed by this Metaphor, Ezek. 36. 25. *Then will I ſprinkle clean water upon you, and ye ſhall be clean: from all your filthineſs, and from all your idols will I cleanſe you.* Our *Juſtification* is alſo comprehended in it, becauſe by it we are made legally Clean; for which reaſon we are told, 1 Joh. 1. 7. *And the blood of Jeſus Chriſt his Son, cleanſeth us from all ſin.* We are therefore told of a *Fountain* which God would *open* for this purpoſe, *Zech.* 13. 11. which hath a reference to this; and hence we are told of *the waſhing of Regeneration*, Tit. 3. 5.

2. *WE have the Uſe which is to be made of this Element, in the Adminiſtration of this Ordinance*; and that is, *Waſhing with it.* The meaning whereof is in general, that it is to be applied to the Fleſh: It is therefore called the *putting away the filthineſs of the fleſh*, 1 Pet. 3. 21. And when he ſaith it is not ſo, the meaning is, that this is not the thing ſignified by it; and this had not been needful to mention, but becauſe it was the external Sign, but that it had an higher aim in it; hence it is not to be applied to the Garment, but to the Body it ſelf. And here is that Queſtion to be looked into, about which there have been ſuch grievous Contentions in the World; viz. *Whether this Ordinance, as to the Ceremonial part of it, is to be applied by Aſperſion or by Immerſions.* True, there would be no need of Controverſy here, if our Oppoſites would be as Candid in this Affair as we are; who do not Diſpute for the neceſſary affixing of it to one, but account it indifferent in it ſelf, and may be governed by Circumſtances. But there are thoſe that make Immerſion Eſſential, and deny the reality of our Baptiſm, becauſe it is applied by Aſperſion. As to the Plea from the Notation of the words, which is made ſo much of, its weakneſs is ſufficiently evident, not only becauſe the uſe of words is

not always limited to the Notation, but is to be underſtood according to the prevailing Cuſtom; but alſo becauſe the words themſelves do not enforce it: Touching that of Baptiſm, we have already obſerved, that it is uſed in both ſenſes, and ſo we have as good a Plea for it, as our Oppoſites: and the word Βαπτισμος properly ſignifies *Sprinkling*, and is uſed Metaphorically, *Heb.* 12. 24. & 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. And if there were any word uſed in this Affair, which only ſignifies to Immerge, it would make nothing againſt us, who never denied the lawfulneſs of it, or it's ſignificancy: But we account the making either the one or the other to be neceſſary, and the Ordinance made void without it, to be equally Superſtitious. And altho' in the Primitive times, that of *Immerſion* was the moſt frequently uſed in the Churches, tho' after a various manner, (and it is very likely, tho' not certain, that *John* the Baptiſt did ſo uſe it,) yet Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory acquaints us, that in the colder Regions where Religion was entertained, they uſed Aſperſion in the room of the other: and it was rational to think that the Apoſtle uſed it, when there were *three thouſand baptized in one Day*, Acts 2. 41. But theſe are only *Problematical*, and may be debated *Pro* and *Con*. But that Aſperſion will anſwer the end of the Ordinance, and come up to the Inſtitution, if proved, is ſufficient to vindicate this Practice, and make it to appear that the Ordinance is not depraved by it; and there are Arguments to prove this abundantly, a few whereof may be juſt named to ſatisfy doubting Conſciences in this regard.

1. *THE words uſed for Baptiſm, do at leaſt ſignify this as well as the other*; and if they prove no more, yet they give us to underſtand, that there is no expreſs Command for one more than the other: and from this we may argue, that they are left *in Medio*, and are to be uſed according to the Rules of Prudence, which may vary in their Circumſtances. And ſurely where God hath not limited us, there is a room left ſo far as may be agreable to the Inſtitution itſelf.

2. AND it is certain, *That the thing which is intended in Baptiſm, is in the New Teſtament expreſſed alluſively by Sprinkling.* We before obſerved, that there are Sacramental Phraſes uſed frequently in the Word of God, in which the Sign is put for the thing Signified, & doth therefore teach us in the uſe of the Sign. Now we before took an account of ſuch Texts where it is ſo uſed, *Heb.* 12. 24. 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. So *Heb.* 10. 22 And ſeem to make it evident, that Sprinkling is a Ceremony well expreſſive of the Application of the outward part of this Ordinance.

3. *ASPERSION is as agreable to the Analogy of the Sign with the thing Signified as Immerſion.* This Analogy is between Water, and the Blood of Chriſt ſignified by it; and as by the one the Fleſh is applied to the Water, ſo by the other Water is applied to the Fleſh. Now in either of theſe ways the Scope of the Ordinance is Anſwered, and the Signification Expreſſed, which is to ſet forth the Vertue of Chriſt's Blood by that of Water, and the Efficacy of it, by Application of it to the Subject. And it is not from the *quantity* of it, but the *quality* of it, that the Sign was appointed; and we may have ſome Argument from that of our Saviour, Joh 13. 10. *Jeſus ſaith to him, He that is waſhed, needeth not, ſave to waſh his feet, but is clean every whit.* And hence it will ſuffice to apply it to the Face, which is the moſt Conſpicuous part of the Body. We might elſe plead from the Ceremonial Aſperſions appointed in the Law, which had a Spiritual ſignification, and aimed at the ſame that this doth; as alſo for the Convenience of Health, eſpecially in Cold Seaſons; and from the Modeſty which is required of us, in all our Religious Attendances; which, if the thing will anſwer the Inſtitution, is to be conſidered. As to the threefold Merſion, of which we are told that it was formerly Practiſed by ſome Churches, to expreſs the Triplicity of Perſons in the Godhead, as if there muſt be ſo many Applications as there are Perſons in the Sacred Trinity, there is no Inſtitution for it; and whatſoever good meaning there was in it, there ſeems to be an Addition to the Ordinance: And we find that in the Primitive Church it was never preſſed as neceſſary, but all were left to their Liberty without offence: and it is certain, that Baptiſm is to be but once Adminiſtred, as we are but once Regenerated. And though there be Three Perſons, yet it is but One God in Subſtance; and the mention of the Three Perſons in the Adminiſtration is ſufficient, otherwiſe it might look rather like Three Baptiſms than one; this therefore ſeems to be more agreable to the Simplicity of the Goſpel, to do it but once, and is fartheſt from the hazard of Innovation in the Goſpel Myſteries: And it were to be wiſhed that God's People would be more careful to ſee to their being made truly partakers in the Spiritual part of this Ordinance, inſtead of making diſturbances about Circumſtances, which not a little hinders the Efficacy, while by them Men hinder the Peace and Edification of the Church of God.

SERMON *CCXXXII.*

3. NOW follows *the manner of the Adminiſtration of the Element in Baptiſm*; viz. *It is applied in the Name of the Father* &c. This preſcription we have laid down in *Mat.* 28. 19. where the expreſs words are, *into the Name.* But nothing is more frequent than to uſe theſe two Prepoſitions, *into* and *in* promiſcuouſly; and which way ſoever we read theſe words, there ſeem to be theſe Three Things imported in them,

1. *THE Authority by which Baptiſm is to be Adminiſtred.* To do a thing in another's Name, is

is to do it by his Appointment ; and there are two things contained in it,

(1.) *THAT God, Father, Son, & Holy Spirit, are the Authors of the Ordinance.* That it is not an Invention of Men, but an Inſtitution of God, and is therefore a true Sacrament, having Divine Original ; which is one Characteriſtical Note. It ſaith, that this Ordinance is not of Humane Authority, it came not from Men, but from God alone. *Paul* therefore makes that Challenge, 1 Cor. 1. 13. *Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?* Baptiſm is not a Precept given in the Law of Nature, or Moral Law ; but is a Poſitive Precept entirely depending on the will of the Lawgiver : Though it hath a reference to the Moral Law, as it requires of all Men Obedience, to whatſoever God ſhall ſee meet to preſcribe to Men, by his Sovereign Authority, by the Second Command ; ſo that though the Duty is Poſitive, yet the Obligation is Moral, and Natural ; and proceeds from this, that it is required of us by him, who hath Authority to preſcribe. Now, tho' Chriſt appointed it by vertue of his Kingly Office, yet it is by a Divine Authority which is rooted in the Divine Nature, which is the ſame in all the Three Perſons. And hence it is not ſaid, in the *Names*, in the *Plural*, but in the *Name*, in the *Singular*.

(2.) *THAT the Diſpenſers of this Ordinance are to do it by Authority derived from him.* To do a thing in another's Name, ſuppoſeth him that doth it, to be Authorized ſo to do, by him in whoſe Name he doth it. There muſt be a Power devolved on him for it, which alone can juſtify him in what he doth. Every Man may not take upon him to execute the King's Edicts, but it belongs to ſuch as are Commiſſioned. Baptiſm is therefore joyned with the Commiſſion of teaching or *Diſcipling*, Math. 28. 19. intimating, that he who is not called to do the one, hath no warrant to do the other. Nay it is certain, that there is a private as well as a publick teaching, and that is of *Charity*, and Chriſtians are bound to *exhort one another daily* ; but the other is of *Authority*, and he that doth it, muſt have his *Charter* for it, elſe God will charge them for going before he ſent them. But Baptiſm is a *Royal Seal* ſet to the Covenant ; and who ſhall dare to do that, but one appointed to do it by the Prince ? They muſt needs therefore be in an error, who make it lawful for private Chriſtians, and for Midwives, to apply this Ordinance in caſe of Neceſſity ; for indeed this Neceſſity is a feigned thing, and grounded on a miſtake, ſuppoſing it abſolutely neceſſary to Salvation ; which may be conſidered afterwards.

2. IT farther intends, that, by this Ordinance, *we are Conſecrated to all theſe Perſons.* To be Baptized into their Name, is to have their Name called upon us, and that implies that we are ſet apart, and ſolemnly devoted to their Service. It is as it were, the Note that is ſet upon them, whereby they are declared to be for God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, and for no other. It is to be a Witneſs that theſe are entred into Covenant with One God in Three Perſons ; and therefore intimates that we are Chriſtians by our Profeſſion. There are others that profeſs a belief of One God ; but this is an Article of the *Chriſtian Faith*, that we believe in *God, Father, Son, and Spirit.*

3. IT alſo intimates, that *all the Three Perſons, are concerned in the New Covenant, and perſonally engaged for the Salvation of God's Elect.* That Baptiſm is a Seal of the New Covenant, hath already been obſerved ; and it belongs to the eſſence of a Sacrament of the New Teſtament. Now it is certain, that in this Covenant, every of the Divine Perſons is concerned, and each of them hath his manner of working aſcribed to him. God the Father hath *Choſen us* to Salvation, God the Son hath *Redeemed us*, and purchaſed Salvation for us, and God the Spirit *Sanctifies us*, by applying to us the purchaſe of the Son, according to the Father's purpoſe. Hence we have that of the Apoſtle, 2 Cor. 13. 14. *The grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the love of God, and the communion of the holy Ghoſt, be with you all, Amen.* We therefore are to exerciſe our Faith on them all, and acknowledge each of them in our Salvation: And it is certain, all God's Works *out of himſelf*, ſuch as is the Salvation of ſinful Men, are common to the whole Trinity, becauſe they flow from his Eſſential Properties, whatſoever difference is aſſigned to the manner of their working.

BEFORE we paſs from the Conſideration of the outward Sign, and the application of it, it may not be amiſs, in a few words, to conſider of the *Neceſſity of this Ordinance*, or the Adminiſtration of the outward part of it; and the rather, becauſe there are differing thoughts, among profeſſed Chriſtians about it. Beſides, that there are ſome who deny any thing but a Spiritual Baptiſm, under the New Teſtament Diſpenſation, contrary to the expreſs mind of the Goſpel ; there are others that place abſolute Neceſſity upon it, and will not allow that there can be any Salvation without it ; and for that reaſon they allow any Perſon to adminiſter it, in caſe of Neceſſity, which Neceſſity they argue from hence. On the other hand, there are too many who ſlight it ſo far, as to neglect it, as a thing at leaſt indifferent, and ſo ſeek it not either for themſelves or for theirs. Some alſo would perſwade us, that Baptiſm was only a temporary Ordinance, in the beginning of the Plantation of the Goſpel Church, to diſtinguiſh Believers from Infidels, which afterwards ceaſed ; as the *Socinians.* We may then take the matter into Conſideration, and ſet it in a true light. And here let us obſerve,

1. *THAT Baptiſm was appointed by Chriſt to be a Sacrament of the New-Covenant during the State of the Goſpel Church on Earth.* That Chriſt himſelf was the Author of this Ordinance is evident, for tho' it was promulgated by *John the Baptiſt*

niſt, as his Forerunner, yet it was by his Authority; and when he appeared on his publick Miniſtry, he practiſed it by his Apoſtles, by whom we are told, that he baptized *more than John did*, Joh. 4. 1. And that he confirmed it to be a *ſtanding Ordinance*, and not tranſient, appears by the Commiſſion he gave to his Apoſtles upon his Aſcenſion, Mat. 28. 19, 20. *Go ye therefore and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghoſt: Teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world. Amen.* And it was on this account that the Apoſtles wherever they came, and brought any over to embrace the Profeſſion of Chriſt, whether of Jews or Gentiles, perſwaded them to be Baptized, as is every where obvious. Beſides, the *End* and *Uſe* of this Ordinance will ſtand to confirm this: For they that deny its perpetuity, ground it on an error, as if the only uſe of it was to be an outward badge to diſtinguiſh Chriſtians from Jews or Pagans; and ſo among People, who are all profeſſed Chriſtians, its no more needful: Whereas we have obſerved, that that was not only a *ſecondary end* of it, but that *primarily* it is to be a ſacred Seal of the New Covenant, and an external confirmation of that Covenant to all that are the Viſible People of God. And by it, as they are bound to all the Duties of the true Religion (as by Circumciſion the Jews were obliged to all the Duties of the Moſaical Pædagogy,) ſo it is to be a help to confirm our Faith in the Promiſes of the New Covenant, and eſtabliſh us in our hope of Glory: It is to be a token of our Communion with Chriſt, and of our Union to him, *Gal.* 3. 27. *Rom.* 6. 3, 4. This is a pledge of our being pardoned our Sins, *Act.* 22. 16. And of our Regeneration, *Tit.* 3.5. And theſe are things which belong to all true Chriſtians.

2. *HENCE we may conſider, of what Neceſſity it is to the Profeſſors of the Chriſtian Religion.* And here we may obſerve, that *Neceſſity* may come under a double Conſideration, viz. *Abſolute*, or *Hypothetical*. A thing may be ſaid to be *abſolutely neceſſary*, when it muſt needs be, and cannot be otherwiſe; it belongs to the very Nature of the thing: and to deny it, denies the thing itſelf; ſo that every thing that is eſſential to a thing, and cannot be ſeparated from it, is thus neceſſary; ſo it is neceſſary that a Man have a reaſonable Soul. A thing is then ſaid to be *Hypothetically neceſſary*, when, not from the Nature of the thing, but from ſome Accidental reaſon, it is made ſo. Thus ſometimes there is a *diſjunctive neceſſity*; either *this* or *that* muſt be, though it may be not neceſſary, whether this or that. And to this Head may be annumerated a *moral neceſſity*, which ariſeth not from the Nature of the thing it ſelf, but from the Connection between the Precept and the Promiſe. And here comes in the diſtinction obſerved by Divines, between a thing's being neceſſary as a *Medium*, and neceſſary *by Vertue of a Precept*. A thing is then ſaid to be a neceſſary *Medium*, when without it the end cannot be obtained, it having an inſeperable Connection with it, in the Nature of the thing: and neceſſary *preceptively*, when God hath by a Poſitive Law, made it the Duty of all that are capable, to conform to it. Now it is only in this latter ſenſe that Baptiſm may be ſaid to be neceſſary. It is indeed appointed by God to be a Medium or help to our Salvation, and is made by his Grace to be not a little helpful herein to forward the Salvation of ſuch as do rightly improve it. And thoſe that may enjoy it and neglect it, do bring Guilt upon themſelves, and caſt contempt on the Divine Authority. But it is not *ſuch a* Medium, as that without it Men cannot be ſaved. Salvation is not inſeparably connected with it. There are many who have been ſaved without it. Some dye before they are capable of it orderly; ſome are prevented of it by living in Places where they cannot regularly obtain it. Faith is a neceſſary Medium, for without it no Salvation, but not ſo Baptiſm. Hence the diverſity of expreſſion, Mar. 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved*; *but he that believeth not ſhall be damned.* Some dye unbaptized thro' their Parents fault: Yea, a Man may be a Godly Man, and yet be doubtful about Infant Baptiſm. Now God's Grace is not reſtrained to the ignorance or error of Men, as though thro' their neglect, God's Electing Grace ſhould be made void; and though the Precept preſcribes this as an External Medium, yet, as it hath no Vertue of its own, ſo God who arbitrarily appoints, can work without: and tho' Poſitive Precepts oblige us to Duty, and we cannot neglect them without Sin, yet they do not tye God's hands. It is not therefore the *want* of the Ordinance, which God Providentially deprives Men of, but the *contempt*, that expoſeth Men to his Wrath.

II. WE are now to paſs over to *the Spiritual part*; or the thing *Signified*, and *Sealed* by the other. And that is laid before us in Three Particulars,

1. *OUR Ingrafting into Chriſt.* And here for our better Underſtanding of the things which are under Conſideration, let me in general call to mind, that Baptiſm is a Seal of the Covenant of Grace: Now it is the Nature of a Covenant, that it is a Mutual Obligation between two Parties upon terms; and that which is the Obligation of ſuch a Covenant confirms the Obligation on both Parties: And hence whatſoever God engageth on his part, and the Believer on his, are herein ſignified and ratified after a Covenant manner. Now both of theſe are pointed at in this firſt, and each of them ſeverally, in the two that follow. In this therefore the main thing intended, is our *Union with Chriſt*, which, as it is ſet forth in the Word of God by diverſe Similitudes, ſo one of theſe is *ingraffing*

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into him: Which is ſet forth by our being cut out of the wild Olive, and being inſerted into the true Olive, *Rom.* 11. Now this Union is made in *Effectual Calling*, in which the Soul being perſwaded to accept of the terms propoſed, Chriſt is embraced by Faith, and by his Spirit takes poſſeſſion of the Believer; and ſo they entertain each other in the neareſt Relation; and this Relation is made inſeparable. Hence that, Iſai. 55. 3. *I will make an everlaſting covenant with you.* Hoſ. 2. 18, 19. *I will betroth thee unto me for ever, yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteouſneſs, and in judgment, and in loving kindneſs, and in mercies.* Now Baptiſm, as it is a Seal of the Covenant, ſo it is a Sign or Token of this Covenant, as well as a Seal of it: And herein it anſwers Circumciſion, which is expreſly ſaid to be a Token of the Covenant, *Gen.* 17. 11. Hence that, Gal. 3. 27. *For as many of you as have been baptized into Chriſt, have put on Chriſt.* Now by our being thus ingraffed into him, we are made to partake in his Sap and Vertue, and thereby receive Grace from him, no longer to live to Sin, but to God.

2. *OUR Partaking in the Benefits of the Covenant of Grace.* This, and that which follows, do genuinely flow from the former: For *Union* is the ground and foundation of *Communion*, and was deſigned to make way for it; we are therefore put into Chriſt, and made Branches of this Vine, that we may participate in the vertue of it, and grow up in it, and bear fruit, *Joh.* 15. *begin.* Now this Communion contains under it, both what God ſtands engaged to us in the Covenant, and what we are engaged in to him. And under the former of theſe, are contained, all thoſe Benefits which Chriſt hath purchaſed for us, and are ratified to us in the Covenant, and Sealed in Baptiſm: Now theſe are manifold, and may be ſummarily gathered up under theſe Benefits, which we formerly obſerved, which flow from effectual Calling. Whatſoever Chriſt purchaſed for his Elect, is exhibited in the Goſpel Covenant, and contained in the Promiſe therein made to all ſuch as receive him by Faith; and are therefore given together with him, to all ſuch as accept of him on the terms propoſed, *Rom.* 8. 32. and therefore the *Pardon of our Sins*, and removing from us the ſentence of Condemnation under which we were held by the Curſe that was upon us; we are therefore told, Rom. 8. 1. *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Chriſt Jeſus, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit.* And this is ratified to us in Baptiſm, according to Act. 2. 38 *Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, for the remiſſion of ſins.* Not that the External Ordinance doth it, but is a Seal of it to them that are in Chriſt. And with this the *Juſtification of our Perſons*, under which is contained our title to Eternal Life, which flows from the *Vicarious Satisfaction*, which he as our Surety made for us, and this flows from the former, becauſe there can be no remiſſion beſtowed upon us, but what comes to us in the way of a Juſtification. There is alſo our *Adoption*, by which we are advanced to the Dignity and Priviledge of the Children of God; and are made Co-heirs with Chriſt in the Glorious Inheritance, *Rom.* 8. 17. This *Title* alſo, is comprehended in Baptiſm, & is expreſt in *Gal.* 3. 26, 27. and is bro't in there to prove our being the Children of God. *Ye are the Children*, &c. *For as many*, &c. Our *Regeneration* alſo or *Sanctification* is another of theſe Benefits, by vertue whereof we are furniſhed with the Sanctifying Principles, which furniſh us for New Obedience. And this is implied in that, Tit. 3. 5. *He ſaved us by the waſhing of regeneration, and the renewing of the holy Ghoſt.* And to this belongeth the Promiſe of waſhing, Ezek. 36. 25. *Then will I ſprinkle clean water upon you, and ye ſhall be clean: from all your filthineſs, and from all your idols will I cleanſe you.* To which we are to refer both the *Mortification of Sin* in us; which is implied in that, *Rom.* 6. 7. and the *Quickning of us to a life of Grace*; which is plainly intimated, ver. 4, 5. *Therefore we are buried with him by baptiſm into his death, that like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the dead by the glory of the Father: even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeneſs of his death: we ſhall be alſo in the likeneſs of his reſurrection.* And to this may be referred our *Perſeverance*, which is continued by the maintaining the new Principle of Spiritual Life in us, that it may dye no more, ver. 6. *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of ſin might be deſtroyed, that henceforth we ſhould not ſerve ſin.* Hitherto alſo is referred our *Glorification*, and that both in the *Inchoations* of it here, both in the Peace of Conſcience, and the Aſſurance of God's love, and in the *Conſummation* of it in the end, in a Glorious Reſurrection, and the enjoyment of Eternal Life. And this ſeems to be implied in that, 1 Cor. 15. 29. *Elſe what ſhall they do, which are baptized for the dead, if the dead riſe not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?* And may well be included in that, Rom. 6. 5. *For if we have been planted together in the likeneſs of his death: we ſhall be alſo in the likeneſs of his reſurrection.* All theſe things are comprehended in the Promiſe of the New Covenant, which Covenant is Sealed in Baptiſm, and belong to the Promiſe on God's part, and that Communion which we are admitted to with him, upon our being united to him.

3. *OUR Engagement to be the Lord's.* This Obligation is laid on us by God, in the Covenant into which he admits us; and is accepted, and ſubmitted to by us, upon our Believing: For it belongs to our embracing of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt by Faith, in which we accept of him as his Father hath offered him to us in the terms of the Covenant: it belongs to his eſpouſal of us to himſelf, according to what he ſays, Hoſ. 2. 19. *And I will betroth thee unto me for ever, yea, I will betroth*

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thee unto me in righteouſneſs, and in judgment, and in loving kindneſs, and in mercies. And this alſo is implied in *Rom.* 6. 4. There is firm engagement in it, that we will no more ſerve ſin, nor fulfil the luſts of the fleſh, but will devote ourſelves to Holineſs and Righteouſneſs all our Days. Every Believer hath done as he did, Pſal. 119 106. *I have ſworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.* And this he hath ratified and confirmed in his Baptiſm. This Inference the Apoſtle therefore draws from our Baptiſm, Rom. 6. 11. *Likewiſe reckon ye alſo your ſelves to be dead unto ſin: but alive unto God, thro' Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.*

2. WE may obſerve, *the Analogy which there is between the External and Spiritual parts of this Element*; in thoſe words, *they do ſignify and ſeal this.* We obſerved, that this Sacrament is both a Sign and Seal, as well as an Inſtrument of Conveyance: and in every of theſe there is ſome repreſentation of the latter in the former: Now as it is a *Sign*, it muſt carry ſome *ſignification* in it; elſe it would not anſwer the denomination: and tho' it is enough for an arbitrary Sign, that it is appointed to ſignify ſuch a thing; yet God hath pleaſed to make choice of ſuch an Element, and ſuch a Ceremonial Application, as do carry in them, that which may ſignify and expreſs an Analogy. Thus the uſefulneſs of Water for the cleanſing of the Body from the filthineſs of the Fleſh which cleaves to it, doth very aptly repreſent the vertue of the Blood of Chriſt, when applied to us by his Spirit, to cleanſe the Soul from it's ſpiritual Uncleanneſs: Hence that, 1 Pet. 3. 21. *Baptiſm doth now ſave us, not the putting away of the filth of the fleſh.* We are therefore told, 1 Joh. 1. 7. *The blood of Jeſus Chriſt his Son, cleanſeth us from all ſin.* And as it is by the application of Water to our Bodies, by which we are made to partake in this Vertue, and made Clean, ſo it is by the Spirit's applying the Vertue and Efficacy of the Blood of Chriſt to us, that we are purged from our Sins: Hence we read of his *waſhing us in his Blood*, Rev. 1. 5. And this is the *Fountain* that we are told was *opened* for this purpoſe, *Zech.* 13. 1. And if we conſider this Ordinance as a Seal of the Covenant wherein it anſwers Circumciſion of Old; ſo as by the Sacramental application of the Element to our Bodies, we are dedicated ſolemnly to Chriſt to be his, which is a declared witneſs of it; ſo the Spirit of God, by applying to us the regenerating Vertue of Chriſt's Blood, ratifies to us the New and Everlaſting Covenant: and tho' the application of Water, doth not of its own Nature convey to us any ſaving Grace; yet by vertue of the Promiſe, and the Operation of the Spirit with it, it becomes an Inſtrument of Conveyance to the Believer: Hence the Apoſtle gives us an Account of the way in which it comes to be effectual for this Deſign, 1 Pet. 3. 21. *Baptiſm doth now ſave us, (not the putting away the filth of the fleſh, but the anſwer of a good Conſcience towards God) by the Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt.* And here we may very briefly conſider, *what is the true and proper Efficacy of this Ordinance of Baptiſm*, about which there are ſuch hot Diſputes between us and the Church of *Rome*, who aſſert, that not only the Guilt of Sin is removed by Baptiſm, and the Dominion of it taken away, that it reigns not; but that it *ceaſeth to be.* As to the two former we readily acknowledge it, but this latter not only do we deny, but it is contradictory both to the Word of God, to the Experience of all the Godly, and to the Papiſts themſelves, as will appear in the next: for tho' *Juſtification* is entire at once, with reſpect to the Perſon, yet *Sanctification* is a progreſſive work; and tho' there is a foundation of it laid in Regeneration, yet it is not perfected till we come to Glory. It is of ſuch as are Baptized, and ſuppoſed to be Godly, that the Apoſtle hath that, 1 Joh 1. 8. *If we ſay we have no ſin, we deceive our ſelves, and the truth is not in us.* And all the Godly do bear witneſs to it in their Confeſſions and Addreſſes unto God. We Sin every Day, and *in many things we offend all.* How many Sins of holy Men do ſtand upon Record to be a witneſs for this? And this is an undeniable evidence of Original Sin abiding in us, which is the fountain from which all Actual Sins do derive, which otherwiſe would not be. *David* therefore runs up his Sin hither, *Pſal.* 51. 5. And how fearfully doth *Paul* complain of it, and yet he was a Baptized Perſon, *Rom.* 7. And ſurely if *carnal Concupiſcence* remain in ſuch, it is a contradiction to ſay, that Sin is aboliſhed in them. And it is certain, that Baptiſm removes Sin only *Sacramentally*, as it is a Seal of the Covenant, and therefore only confirms the Covenant Promiſe, which doth not engage to take Sin away, as to it's being in us, at once: And tho' Sanctification is ſealed hereby as well as Juſtification; and therefore Sin cannot reign in the Regenerate, yet not that it ſhall not remain; for *Paul* ſaith, Rom 7. 21. *I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is preſent with me.* Another thing which they aſſert is, That the efficacy of Baptiſm reacheth only to Sins paſt before it, but not to ſuch as are committed after it; on which they have introduced their ſurreptitious Sacrament of *Pennance*: But not to inſiſt on the contradiction which hereby they do involve themſelves in; ſince if all Sin be taken away in Baptiſm, how then ſhould they Sin at all afterwards? But as to the thing it ſelf, we know that the Sacraments, one whereof is *Baptiſm*, they are Seals of the Covenant, and do accordingly ſtand to ratify the whole Covenant, whereto it is annexed as a Seal; and muſt therefore be coextenſive with it. Now it is certain, that in the Covenant, there is a Juſtification of the Perſon, whereby all Condemnation paſſeth away from the Juſtified Perſon; Rom. 8. 1. *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Chriſt Jeſus, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit.* And Juſtification

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is applied upon Believing, Faith being the Inſtrument which receives, *Rom.* 5. 1. So that tho' upon the Commiſſion of new Sins, there is Repentance to be exerciſed, and forgiveneſs to be asked of God and waited for; yet concerning thoſe that belong to the true Iſrael of God, Chriſt is *exalted to give Repentance & forgiveneſs of ſins*, Acts 5. 31. And a right to this is given in the Covenant, and ſecured to every Believer. And this is the encouragement given to all ſuch, that God will chaſten and humble them for their Sins, give them Grace to repent and turn, and renew their Faith in Chriſt; and that he will never caſt them off for them, but reſtore them again by Repentance: So that tho' here be no encouragement to Sin; yet great encouragement to Repent, if we Sin.

USE. BE we then all adviſed, not only to ſeek the outward Ordinance; but ſee to it, *that we have the ſpiritual Grace that is ſignified and ſealed in it*: And take care, as to have the true Conſolation of it, ſo to improve it to quicken and engage us to Holineſs of Life; and ſo ſhall it be abundantly helpful to the promoving of our Salvation.

SERMON *CCXXXIII.*

QUESTION XCV.

TO whom is Baptiſm to be Adminiſtred?

ANSWER.

BAPTISM is not to be Adminiſtred to any that are out of the viſible Church, till they profeſs their Faith in Chriſt, and Obedience to him; but the Infants of ſuch as are Members of the viſible Church, are to be Baptized.

WE have taken an Account of the Nature of Baptiſm; and are now to enquire after the true and genuine *Subjects* of it; about which there hath been, and ſtill is, a great deal of Diſpute among Men, that bear the common Name of Chriſtians; and hath among ſome amounted to a ſeparation one from another: And it is great pity, that that which is by Chriſt's appointment, a Sacrament of Union with him as our Head, and one with another, as Members of the ſame Head, ſhould be a ball of Contention, and an occaſion of ſo great Diviſions among thoſe who pretend to *one Faith*, and ought to acknowledge *one Baptiſm*. Some exclude all Infants from it, of what Denomination ſoever, reputing them Subjects incapable: Others reſtrain it to ſuch as have given an account of their ſaving Converſion, and upon it are joyned in Communion with a particular Church, together with their Immediate Seed: Others extend it to Chriſtianity in the largeſt ſenſe: Nay ſome will have it applied to inſenſible things, as Bells, and other Utenſils ſet apart by them for Religious Services. It is therefore needful that we be well informed and ſatisfied in this matter; and the Anſwer before us will be helpful to our more diſtinct taking of it up: And to facilitate this to our Conſideration, let me premiſe four things;

1. THAT the matter under our preſent Conſideration, is about *the external Adminiſtration of the Element to the Subject*. We obſerved, that there are two parts in a Sacrament, the *Sign*, which is ſome *outward thing*; and that which is *ſignified*, which is the *ſpiritual Grace*, that is connected with it. Now it is certain, that the application of the former is *Miniſterial*, and is committed to ſuch as are Commiſſioned to diſpenſe the Goſpel and Ordinances of of it; whereas the latter properly belongs to the Spirit of God, who is the Author of all ſaving Grace in the hearts of Men: Hence that of *John*, Joh. 1. 33. *He that ſent me*, &c. And it is unqueſtionable, that there may be one of theſe, where the other is not.

2. HENCE the proper enquiry here, is, *Who are to be looked on as the Subjects of this outward Ordinance*? This is the only thing incumbent on a Goſpel Miniſter in this regard, to know whom they are to whom he is authorized and enjoyned to apply Water-Baptiſm; and if he be groundedly ſatisfied in this, he thereby comes to know the limits of the Subject, and ſo the extent of his Duty. If he Baptiſeth ſuch, and no other but ſuch, as Chriſt hath deſigned it for, his Conſcience ſtands clear, and he muſt leave the Succeſs of it to Chriſt, who only can afford it to any. And as he knows not to whom Chriſt will ſavingly Bleſs it, ſo he may be ſatisfied that in the faithful diſcharge of his Duty, he ſhall be a *ſweet ſavour to God*, 2 Cor. 2. 15, 16. And Chriſt himſelf could comfort himſelf in this, when he made that complaint of his unſucceſsfulneſs, Iſa. 49. 4. *Then I ſaid, I have laboured in vain, I have ſpent my ſtrength for nought, and in vain, yet ſurely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.*

3. *IT is of no little weight, that the Adminiſtrators of it be well ſatisfied who theſe are.* God puts no ſmall ſtreſs on his own Ordinances: Nor is it a thing indifferent whether they neglect this Duty to thoſe to whom it is due, or apply the Ordinance to ſuch as have no right of Claim to it. God gave in charge to the Miniſters of the Sanctuary, that they ſhould *put difference between the Clean and the Unclean*; and that they *ſhould not receive the Canaanite into the houſe of God*: And Chriſt himſelf warns us, that we *caſt not* his *holy things to Dogs*; and hath willed that we ſhould

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Feed his Lambs; and hath threatned thoſe who neglect their Duty in this regard; nor is a Miniſter true to his truſt, if he be not careful in this regard.

4. *HENCE there muſt be ſome Rule given in the Goſpel to determine this.* We are told, Deut. 29. 29. *Secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but thoſe which are revealed, belong unto us, and to our children for ever.* It is not for us to be over curious in inquiring, who belongs to the Election of God's Grace: And if that were the Rule in this caſe, the Servants of Chriſt muſt be ever at a loſs, and their Conſciences muſt be entangled; but there is no ſuch thing: The Goſpel is therefore our directory. So the Charge given the Apoſtles runs, Mat. 28. 20. *Teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you.* We are bound *to the Law and to the Teſtimony*, and to go no further, nor to come behind here. What *Paul* ſaith of the other Sacrament, is true here, 1 Cor. 11. 23. *I have received of the Lord, that which alſo I delivered unto you.* Nor had *Chriſt* been *faithful in his houſe as Moſes was*, had he left us at a loſs on this account. Here then we may proceed to conſider, what Light the Word of God will afford us on this account. And we ſhall find that our *Catechiſm* reduceth this to Three Heads, the Conſideration whereof will afford us help in the reſolution of this Caſe.

1. *THAT none being and abiding out of the Viſible Church, are to be Baptized.* The diſtinction of Viſible and Inviſible with reſpect to the Church in this World, is known & approved: and the ſame Perſon may belong to each in a diverſe conſideration: and we have the foundation of this difference, Rom. 9. 6. *For they are not all Iſrael which are of Iſrael.* And by the viſible Church, we are to underſtand all them who ſtand related to the Goſpel Adminiſtration as ſubjects of it: and theſe may be numbred under two ſorts. 1. *Such as upon the report and offer of the Goſpel made to them, do by an open and free Profeſſion, entertain the terms of it, and put themſelves under the Rules and Ordinances of it.* By this way therefore we find that Perſons were added to the Church, in the Hiſtory of the New Teſtament. 2. *The Children of ſuch as theſe*, who are involved with them in the ſame relation, according to the appointment of God. But the conſideration of this laſt, will come under the 3d particular, to which I refer it; and we may here conſider it with regard to the former. Thoſe that are here excluded, are all thoſe that are out of the *Viſible* Church; for a Man may be out of the *Inviſible* Church, and yet have a Goſpel claim to it, *Rom.* 9. 6. Now there are different thoughts about this Queſtion, *Who are not of the Viſible Church?* and many there are who ſtraiten it without Scripture Warrant: But I think that the Apoſtle deſignedly gives us a Deſcription of them, Eph. 2. 12. *That at that time ye were without Chriſt, being aliens from the common wealth of Iſrael, and ſtrangers from the covenants of promiſe, having no hope, and without God in the world.* But I ſhall not tarry here to expound every Article of it, but only draw ſome Inferences from it.

1. *THAT all ſuch as never heard of the Goſpel, nor had the Offers of Chriſt, and Salvation by him, made to them, are out of the Viſible Church.* It was reckoned as a diſtinguiſhing Priviledge belonging to *Iſrael*, that they had *God's Statutes and Judgments*, Deut. 4. 7, 8. And, this is mentioned as their main Prerogative, *Rom.* 3. 1, 2. And we before obſerved, that there muſt be a Profeſſion of the true Religion to the Conſtitution of Viſible Church-Membership. Now where there is no knowledge of this Religion, there can be no profeſſion of it. And it is equally certain, that where the Goſpel comes not, there is no knowledge of this; for the light of Nature makes no diſcovery of it, but it was revealed by the Goſpel, 2 *Tim.* 1. 10.

2. *THAT ſuch as have had the Goſpel ſent to them, and they rejected it, are alſo out of this Church.* We find that when the *Apoſtles* were ſent forth to Preach the Goſpel to all Nations, they did not find a like Succeſs every where, nor from all Perſons: if ſome entertained them, others withſtood them, blaſphemed the Name of Chriſt, and perſecuted thoſe that were ſent to them. Now it is evident that ſuch as theſe abode ſtrangers; for it is not the offer, but the entertainment of the Goſpel, that will give them this denomination. And Chriſt's Meſſengers were appointed to ſhake off the duſt of their feet againſt ſuch as ſo treated them. And we find how they dealt with the Jews on this account, *Act.* 13. 45, 46.

3. *THOSE that have totally abandoned the Chriſtian Religion, and turned to another, ceaſe to be of the Viſible Church.* This follows from the Conſideration that a Profeſſion of the true Religion, is that by which Men, who formerly were out of it, come to be annumerated to it; and it is a Note by which they are known to be ſuch. It is true, there may be many groſs Apoſtacies which Men may be guilty of, both in Doctrine and Manners, and yet be Chriſtians in the main of their Profeſſion: But when they turn to a *falſe Religion*, and put off the true one, in all the diſtinguiſhing Articles of it, they thereby ceaſe to be Chriſtians, and have not ſo much as the face of Chriſtianity upon them. And from the Premiſes it appears, that *Pagans* who Worſhip a falſe God or Gods; *Mahumetans* that reject the Goſpel, and have ſet up a falſe Religion; and *Jews* that maintain the Moſaical Pædagogy againſt the Goſpel, are not to be acknowledged of the Viſible Church: and all ſuch as once made a Profeſſion, but are now gone over to any of theſe, and Abjured Chriſt, muſt be of the ſame number. Nor can thoſe whom we call *Deiſts* excuſe themſelves from this, inaſmuch as they abandon all *Revealed* Religion, which is utterly inconſiſtent with Chriſtianity. Now that Baptiſm is not to be Adminiſtred

to

to any ſuch as theſe, during their continuance in this ſtate, will be very evident to ſuch as conſider the nature, deſign, and uſe of the Ordinance. And here obſerve,

1. *THAT Baptiſm is a Sacrament of the New Covenant.* This hath been already made to appear, when we conſidered the Deſcription of a Sacrament, and alſo of Baptiſm: But it is of uſe to be here again conſidered, for our better clearing up of the Truth in hand: For if it be a Sacrament, the uſe of it muſt be Sacramental; and if it belongs to the New-Covenant, it muſt needs be accommodated to the Deſign of that Covenant.

2. *THAT it belongs to the Deſign and Uſe of this Ordinance, that it is a* Seal *of this Covenant.* I do not ſay that this is all the Deſign and Uſe of it; for we before obſerved, that it is alſo a Sign and an Inſtrument of the Conveyance of Grace; but this conſideration of it as a *Seal*, hath a peculiar ſerviceableneſs to the Demonſtration of the Aſſertion under conſideration, as will appear from the right Conception of the Uſe of a Seal, for the confirmation of ſuch Inſtruments, to which it is annexed. Hence,

3. *IT neceſſarily preſumes, that there is ſuch a Covenant, in order to the ſetting of a Seal to it.* Seals are not wont to be ſet to Blanks; they are not the Matter of the Covenant, but only uſed for the Ratification of it: If therefore there be not a Covenant drawn, and the Articles of it ſtated, it cannot be in any readineſs to be ſealed. Baptiſm indeed is a *Poſitive Ordinance*, and ſo the force of it's Obligation depends on the pleaſure of the Inſtituter: But becauſe Chriſt hath annexed it to the Covenant for this end, it always points us to the Covenant in order to our right underſtanding the force of it: Hence it is ſaid of Circumciſion, Rom. 4. 11. It was *a ſeal of the Righteouſneſs by Faith.*

4. *IT is to be an evidence of the Reſtipulation of the Party ſo Covenanting.* We formerly obſerved, that one deſign of a Sacrament, is to be a token of the Covenant, as Circumciſion is called, *Gen.* 17.11. And this not only to evidence it to the Perſon himſelf, to put him in mind of his Covenant Obligation, but alſo to others, it being one diſtinguiſhing Note between thoſe that are viſible Chriſtians and others: Hence the People of God and others are frequently notified by that diſtinction, *Circiſed* and *Uncircumciſed.*

5. HENCE *becauſe theſe are out of the Church Viſible, and ſo not within the Covenant, the applying of this Ordinance to ſuch would be inſignificant*; yea, would indeed be a *falſe Witneſs*: It would be a Seal without an Inſtrument, and render it a *vain Ordinance*, in the very Uſe which is made of it: And we are ſure, that God never appointed any of his Inſtitutions in vain, but to be ſome way ſerviceable to the End of them.

II. THAT *when ſuch as theſe ſhall make a Profeſſion of Faith in Chriſt and Obedience to him, they may and ought to be Baptized.* And the ground or reaſon of this is very evident from what hath been ſaid before: But we may here take a more diſtinct Account of it, in the following Concluſions;

1. *THE outward Diſpenſation of the Covenant of Grace, is by Chriſt's Command extended to all Nations.* It was once ſhut up to the Nation of *Iſrael*, and all others were ſtrangers to it, excepting ſuch as were Proſelyted to that Nation. But after Chriſt's Reſurrection, he did, upon his Aſcenſion, enlarge it, and ſent it to the whole World illimitedly, *Mat.* 28. 19. *Mark* 16. 15,16. Hence that, Gal. 3. 28. *For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promiſe: but God gave it to Abraham by promiſe.* And, Eph. 2. 13, 14. *But now in Chriſt Jeſus, ye who ſometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Chriſt. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.* And this was the Kindneſs of God which was reſerved for Goſpel times.

2. *IN the Preaching of this Covenant, Chriſt and Salvation by him, were to be offered to all upon Terms.* It is true, that God Providentially governed this Affair; and the Goſpel did not actually come to all at once, *Acts* 16. 6, 7. but it was illimited as to the Commiſſion; and the Subject of it was Chriſt and Salvation thro' him; which was to be made a tender of, to all that came within the ſound of it, *Acts* 17. 30. But it being in a Covenant way, the *Terms* of this Covenant were to be opened to Men; they were not only to be told, that there was Salvation to be had, but alſo in what *Way*; and we have the Subſtance of it expreſt, Mark 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized ſhall be ſaved, but he that believeth not, ſhall be damned.* And that it muſt be in this way, appears from the very *Nature* of a Covenant, which always preſuppoſeth *Terms.*

3. *IN the opening of theſe Terms, there is a Promiſe to be made to ſuch as will accept of theſe Terms.* Without this it could not be propoſed in the form of a Covenant, in which there are to be mutual ſtipulations, each Party obliging himſelf accordingly: Thoſe therefore that carry the Goſpel into the World, being to treat with Men as reaſonable Creatures, are to encourage Men to receive their Invitation, by telling what is the Advantage they ſhall gain by their Compliance; and this is to *draw them with the Cords of a Man*; and ſo Chriſt himſelf treated Men, *Matth.* 11. 28.

4. *HENCE Men, by their cloſing in with theſe Terms, do thus enter into the Covenant.* Chriſt doth on his part ſay to Men by his Ambaſſadors, that if they thus accept of him, he is theirs; and ſo the Covenant is plighted: For it is certain, that the Conſtitution of a Covenant conſiſts in a *mutual Conſent*; and whatſoever follows, is not the Covenant it ſelf, but only the Ratification of it: When therefore Circumciſion is called the Covenant, it is a *tropical* Expreſſion.

5. *THAT Men outwardly thus do by a Profeſſion of Faith in Chriſt, and Obedience to him.* That theſe two are the Terms of the Covenant, is abundantly manifeſt in the Goſpel it ſelf: To theſe is the Promiſe made; and therefore on their ſubmiſſion to it, the Covenant paſſeth into being. And there are two things required, viz. *Confeſſion with the mouth*, and *Believing in the heart*, Rom. 10. 10. The former of theſe is the outward part, and that which is diſcovered to Men; and tho' without the latter Men cannot approve themſelves to God, who requires Truth in the inward part; yet by the former they recommend themſelves to Men, and do make their Chriſtianity Viſible.

6. *THAT Chriſt hath ordained Baptiſm to be a Seal of this Covenant, to all ſuch as do ſo profeſs.* That this is one of the Goſpel Inſtitutions, hath formerly been obſerved; and Chriſt hath therein told us who they are, to whom he will have it be applied, that ſo his Servants need not be at a loſs about it: Nor is it a bare liberty that is granted to ſuch, and they *may* demand this Ordinance, of thoſe to whom Chriſt hath committed the Diſpenſation of it, and they cannot juſtly refuſe it; but he hath made it the Duty, as of his Meſſengers in his Name to affix this Seal to ſuch, ſo of all ſuch as ask it, and ſubmit to it; it being a Seal of the Covenant, and a Teſtification of their being under the Obligation of it. Hence *Teaching* and *Baptiſm*, are to go together, (*Matth.* 28. 19.) as a Seal is applied to a Covenant to confirm it. And this we find to have been the practice of the *Apoſtles* whereſoever they Preached the Goſpel; upon Mens profeſſing their Acceptance of and Subjection to the Offers made, to apply Baptiſm to them. Many inſtances there are for this. Thus it was with *the three thouſand Converts*, Act. 23. 7, &c. Thus with the honourable *Eunuch*, Act. 8. 36, 37. Thus with *Simon Magus*, ver. 13. Thus with *Cornelius and his Friends*, Chap. 10. 37. With the *Jaylor*, Chap. 16. And doubtleſs this practice of the Apoſtles was in Obedience to the Command of Chriſt laid on them.

7. *THIS Profeſſion is to be judged of by Men who cannot know the Heart, but muſt judge according to Appearance.* God hath reſerved the other as his own Prerogative; and therefore we are told, 1 Sam. 16. 7. *Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.* God hath put it into the hands of Men to diſpenſe the Goſpel-Ordinances, and hath told them who are the Subjects, and by what Rule they are to determine them, and that is by their Profeſſion, or outward demeanure of themſelves; and that this may be Hypocrital, the Experience of the moſt diſcerning Men, hath ſufficiently proved.

BUT it may be here Enquired, *What is requiſite to ſuch a Profeſſion as will give Men a title to this Ordinance?* And becauſe there are diverſe thoughts about this, we may take ſome brief account of it. It then contains theſe things in it,

1. *AN Underſtanding of the things which they Profeſs.* God in the Covenant treats with Men as rational. The *Covenant demands* muſt be underſtood, and the *Articles of the Faith* imbraced, and known what they are, as to the literal meaning of them. No Man can believe in Chriſt, except he know who he is, and how he came a Saviour to ſinful Men. Hence that, Pſal. 9. 10. *They that know thy name will put their truſt in thee.* There muſt be alſo an Underſtanding of the *Rules of Goſpel Obedience*, elſe there cannot be ſo much as a Viſible Conformity thereto. The want therefore of this knowledge is deſtructive, *Hoſ* 4. 6. And tho' Men may know and not do, yet knowledge is always preſuppoſed, *Joh.* 13 17.

2. *A profeſſed Aſſent to the truth of the things thus underſtood.* It is one thing to know the *Grammar* and *Logick* of a Propoſition, and another to believe and acknowledge it to be a *Truth*. The former therefore without this will not amount to a Profeſſion. And if a Man do not believe the things themſelves to be true, he cannot believe in the Object therein recommended to his Affiance; ſo that when the *Eunuch* asked Baptiſm of *Philip*, he made that Propoſal to him, and received his Profeſſion about it, in Act. 8. 37. *And Philip ſaid, If thou believeſt with all thine heart, thou mayeſt. And he anſwered and ſaid, I believe that Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God.*

3. *A Confeſſion of their former ſinful Courſes.* Theſe are ſuppoſed to have been before ſtrangers to the true Religion, and to have lived in an alienation from God, and under the power of their luſts: There is therefore expected of them that they do give Glory to God, by a free Confeſſion of this. Thus therefore we are told how *John* diſpenſed this Ordinance, Mat. 3. 6. *And were baptized of him in Jordan, confeſſing their ſins.* And the *Prophet* foretells the manner of the *Gentiles* coming over to the imbracing of the Goſpel, Jer. 16. 19. *The Gentiles ſhall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and ſhall ſay, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit.* And without this Confeſſion there cannot be ſo much as a Viſible Repentance expreſſed by Men.

4. *A declared Renouncing of their former falſe Principles and lewd Practices.* Though a Confeſſion be neceſſary, yet it is not alone ſufficient, but it muſt be followed with a forſaking. Hence that, Prov. 28. 13. *He that covereth his ſins ſhall not proſper; but whoſo confeſſeth and forſaketh them ſhall have mercy.* Let Men confeſs never ſo plumply, yet if they continue in the Sins which they ſo confeſs, they contradict themſelves. And of ſuch we are told, Tit. 1. 16. *They profeſs that they know God: but in works they deny him.* A Viſible Profeſſion is not only *Verbal*, but it muſt be *Practical*, and is to be judged of by Men accordingly. A good *Creed* will not do without a *Life* anſwerable to it. And this alſo muſt come within the Cognizance of Men, for of ſecret things, God only can judge.

5. THERE

5. *THERE muſt alſo be a ſolemn Promiſe of Submiſſion & Obedience to the Rules of the Goſpel Covenant.* By this they put themſelves under the Covenant, who were before ſtrangers to it. As to thoſe that were before under the Covenant, we ſhall have occaſion to conſider afterwards. And now only conſider of thoſe that are to be introduced into the Covenant; which is to be done upon their regular Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Religion, of which before they made none, but were *Aliens* from it. Now, we obſerved before, that Baptiſm is not the Covenant itſelf, but a Seal or Ratification of it, and is therefore to be Adminiſtred only to ſuch as are preſumed to be in it. Now in this Covenant they become the Subjects of the *Kingdom of Chriſt*, and in this Kingdom there are the *Laws* to which all that enter into it are to be ſubjected: and till they do profeſs themſelves ſo to be, by taking of his Yoke, and binding themſelves to live accordingly, they cannot be ſaid any way to be in the Covenant, and therefore cannot orderly have the Seal of it affixed to them; but when once they come to this, who ſhall deny Water to be Sacramentally applied to them? For, whether they are accepted by God in the Everlaſting Covenant, yet they are ſuch as Chriſt would have to be entertained in the Viſible Covenant, and have the outward Seal of it applied to them.

USE. *WE may here obſerve, that it is a dangerous thing to withold Baptiſm from them to whom it belongs.* God hath appointed a ſtate of a Viſible Church here; and Chriſt hath Inſtituted a Sacrament to be a Seal of that Covenant which is opened to them, and a badge of the Members of it: and doubtleſs, to prohibit this Ordinance to be applied to ſuch, is a practical baniſhing them from the Viſible Church of God, and bidding them go and ſerve other Gods, *Joſh.* 22. 24,25. And let ſuch alſo as call themſelves Chriſtians, and live without this Ordinance, conſider what Contempt they caſt upon the Covenant.

SERMON *CCXXXIV.*

III. *THAT the Infants of ſuch as are Members of the Viſible Church, are to be Baptized.* We before took an Account of the Subjects of this Ordinance in general, which we ſhall have occaſion here to reflect upon in particular: for as there are ſome that altogether deny the uſe of this Inſtitution in Goſpel times; ſo there are others, who tho' they acknowledge the Ordinance to continue in force, yet will not acknowledge Infants to be the ſubjects of it; looking upon them, not to come under the Comprehenſion of the Precept, and counting them not capable of receiving this Seal. There were ſome of theſe in the firſt Ages of the Church, but in theſe latter times they have much more abounded, and given no ſmall diſturbance to the Church of God; while under a pretence of Conſcience, they have ſet themſelves to withſtand the Orthodox Doctrine, and deny the Viſible Chriſtianity of the greateſt part of the Profeſſing Churches in the World, and of all ſuch as have received no other Baptiſm, but what they had in their Infancy: and though we are Charitably to think that many of theſe are truly Godly, and are acted by Conſcience, tho' erroneous, yet the Communion of Churches is hereby undermined, and an undue ſeparation made, to the hindrance of that Unity which ought to be in the Church of God. Many diſputes there have been in *Chriſtendom* on this Subject, and unſuitable heats in the management of them, & many Treatiſes have been emitted about it: the leſs therefore needs now to be ſaid on this Theme. I ſhall then endeavour to comprize the matter as briefly as I may; and here we have mainly to do, with ſuch as are Vulgarly called *Anabaptiſts*, which word ſignifies, ſuch as are for Baptizing again; though they diſown it, and call themſelves *Antipædo-baptiſts*, becauſe they diſown the Baptiſm of Infants, and will not acknowledge them to be Baptized at all: though it is certain, that all which belongs to the external part of the Ordinance is applyed to them. Here then, that we may take up the caſe aright, let me obſerve,

1. *THAT we plead not for the Abſolute indiſpenſible neceſſity of Baptiſm, but only for the Preceptive.* There are many things in Providence, which may put a bar to Mens enjoying of the Goſpel Inſtitutions, but they will not hinder the Salvation of ſuch as are ſo debarred. Theſe are indeed outward Seals of the Covenant, but though they bind *us* in Duty, (which yet is under the Government of God) yet they do not limit the Grace of God towards Men. Doubtleſs many an *Iſraelitiſh Infant* dyed before *the eighth Day*: and how many of that People that were Born after their going out of *Egypt*, are to be ſuppoſed to Dy in the Wilderneſs, during which time, Circumciſion was intermitted? And it would be an over harſh cenſure, to conclude that all theſe Periſhed Eternally.

2. *WE do not aſſert, that all Infants indiſcriminately are to be Baptized, but only ſuch as derive from thoſe that are Members of the Viſible Church.* And though all are not agreed, who are to be accounted ſuch Members, yet we limit it to ſuch, and allow it to no others. As to the Children of *Pagans*, and ſuch as make no Profeſſion of the Chriſtian Religion, we forbid them Baptiſm; till either their Parents, at leaſt one of them, do make ſuch a Profeſſion; or they themſelves are inſtructed and grow to capacity of making it, or in their Infancy be made Members of ſuch Families as have the power over them, and undertake their Chriſtian Education.

THE thing then under Conſideration, is, that *the Children of ſuch as are Members of the Viſible Church, are the Subjects of Baptiſm, and ought to be admitted to partake in it, and to with-*

hold it from them, is an injury done them, and an affront put upon Chriſt himſelf. It may here ſuffice for the making good of this Aſſertion, to lay down two Aſſertions, and give the evidence of the Truth of them, *viz.* 1. That ſuch Infants are entituled to Baptiſm, according to Inſtitution, 2. That their Infancy puts no moral Obſtruction, to their preſent participation in it. And if both theſe are true, who ſhall forbid Water to be Sacramentally Adminiſtred to them ?

1. THAT *ſuch Infants are entituled to Baptiſm according to Inſtitution.* Divines do well diſtinguiſh of right, viz. their is *jus in re*, and *jus ad rem*; by the *former* of theſe he hath a *Title*; the thing belongs to him as his own, he is the Heir or Owner of it; by the *latter* he hath a *claim* of entring upon it, and taking poſſeſſion of it; as when an heir is come to full Age. It is the *former* of theſe now under conſideration, & is firſt to be conſidered, becauſe it is the foundation of the latter: Now for the Demonſtration of this, a few Obſervations may ſuffice,

1. *THAT there is an external and mediate Diſpenſation of the Covenant of Grace, in Goſpel times.* This is a foundation Truth to be Believed, by all that would have a right conception of the Covenant Tranſactions between God & Man that there are but two eſſentially diſtinct Covenants in which God hath treated with Mankind, viz. *The Covenant of Works* & *the Covenant of Grace*: And though there have been different modes of the Adminiſtration of this latter, before & ſince the appearing of Chriſt in our Fleſh, yet the Covenant is but one and the ſame. When Man had made himſelf miſerable, by forfeiting the Happineſs exhibited in the firſt Covenant, God in his rich Mercy opened a *Remedial Covenant*, which is in and by Chriſt; the great end and deſign of it being the Salvation of Sinners by a Redeemer, whom he hath conſtituted; and though there were a more ſervile Adminiſtration of it before Chriſt, and one more free from Bondage under the Goſpel; though a Chriſt to come were ſhadowed under Types & Ceremonies, whereas we may with *open Face* diſcover him in Goſpel times; yet ſtill it is *the ſame Chriſt*, tho' under different Degrees of Manifeſtation. Nevertheleſs, there was an external diſpenſation of this Covenant then, and ſo there is now, and this was *Mediate*, or by means appointed by God for the carrying of it on: *the Goſpel is Preached to us as it was to them*, Heb. 4. 2. As there was then a difference between a *Jew outwardly*, and one *inwardly*, Rom. 2. 28. ſo there is now between a Viſible Church Member, and one that is ſo in truth or heart: and Chriſt hath aſſured us, Mat. 7. 22, 23. *Many will ſay to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy name? and in thy name have caſt out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profeſs unto them, I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity.* And thoſe who are to be Door-keepers of the viſible Church, can ſee no farther than an outward Profeſſion will give them light.

2. *THAT Men firſt become Members of the Viſible Church, by their profeſſed Subjection to this Covenant.* I ſay, *firſt*, For there is another way in which they become ſo afterwards, as will preſently be obſerved. We are here to obſerve, that when Chriſt ſent forth his Apoſtles into all the World, they went to thoſe who were before ſtrangers to the Covenant, and ſo were out of the Viſible Church, *Eph.* 2. 12. Now theſe were to be brought into it, by the Preaching of the Goſpel, and this was done by perſwading them to forſake their falſe Religions, & to embrace that which was the true one; and by this means they became Chriſtians, as the Goſpel every where acquaints us: Now to this Introduction of Perſons into the Covenant of the Goſpel, it is requiſite that there be an *expreſſed conſent* to the terms of it; and for that reaſon the Perſons ſo conſenting, muſt be of Years of underſtanding; they muſt be capable of hearing the Goſpel, conſidering the propoſals of it, elſe they cannot be voluntary in it, and act deliberately: and on this account we find in the Goſpel, that Men were firſt inſtructed in the Goſpel Truths, and upon their being perſwaded to receive theſe Truths, and give themſelves up to the Orders and Ordinances of the Goſpel, they were ſo *added to the Church*, and acknowledged to be the People of God; as is very obvious. And now they were acknowledged to be Chriſtians, and admitted to partake in the outward Priviledges of the Goſpel Covenant. Nor did the Apoſtles receive them, becauſe they did by an infallible Spirit diſcern them to be true Believers, but becauſe they were ſuch by Profeſſion, and the Rule of Charity bound them to repute them ſuch, though many of them afterwards proved otherwiſe.

3. *THAT God in the diſpenſation of this Covenant receives Children into it, together with their Parents.* Though it be true, that none but Perſons of Years and Underſtanding can make an open Profeſſion of the Covenant; yet if we obſerve the Order of God's Tranſactions with Men, in the way of the Covenant, recorded in Holy Writ, we ſhall find that when he took any near to him in a Covenant, he extended this Priviledge to their Children with them. For this reaſon, we ſhall find, that he calls them *His Children*, and the Children which they have *Born to him*, *Ezek.* 16. 20, 21. Thus the Covenant with *Abraham* engroſſeth his *Seed with him in their Generations*; and in their revolts, he is ſaid *to remember for them his Covenant with Abraham, Iſaac and Jacob.* This plea *David* uſeth with God, and Confeſſeth his Obligation to him on the account of it, *Pſal.* 116. 16. With this Argument God aggravates the Guilt of the *Jews*, in that they offered their Children to Idols, *Ezek.* 16. 20. And the ſame Covenant is continued in the Days of the New Teſtament. Hence when *Peter* invites the *Jews* to embrace

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the Goſpel, and come over to this Faith, he uſeth ſuch an Argument with them, Act. 3. 25 *Ye are the children of the Prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers.* Chap. 2. 39. *For the promiſe is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God ſhall call.* Which Promiſe muſt refer to the Goſpel, elſe it had not been pertinent to have been uſed, to draw them over from their *Judaiſm.* And that Parents may bring their *Infant*, yea *unborn Seed* under a Covenant, in which they could not actually tranſact, is acknowledged by the *Light of Nature*, & practice of meer Gentile Nations. Surely then, God who hath a right to all, may thus comprehend them; yea, it is their *priviledge* that he ſo doth, as is evident from the Nature of the thing.

4. *THAT Water-Baptiſm is a Seal, which Chriſt hath appointed to be affixt to this Covenant, and applied as an External Sign of it to ſuch as are in Covenant, and no other.* That the Ordinance it ſelf is a Seal hath before been made good, and alſo that it is a ſignificant Seal. Hence it muſt needs be a Seal to ſomething which it is uſed to confirm, elſe it would be vain and impertinent: Now that which it thus Seals, is the Covenant of Grace, and conſequently it muſt belong to thoſe who are taken into it: For tho' it be not the Covenant itſelf, yet it is an *outward badge* of it, which is a token to others, that ſuch are in Covenant, and lies as a ſtrong bond upon them, carefully to keep it, and will be a Witneſs againſt them, if they violate it. Now the Truth of this Aſſertion will be made evident from two Things,

(1) FROM *the Parallel of Circumciſion.* That Circumciſion was a Seal of the Covenant made with *Abraham*, is expreſly declared, *Gen.* 57. 10, 11. That this was no other but the Covenant of Grace is no leſs apparent from that of the *Apoſtle*, Rom. 4 11. And farther amplified in *ver.* 13. 14. And that the Goſpel Covenant is the ſame with that made with *Abraham*, is manifeſt, becauſe by cloſing in with the terms of it, we become *Abraham's Children*, Gal. 3. 7. which cannot be applied to his Natural Seed, but muſt be underſtood with regard to the Covenant plighted with him. And the reaſon of the Change of the Signs, is becauſe the former was accommodated to repreſent a Chriſt to come, and the latter a Chriſt already come; but the ſame Chriſt, and the ſame Benefits.

(2.) FROM *the expreſs Command of Chriſt about it.* That Chriſt is King of his Church, and hath Authority as ſuch, to make Inſtitutions for it, and enjoyn the Subjects of it in Obedience thereunto, hath been formerly proved; and he himſelf aſſerts it, Mat. 28. 18. *And Jeſus came, and ſpake unto them, ſaying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.* Now the Commiſſion which he hereupon gave them, *ver.* 19, 20. makes this very evident. They were ſent to *all Nations*, ſuch as were before ſtrangers to the Covenant; and their next buſineſs was to make *Diſciples* of them, for ſo the Word, which we render *teach*, properly ſignifies, *Luk.* 14. 27. Now one thing that they were to do in their making of *Diſciples*, was to *Baptize them*; which can intend no other, but that when by Preaching they had won them to embrace the Goſpel, and make a Profeſſion of it, they ſhould ſet this Seal, to ſuch, as an outward badge of their Diſcipleſhip; which was to be followed with inſtructing them in all Covenant Duties. And this is laid down as a way whereinChriſt inſtructed his Apoſtles in the way how the Viſible Church ſhould be gathered, and preſerved to the end of the World.

2. THE next thing to be conſidered is, that *their Infancy puts no moral obſtruction to their participation in this Ordinance.* They are by God's free act taken into Covenant, & therefore the Priviledges of that Covenant do belong to them as there right; and ſo they ought to participate of them as they are capable. And if this be granted, as it cannot with any good reaſon be denied, their will nothing remain but to make it appear, that their Infancy is no juſt impediment to their Baptiſm, and ſo, that they have not only a right *in* the thing, but alſo *to* it. It is readily granted, that a Man may be owner of a Priviledge, and yet muſt wait for actual enjoyment, till he be in a capacity of it: An Heir muſt be of Years & Diſcretion, before he is introduced into a free power of diſpoſing his Inheritance. And it muſt be granted, that the other Sacrament of the Supper, is a Seal of the ſame Covenant, and therefore Chriſtian Infants have a right in it; but becauſe they are not capable of participation in it, according to the deſign of it, they muſt come to Years of knowledge, before they may be admitted. But the matter is not ſo with regard to Baptiſm, but otherwiſe; for though there be an Improvement of it, to be made by us, that we cannot ſo make till we are come to have the uſe of our moral Powers, yet as to the *main end and deſign* of this Ordinance, Infants are as capable of it as grown Perſons; and this is the thing that now lies before us to make good: for which let theſe things be well conſidered,

(1.) *THIS is very evident from the Appointment of the Ordinance of Circumciſion.* This is a Principle not to be parted from, nor can all the Adverſaries of it ever be able to undermine it, unleſs they can blow up the Goſpel, that *Circumciſion was a Seal of the Covenant of Grace.* And as long as this abides a Truth, our Argument ſtandeth ſtrong, and it will ſo abide true as long as the World ſtands. Now it is one plain Article in the Law of Circumciſion, that the *Male-Children* of ſuch as were in Covenant, were to *be Circumciſed on the eighth Day from their birth:* and certainly ſuch muſt be acknowledged to be Infants, that had no underſtanding of the meaning of the Ordinance, that were not capable of the act of Faith, nor could make an open Profeſſion of it: and yet God infinitely wiſe, did not account this to

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be a juſt impediment, or reaſon ſufficient to delay this Ordinance being applied unto them. If then Baptiſm be a Sign of the ſame thing, and a parallel Seal of the ſame Covenant, *Chriſtians Infants* muſt needs be equally capable of it, as *they* were of that. Nor is it of any availance to ſay, that that was a Seal of Confirmation for their inheriting the Land of *Canaan*; for that was *typical*, and had a direct aim at the *Antetype*: for it was *a Seal of the Righteouſneſs of Faith*; i.e. that Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, which becomes ours by believing. And we find that the *Patriarchs*, did not terminate their Faith on *Canaan*, but ſought *a better Countrey*, Heb. 11. 16.

(2.) *IT farther appears, from the extent of Baptiſm under the New-Teſtament.* As to the pretence of ſome, that we no where read in the Goſpel expreſly, that the Apoſtles Baptized any Infants, it can have no weight to ſupport the Caſe that it is pleaded for; for if the thing it ſelf comes within the Precept, the want of ſuch Inſtances, will not invalidate the force of it; and for the ſame reaſon might Women be forbidden the other Sacrament. Now that Children are included in the Precept, is evident from *Mat.* 28. 19. It is directed to *all Nations*, and ſuch among them as are made Diſciples, which is by bringing them in the graſp of the Covenant; which that it comprehends Infants, hath been already made to appear. And it is to be obſerved, that *all Nations*, are here contradiſtinguiſhed from the *Jews*, who had the Priviledges of the Covenant confined to them, before the coming of Chriſt; but now Chriſt pulled down that *Wall of Separation*, and extended the like Priviledges to the Gentiles. As therefore under the Nation of *Iſrael*, were comprehended all, both Elder and Younger, yea their *Infants*, who were Children *born to God*; there is alike Conſideration to be had of *other Nations*: and not to annumerate Infants to the Nation they belong to, is againſt the common ſenſe of Mankind. And we ſhall find that the Apoſtles in their carrying the Goſpel abroad into the World, practiſed upon this Principle; and accordingly when they Converted the Head of any Family to Chriſt, they not only Baptized them, but *their Houſholds with them*, as we find divers Inſtances on record, *Act.* 16. 15. *ver.* 33. 1 *Cor.* 1. 16. And when they demand of us, How do you know that there were Infants in thoſe Houſes? it is a meer banter: and it is retort ſufficient, How do you know that there were not? It ſufficeth, that upon their Believing, their Houſholds were Baptized, which was the Rule they proceeded by, and muſt include Infants if there were any.

(3.) IT farther appears, *from their being capable of the thing that is ſignified by Baptiſm.* This added to the former, is enough to ſtate this Caſe, beyond any juſt or rational Diſputing againſt it. Theſe Infants are within the Pale of the Viſible Church; they are *Chriſt's Lambs*; nor can there be any reaſon why his *Mark* ſhould not be ſet upon them, but their incapacity: if then they are Subjects capable in their Infancy, of the *thing ſignified*, ſurely then of the *Sign*, inaſmuch as they have a right in it.

BAPTISM is a Seal of Regeneration, of our being engrafted into Chriſt, of our ſeparation from the World, and dedication to him and his Service, of our being made Heirs of the glorious Inheritance: Now all theſe are Infants capable of having actually conferred upon them; ſurely then they are in a Capacity of receiving the Sign, which as a Sign imports all theſe things according to the Tenour of the Goſpel Covenant; and this might be inſtanced in particular: They are capable of *Regeneration*; in which work the Subject is *Paſſive*: They may have the Graces of the Spirit infuſed, and the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt imputed: They can as well have Grace put into them, as Original Sin come into the World with them: They are capable of *Fœderal Holineſs*, by being ſeparated for God and his Service. *Jeremiah* was *ſanctified from the womb*; and the Children of one Godly Parent *are Holy*, 1 Cor. 7. 14. which to apply to *Legitimacy* is ridiculous; and to limit it to the *ſanctification of the Spirit*, is beſides the purpoſe, and not true of all: And that they are capable of the *heavenly Inheritance*, is implied in that of Chriſt, Matth. 19. 13. *Of ſuch is the kingdom of heaven.* And to limit it to ſuch as are qualified as Children, is to enervate Chriſt's Argument in it; and we are ſure, that *he took them into his Arms and bleſſed them*; and ſuch are *Bleſſed indeed.*

USE. FROM the whole let us learn, as not to *deſpiſe* or *neglect* this Ordinance, either for our ſelves or our Children; ſo not to *confide in* it; but to wait on God for his Grace and Spirit, whereby we may receive all that is ſignified in it, by a living Faith.

SERMON *CCXXXV.*

QUESTION XCVI.

WHAT is the Lord's Supper?

ANSWER:

THE Lord's Supper is a Sacrament, wherein by the giving and receiving Bread and Wine, according to Chriſt's Appointment, his Death is ſhewed forth; and the worthy Receivers are not after a Corporeal and Carnal manner, but by Faith made partakers of his Body and Blood, with all his Benefits, to their Spiritual Nouriſhment and Growth in Grace.

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WE have taken a diſtinct Account of the Sacrament of *Baptiſm*: We are now to paſs over to the other, which we frequently call the *Lord's Supper*: And theſe *Two* are the only Sacraments which the *Proteſtants* do acknowledge to be true Sacraments under the Goſpel, according to Chriſt's Inſtitution; and for that reaſon we repudiate the other *Five*, which the Church of *Rome* would impoſe on us, as ſpurious; and ſuch to which the Deſcription before given of a Sacrament, will not agree in the *Eſſentials* of it. This Ordinance being a great Goſpel Myſtery, and bequeathed by Chriſt to his Church, when he was ready to be offered for us; as to be a Sacred *Commemoration* of his wonderful Love in dying for us, ſo to be a *Medium* of our Communion with, a *Confirmation* of his Love to us, an *Obligation* of our Love and our faithful Obedience to him, and a bond of *mutual Love* between Chriſtians. Satan hath peculiarly attempted by his Inſtruments to corrupt, deprave, and ſo evacuate the Profitableneſs of it, making it a bone of Contention, and filling the Chriſtian World with endleſs Contentions about it; raiſing of Perſecutions, and bloody Maſſacres on account of it. Great need then is there, that we be rightly informed in the Nature and Uſe of it, which will help to fortify us againſt all thoſe falſe Doctrines that are diſſeminated about it, and help us to get the ſaving Good of it to our own Souls. Now this and the former agree in the *general Nature*, of which we have already conſidered: And as for the things wherein they differ, they are to be obſerved from the *ſeveral Deſcription* of each; the principal whereof are theſe,

1. THEY differ in *their Signs*. For tho' there is ſomething ſignal in each of them: In Baptiſm there is a ſingle Sign, viz. *Water*: In the Supper there is a complicate Sign, viz. *Bread* and *Wine*: Nor are theſe left at liberty to be altered at Men's Pleaſure, but are required by Chriſt's Inſtitution.

2. THEY differ in *their Text and immediate Signification*. For, tho' it is true, that both of them do point at Chriſt and his Benefits, yet that which is nextly ſignified and repreſented in Baptiſm, is our engraffing into Chriſt by Regeneration, & participation in his Blood for cleanſing us from the Guilt and Pollution of Sin, and our Union to him; whereas in the Supper is ſignified, our Communion with Chriſt, our growing up in him, our ſpiritual Growth and Nouriſhment by him.

3. THEY differ in *the Manner of the Adminiſtration*: And this genuinely follows from the former. As we are but once Born, ſo we are but once *new Born*; and accordingly we are but once to be Baptized: whereas the new born Chriſtian muſt have continued and repeated Nouriſhment afforded him, that he may *grow in Grace*; and therefore this is often to be received.

4. THEY differ in *the Order of Adminiſtration*. And this alſo is to be argued from their ſignification; for there is preſuppoſed Life, in order to Growth. Now in Regeneration we *paſs from Death to Life*; till when, we cannot perform Life Acts: And it will be a prepoſterous thing to admit an unbaptized Perſon to ſit down at the Lord's Table.

5. THEY differ in *the Qualification of the Subject that is to participate*. In Regeneration we are wholly Paſſive; and ſo it only is requiſite in Baptiſm, that the Subject be entituled to the Covenant: whereas in the partaking in the other Ordinance, there is required, Underſtanding to diſcern the Lord's Body, and a Profeſſion of the Covenant Obligation. And for the help of ſuch, it is needful that we take a diſtinct Account of this Ordinance, which is now to be conſidered.

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Firſt, THE *Title* put upon it, *the Lord's Supper*. This Title ſome deny to belong to this Sacrament, and apply it to the *Love Feaſts* kept by the Chriſtians in the Primitive Church; but without reaſon; they being no Inſtitution of Chriſt, nor obſerved as holy Ordinances by Chriſtians, and were quickly turned into Abuſes, and therefore diſapproved by the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 11. 22. and in *Ver.* 20. he calls it *the Lord's Supper* in diſtinction from theſe Feaſts. And the reaſon why it is called a *Supper*, is becauſe it was firſt Celebrated by Chriſt in the Evening after the Paſſover: and called *the Lord's*, becauſe Chriſt who is the Lord of his Church appointed it to be Celebrated. Not as if it were matter of Inſtitution to keep it in the Evening, as ſome pretend and practice; it being meerly occaſional: And it may be Celebrated at that or any other time, according to the Convenience of the Communicants It is alſo called *the Table of the Lord*, 1 Cor. 10. 21. and *the Communion of the body & blood of Chriſt*, ver. 16 and the breaking of Bread, *Acts* 2. 42. And it is very frequently among Chriſtians called the *Euchariſt*, becauſe of the ſolemn Bleſſing that is to be pronounced on the Elements, 1 *Cor.* 10. 16. This then is the Ordinance under our preſent Conſideration.

Secondly, THE *ſpecial Nature* of this Sacrament, is laid open to us in that which follows: As to the *general Nature*, viz. *That it is a Sacrament*, we need add nothing to what was before ſaid of a Sacrament, every part whereof will appear in the conſideration of the ſpecial Nature of it, in which it carries the evidence. Here we are to conſider, as we did under the former, both the *Signs*, and the *thing ſignified*, and the *End* or *Uſefulneſs* of the Ordinance.

I. *THE Signs appointed by Chriſt*: Under which are comprehended, both the *Elements* themſelves, and the *Rites* or Ceremonies to be uſed in the Adminiſtration of them.

1. THE *Elements themſelves*; which are two, *Bread & Wine*. Theſe our Saviour himſelf uſed in the firſt Inſtitution of it, *Matth.* 26. 27, with 29. And this the Apoſtle mentions when he came to rectify the Abuſe of this Ordinance, by bringing it to the Primitive

mitive Institution, 1 *Cor.* 11. 23, *&c.* where by *the Cup* is intended the Wine in the Cup, as appears by our Saviours Interpretation. And here observe,

(1.) *THESE are the Elements to be used, & no other instead of them.* All Instituted Ordinances depend wholly on the Pleasure of the Instituter: and although he exerted his Arbitrary *Soveraignty* in this, which is not to be disputed by us, yet he used his *Wisdom* in the choice that he made; and because he appointed them to be Signs, he made choice of such things as are aptly suited in their nature and use, to be accommodable to such a signification. This Sacrament is appointed to represent the sufficiency and suitableness of Christ for our Spiritual Life; and what can be found among Corporeal things, that can better serve to this end, than these which Christ hath thus chosen? *Bread is the Staff of Life*, of such necessity and usefulness, that it is separately put for Man's whole Livelihood: and *Wine* is very refreshing & cheering: and in the *Properties* of each of these, we may gather many Instructive Lessons of the Excellency of Christ to affect our Hearts with him. Nor hath he given us leave to devise others to surrogate in the room of them, because we may imagine them to be fit for such a representation. They therefore, who undertake to exchange these, and put any other in their stead, do usurp upon the Prerogative of him who is our Lord and Lawgiver.

(2.) *THERE are no more, nor fewer than these, to be made use of, as significant Signs in the Administration of this Ordinance.* We are neither to *add* to, nor *diminish* from any of Christ's appointments, but keep close to them, and rest satisfied in them. Christ would have these two, to set forth *the fulness of sufficiency* there is in him. Man cannot Live without Meat and Drink; in the want of either of them, he must famish: and both together do set forth a fulness of supply: And Christ saw good to adumbrate his compleat fulness by these two; and they who add any more, do it without warrant: and he appointed them both, and gave his Disciples, and in them his Church, to use both of them in Remembrance of him. But our Popish Adversaries, by a Sacrilegious *Synecdoche*, rob the People of one whole Element, viz. *the Wine*; pretending it to be included in the other: which is an intollerable usurpation, both upon Christ's Prerogative, and the Priviledge of his People; and in all their pretences of inconvenience, they go about to make themselves wiser than Christ himself. It was so in *Paul*'s days, that the People did partake both in the *Bread* and in the *Cup*. 1 Cor. 11. 26. *For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.*

(3.) *THERE ought to be no Superstition used in the choice of the Bread or of the Wine.* Touching the Bread, there was a hot Dispute of old between the *Greek* and *Latin Church*, one contending for unleavened, the other for leavened. That Christ used unleavened Bread, was only because it was the Bread then used, it being the time of the *Passover*, when leavened was forbidden by the Ceremonial Law; though at all other times, the Bread in common use was leavened; but that difference past away with the rest of the Law Ceremonies. It is therefore a thing indifferent; and one sort will as well answer the signification as the other. Christ *took Bread*, and such as was then in use, and there is no Precept for one or the other. There have also been disputes about the *Wine*, whether it should be Red, to be like Blood, or whether of any other colour; or whether it should be Pure Wine, or rather mixt with Water; but these also are needless: our Saviour extends it to *the Fruit of the Vine*, Mat 26. 29. And so all colours are alike. Every sort of Grape doth not grow in every place, and if it be *Wine*, it answers the end of the Institution. And as to the mixing of it with Water, there is no Precept for it, and therefore to make it a sin, yea, a mortal sin to use it without mixture, is Superstitious; though in case there should be Water mingled with it, it will not thereby be rendred unuseful; for then frequently it could not be known, whether it may be used or not.

2. THERE are the *Sacramental Actions* which are to be used in the Dispensation of these Elements, or *the Ceremonies* which are to be used about the Administration: these are contained in those Words, *The giving and receiving the Bread and Wine, according to Christ's appointment.* And there are several Actions wrapt up in these general Terms, which may be a little more distinctly considered. And here in general observe, That they are only the *Sacramental* Actions which here come under our enquiry. There are Civil Actions which are inseparable from all the external Performances of Religious Worship to God, about which we have no particular Precept, but only a general Direction, that all be done *Decently and Orderly*, 1 Cor. 14. 40. Which some have without reason strained, to introduce all the fictitious Rites, which luxuriant Inventions have imposed on the Church of God, and obtruded as the terms of Communion, and made them a Test: by which what Tragedies have been acted among Christians, is obvious in Ecclesiastical History. Whereas a *Sacramental Action*, is that which carries in it a *Mystical* or *Spiritual signification*, which is represented under an external Sign. And here let us observe,

(1.) IN general, *All is to be done according to Christ's Appointment.* Not only hath he prescribed the Elements that are to be made use of, but all the Religious Performances that are to be used about the Administration and Participation. And the reason of this is because all Sacred Institutions depend on him, who is Lord and Lawgiver of his Church, and they are to receive *this Law*

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at his Mouth. God's Inſtitutions were Arbitrary; and howſoever he hath adapted theſe to the Nature of the things for which they are uſed; yet that they ſhould ſignify theſe ſpiritual things, and be uſed for that end, doth not flow from their Nature, but his free Deſignation: And if it be enquired, *Where is this Word of Inſtitution recorded in the Goſpel?* It is readily anſwered, It is contained in the Practice of our Saviour in the firſt Sacrament of the Supper, which he Celebrated with his Diſciples: In which he not only Celebrated it with them, but therein alſo gave them a *Pattern* of what he would have them to do after his Departure: He therefore commanded them, *Do this* thing *in Remembrance of me*; i. e. Be ſure to imitate me, and do as I have done; which comprehends not only the matter, but alſo the *manner*. When therefore the Apoſtle would rectify the Diſorders gotten into the Church of *Corinth* about this Ordinance, he reduceth it to the manner of Chriſt's firſt Celebrating it, 1 *Cor.* 11. 23, *&c.*

(2.) IN particular he reduceth it to thoſe two heads, of *giving* and *receiving*: Under which there are divers things to be conſidered. And we may take an account of them apart, firſt in reſpect of the *Giver*, and then of the *Receiver*.

[1.] IN regard of the *Giver*; theſe things are to be conſidered,

1. *WHO it is that is to Give them.* And that will appear if we conſider what is ſignified in it, viz. *The free gift of Chriſt*, in which he beſtows himſelf on his People: he firſt gave himſelf *for* them, to be a Sacrifice of Atonement; and then he giveth himſelf *to* them. It was he himſelf who gave the Elements in the firſt Sacrament, thereby intimating that they are to be given in his Name, and conſequently by ſuch only as he hath appointed to repreſent him in the Goſpel Diſpenſation: And theſe can be no other but ſuch as are, according to his Inſtitution to adminiſter his Ordinances: Theſe are his *Ambaſſadors*; and being Authorized by him, what they do according to their Commiſſion, is as if he himſelf did it: They are therefore to do every thing *in his Name*, i.e. by his Authority; and for any other but ſuch to undertake this, is a Uſurpation, a going before they are ſent; and there are none but ſuch as he ſends, who have the Promiſe of his Preſence and Bleſſing, *Matth.* 28. 19, 20.

2. WHAT is to be done in the *Manner* of giving them, which is to be gathered from what Chriſt did on this Account.

AND here we may Conſider,

(1.) *THAT he took and adminiſtred theſe two Elements diſtinctly.* Firſt the *Bread*, and then the *Wine*; in which we are to imitate him: And therefore the mixing them together, and giving them at once, is beſides the Inſtitution; *much more then*, the giving one, and altogether with-holding the other: In each of theſe he is repreſented; and it is the ſame Chriſt that is exhibited under both; and ſo each afford us matter of Contemplation.

(2.) *THE ſeveral Actions which are obſervable in this manner of the Adminiſtration.*

AND here Conſider,

1. *SOMETHING Preparatory to the giving of them.* Theſe being to be Sacramental Signs in the Uſe of them, there was ſomething to be done, to render them ſo: for *all* Bread, or *all* Wine are not ſo; but only that which is made Uſe of in the Adminiſtration of this Ordinance. And here we are to conſider the *Taking* of them, and the *Bleſſing* of them; by both of which conjunctly, they were ſet apart from common, and conſecrated to ſacred Uſe; and by this they are prepared for ſuch a Service; not the *Taking it alone*, nor *Praying over it alone*, but *both together*, do thus ſanctify it for the preſent purpoſe: And in both of theſe, there is ſomething ſignificant to be conſidered;

(1.) BY the *Taking of it*; it is implied, *That Chriſt is a free Gift*: that God the Father gave him for us, and provided him to be our Saviour; and that Chriſt himſelf gave himſelf for us, and offers himſelf to us; that he is the Author of all the Good & Benefit that we receive by him: and particularly that he is the Author of this Ordinance, and gives all the Force and Efficacy to it; and that having been provided for us, he is the gift of free Grace to us: We therefore read, Joh. 3. 16. *For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son: that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* Gal. 2. 20 *The Son of God, who loved me, and gave himſelf for me.*

(2.) BY the *Bleſſing of it*, is ſignified, *That all the Good that we receive by it, depends upon his Bleſſing*; and therefore we are to wait upon him for it, if we would receive any ſaving Good by it. There are two words uſed to expreſs this thing; one ſignifies to *Bleſs*, and the other to *give Thanks*, in both of which the ſame thing is intended: And the word *giving Thanks* is uſed *Synechdochically*, for any ſort of Prayer; and both do here ſummarily comprehended the Conſecration of the Elements, by giving God Thanks for this unſpeakable Gift of Chriſt, and asking his gracious Preſence with, and Bleſſing upon the Elements for the ſpecial End which they are appointed to be uſed. And this is an *Authoritative* Bleſſing on them, being done by Chriſt, or in his Name; and conſequently they are thus ſet apart for this Uſe. And here we are to take notice that Chriſt is mentioned to take theſe two *ſeverally* and *ſucceſſively*, and to Bleſs them. And here it hath been a matter of Diſpute, whether Chriſt Bleſſed theſe two *diſtinctly* or *conjunctly*, and conſequently whether there be a *ſeveral Prayer* to be made over each of them; or whether there is to be *but One* for them both; and the Practice is accordingly diverſe among Chriſtians: And altho' we cannot ſay, that the Eſſence of the Ordinance is deſtroyed by ſuch as do it only once; yet it ſeems more agreable to the Practice of Chriſt, whom we ought to follow, to do it at the Conſecration of each

Element; for the Apoſtle tells us, that he did *after the ſame manner* with the Cup, that he had with the Bread; 1 *Cor.* 11. 25. And we are particularly told in Mark 14. 23. *And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it.* And tho' the word there uſed is *indefinite*, and therefore ſome refer it to the ſame time, when he bleſſed the Bread, yet if we put both together, it ſeems moſt agreable, that it was done ſeverally; eſpecially conſidering, that both Bread and Cup, were taken from the Table when the Paſſover was Celebrated, and that was after he had diſpenſed the former.

2. *THE Actions done in the Adminiſtration it ſelf, of the Elements thus Conſecrated.*

AND here,

(1.) *CONCERNING the Bread*, it is expreſt, that *he brake it*: And this Action is ſo eſſential, that the whole Ordinance is denominated from it, *the breaking of Bread.* This Action is to be underſtood *properly*: nor doth it at all intend Immolation or offering it; nor yet only a diſtribution of it, which our Popiſh Adverſaries uſe to excuſe their Superſtitious giving of Wafers whole, which is directly contrary to the Example of Chriſt. And it is very evident, that the *Breaking* of Bread, and the *Diſtribution* of it, were two Actions; and to be diſtinctly conſidered: Nor did he only break the Bread, ſo to prepare it to be diſtributed among the Communicants, for that might have been done in the other way; but it had a *myſtical Intention* in it: And as the Bread ſet forth whole, intimates that it is one and the ſame Chriſt, that we are all to partake in, (*Acts* 8. 12.) ſo the breaking of it, had a peculiar reference to the Paſſion of Chriſt, and repreſented the bitter Sufferings that he underwent to render him an Object fit for our Faith to feed upon. And we are to look on the breaking of the Bread with ſuch Contemplation as may affect us with all that he ſuffered to procure theſe Benefits for us, which we partake in. And it is well adapted to this, being a lively Emblem of his Sufferings: Hence it is ſaid of him, Iſa. 53. 5. *He was bruiſed for our iniquities.* And whatſoever is pleaded, that it is not eſſential to the Ordinance, being neither the Matter nor the Form; yet it is neceſſary as belonging to the *Integrity* of the Ordinance, and in that regard eſſential to it, as it belongs to the Inſtitution, about which the ſignificant Circumſtances come under the Precept, without which we cannot do as Chriſt did. And by the Omiſſion of this, one main thing in which this Ordinance is concerned, is left out; by which not only are we to affect our ſelves with his Love in ſo Dying for us, but are directed in the way wherein he was rendred a ſuitable Object for us to Live upon. And we are given to underſtand, that the myſtical breaking the Bread, was obſerved in the Church at the Adminiſtration of this Ordinance, for more than a thouſand Years; and it is certain, that the Omiſſion of it, came in by the Uſurpation of the Church of *Rome.*

IT is here enquired, *Whether in Adminiſtring the Cup, there is any thing which anſwers the breaking of the Bread*, viz. *The pouring out of the Wine?* That it is to be done, in order to the Diſtribution of it, is beyond queſtion; but whether it be a *Sacramental Action* is deliberated, or whether it carries the force of a *Sign*; and that becauſe the *Evangeliſts* do not acquaint us with ſuch an Action: But I think we have no reaſon to exempt it from the general Expreſſion, 1 Cor. 11. 25. *In like manner*; which refers to the *Mode* of Adminiſtration, and hath a Conſimilitude to the breaking of the Bread, and doth as well reſemble the ſhedding of his Blood, as the other doth the ſuffering of his Body: It is therefore as proper for our Contemplation in this Action as the other; and our ſo doing is Profitable, and cannot render us guilty of Superſtition.

AND doubtleſs it is our Duty, in our Participation at this Ordinance, to endeavour to raiſe our Hearts, in the Participation of the Signs, to the higheſt ſtrain of Love and Admiration at the good Will of Chriſt appearing in giving himſelf for us.

SERMON *CCXXXVI.*

(2.) *IN regard to both Elements*, it is ſaid, that *he gave them to his Diſciples.* And under this Head, we are to conſider the Diſtribution of the Elements ſo prepared, to thoſe who are to partake of them. And here two things may be conſidered, viz. the *Subjects* of participation, and the *Diſtribution* of the Elements among them.

1. *THE Subjects of participation*: Theſe are ſaid to be *his Diſciples*, *Matth.* 26. 16. And this leads to enquire, *Who are to be admitted to ſit down at this Ordinance, and receive theſe Sacramental Elements?* Theſe are ſaid to be his *Diſciples*; which word is uſed in the New-Teſtament to expreſs ſuch as acknowledged him to be their Lord and Saviour, and profeſſed themſelves to be Subjects of his Goſpel Kingdom: and though the word *Diſciples* is ſometimes uſed for his *Apoſtles*, and ſometimes for the *Seventy* whom he ſent forth to Preach the Goſpel; yet it is alſo frequently uſed for all that Profeſſedly adhered to him, followed him, & ſubmitted themſelves to his teachings: and though there were no other with him at this firſt Sacrament, but the *Twelve Apoſtles*, whom he not only admitted to this Priviledge, but gave them a pattern of Adminiſtration, which they were to obſerve afterwards, when called to Adminiſter in his Name; yet they here acted not as Officers but as *Communicants*, and ſo repreſented the Subjects of it. And doubtleſs none but Diſciples are to be admitted to theſe Sacred Seals; for as ſuch they do belong to the Goſpel Covenant, and ſo cannot be properly applied to any but ſuch as ſtand related to that Covenant: and that all ſuch have a right

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in these Seals, hath been formerly observed: but that there is a way appointed for their orderly coming to participation in them, is also to be considered; for which there is something more to be considered, than a bare visible Relation to the Covenant. There are *Qualifications* required to be found in such as we are to receive; for this Sacrament is a barred Ordinance; and all are not to be promiscuously admitted to it. And it is evident that such as have been regularly admitted, may bring themselves under a *Censure* that debarrs them from it. But then there are disputes in regard of what it is that qualifies Persons for this participation; and all are not of a mind. I shall here only offer to consideration, that we are not here enquiring who have a *Spiritual Right to the Saving Benefit* of this Ordinance; for that matter lies between God and their own Souls, for which there is *a Self-Examination* required, 1 Cor. 11. 28. But *who they are who are to be accepted of by Men, as being Priviledged with a claim to Participate.* And here it is certain, that they are none but such as make a Profession of the Christian Religion, and their Subjection to the Gospel Institutions. All that do not make this Profession *are without*, and Holy Things are not to be cast abroad to them: Childrens Bread is not to be given to Strangers. There is also required of them, a Capacity to *discern the Lord's Body*, 1 Cor. 11. 29. They must be arrived to such a Judgment, as to be able to distinguish between the Sign & the thing signified by it, else they cannot make that practical Improvement of it, which is required of all such. They that cannot put a difference between Bread and Wine, and the Body and Blood of Christ, and understand the Sacramental Union between one and the other in the Ordinance, ought not to be received. And for this reason *Children* before they come to have a Judgment of Discretion, ought not to be admitted, although they ought to be so to Baptism, as we before observed. *Naturals* also, who have not the understanding of a Man, they are thereby incapable of being admitted, for the same reason. Such also as are under Distraction, and deprived of the use of this faculty, while they are under the efficacy of this Malady. For though we acknowledge that the Spirit of God can apply his Sanctifying Grace to them, by a mighty Operation, which encourageth us to hope & pray for their Salvation; yet they are not capible of being applied to by the means, as reasonable Creatures. Such also as have not been Instructed in the Principles of the Christian Religion, but are found grosly ignorant of the fundamental Articles of Salvation, cannot without profanation of the Ordinance, be accepted, till they be Instructed, and are able to give an account of these Principles, and profess their Belief of them. 1 *Pet.* 3. 15. *Scandalous Persons* are here also excluded; for if it be a Duty, as it is, to suspend such from Communion, till they give some evidence of their Repentance, by parity of reason, such as have rendred themselves Scandalous and remain under it, are to be denied it upon the same terms: And though we are not to repute all such for Scandalous, as labour of sinful infirmities, which they disallow in themselves, and labour under the sense & burden of, yet every gross sin lived in, or any such sin fallen into, which exposeth the *Name of God to be evil spoken of*, belongs to this head, which must be repented of, and reformed, before they can be entertained; else how shall there be a difference made between the *Precious* and the *Vile*? And hither also are to be referred, such as do maintain heretical Opinions, and professedly adhere to such Doctrines, as do manifestly subvert the foundations of our hope of Salvation by Christ alone: though many other Errors and Mistakes ought to be born with, & milder means used with them, to bring them off.

AS to that Question, *Whether an account is to be given to the Church, of a Work of Saving Conversion, by all such as ask admission to the Lord's Table, and this to be a Test of Communion?* I shall only say, that we have no such Institution in the Gospel; and it is dangerous to make Innovations in the Positive Worship of God, let the pretence be never so plausible. And though the Brethren ought to bear their orderly Testimony against known Scandals, yet they are not made the Door-keepers of the House of God. And it is certain, that many of whose Sincerity, the Rules of Charity bindeth us to be perswaded, yet cannot give a distinct account of such a Work; tho' this doubtless belongs to the Work of Self-Examination. And as to that plea, that the Sacrament is no Converting Ordinance, we before considered it, and it only intends, that it is no Ordinance for the making of Men Christians, and so neither is Baptism.

BUT it is here to be observed, that *not only the People, but also the Minister is comprehended under this Subject.* Christ himself did participate with his Disciples; and it is certain, that Ministers are Disciples as well as other Christians, and their Hope of Salvation is Built on the same bottom; and they stand in need of all the helps that other Believers do, and ought therefore to seek Communion with Christ in all the Ordinances appointed for it. And this may suffice for the Subjects of participation.

2. WE may a little consider *the distribution itself*: It is said that *he gave it to his Disciples.* And this followed upon his *breaking of the Bread*, and his *taking of the Cup.* Now in this *giving* there necessarily included a *distribution*, for every one was to partake in a part of it: In which *giving* there is also a Sacred Mystery contained; and it gives us to understand, that as Christ gave himself *for* us, to purchase all those Benefits which derive to his People, through his Redemption, so he freely gives himself *to* us, and is the Author of all that good which we receive, and the

whole vertue muſt derive from him; that all the benefit we get by this Ordinance muſt be conveyed to us by the power and influence of his Grace and Spirit; and it directs us to acknowledge it as his free Favour, and not aſcribe it to any Merit of our own. It alſo informs us, that this Grace muſt be applied to every particular Believer, otherwiſe we can receive no ſaving good by it: Vertue muſt derive from him to us, elſe it will not be ſpiritually profitable to us.

HERE a Queſtion ariſeth; *Whether the diſpenſer of it, is to give the Elements with his own Hands to the Communicants, or the Ordinance be mutilated without this Ceremony?* The Practices in Churches are different on this account, nor doth the Hiſtory determine whether he did ſo as to the Bread: And it is certain, that he did not ſo, as to *the Cup*, for we read, Luk. 22. 17. *And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and ſaid, Take this, and divide it among your ſelves.* Though he bids them all to Drink of it, in which they are conſidered diſtributively and ſeverally.

[2.] WE have conſidered the Actions in reſpect of the *Giver*, it follows that we conſider *the Actions required of the Receiver.* And theſe are contained under that Precept given to his Diſciples; and theſe are two, *viz.* the Receiving of the Elements of him, and the application of them to ourſelves.

1. *THE Receiving of them.* Our Saviour in reſpect of the Bread, commanded them to *Take it*, and he did by the Wine *in like manner*; they were to receive it at his Hand; for as in the Word, ſo in the Sacrament, as Chriſt offers himſelf to us, to be all that to us which is ſignified therein, ſo it is our Duty to receive him, and it is upon our ſo receiving him, that we derive ſaving Vertue from him: for it is not barely the offer of himſelf that he makes to us, but the entertainment that we give to him, which will give it to attain the end of it: Hence we read, Joh. 1. 11, 12. *He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to them that believe on his Name.* So that there is a *Sacramental Significancy* in our taking of the Elements; and tells us, that as Chriſt hath an hand to give, ſo we muſt have an hand to receive. The word for taking, here uſed, properly ſignifies *a free* and *Voluntary receiving of a thing*; and is oppoſed to that which is forcibly put upon us. And although the word may be applied either to the Mouth or the Hand, yet it ever implies a ſpontaneous reception of the thing. God bids us to *open our Mouth*, &c. Pſal, 81. 19. And by opening the Mouth, is intended a free receiving of that which he offers to us. But in the ordinary ſenſe, when giving and receiving are joyned together, it refers to the *Hand*, which is an Organ adapted for, and appointed in Man to be uſed in this act. And it is certain, that in a proper ſenſe, the taking of a thing intends, not that we are meerly paſſive, but active. Now the hand by which we receive Chriſt and his Benefits, is that of *Faith*; hence that, *Joh.* 1. 12. And on this account we have that given as a reaſon why they got no good by the Word Preached to them, *they did not mix it with faith*, Heb. 4. 12. Here the Vanity and Superſtition of the Papiſts is diſcovered, who forbid the Communicants to take the Bread into their Hands, but will have it be put into the Mouths of thoſe to whom it is Adminiſtred, by the Hand of the Prieſt. For though the thing may be done, and ſometimes may be neceſſary, when the recipient hath loſt his Hands, yet there is no Precept to bind it to this; and the thing ſignified is more fully expreſt by the taking it into the Hand, being moſt ſignal of a free act, according to the Cuſtom of Men. And as to the reaſon given by our Adverſaries for their Practice, viz. *leſt otherwiſe they ſhould defile it with their polluted hands*, it is vain and ridiculous: for nothing can be obſtructive of the right receiving it, but a moral pollution, which the Mouth is as much ſubjected to as the Hand: whereas the whole Man is evangelically purified by Faith, and every Member is made ſerviceable to God in its place.

2. THE other act is *the Application of it to our ſelves.* And this is ſet forth in thoſe two words, *eat and drink of* it; and theſe are ſuited to the Nature of the Signs. Bread is to be eaten, and Wine is to be drunk; and theſe alſo are Sacramental, and Significative; and for that reaſon are eſſential to the Ordinance, and it cannot be without it. And it is to be done by the Subject, and no other for him. And this will appear if we conſider the *end* and *uſe* of the Sacrament, which is our Communion with Chriſt, and our receiving Spiritual Nouriſhment and Growth from him. Now he having choſen theſe Elements to be a repreſentation of this, which are adapted for the bodily Nouriſhment, He would have us to conſider the uſefulneſs of them, & the way wherein they become ſerviceable to us, for the end they were made for. Now it is ſure, that let the Meat and Drink be never ſo proper, yet if we do not Eat and Drink it, it will afford us no Nouriſhment at all, but notwithſtanding this we may Starve: and thus, if we do not Feed upon Chriſt, which is alſo to be done by Faith, though he hath all fulneſs in him, yet we muſt Languiſh and Periſh. There is therefore a Bodily Eating & Drinking of theſe Elements required, elſe they would not be Sacramental, nor uſed as Signs; though ſtill there muſt be a Myſtical Improvement of theſe, elſe they will not obtain the Sacramental end and uſe of them. For by a bare Bodily Application of theſe, we do but abuſe the Ordinance and turn it to our hurt, according to that of Chriſt, Joh. 6. 53. *Then Jeſus ſaid unto them, Verily, Verily I ſay unto you, Except ye eat the fleſh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.* And under this Eating and Drinking, we are to comprehend all the other Operations Natural,

whereby

whereby our Food becomes Nutritive to us, being Concocted, and thereby producing our Thriving: only there is this difference to be obſerved, that our bodily Nouriſhment is ſo Concocted, as it turns into our bodily Subſtance; whereas in the ſpiritual feeding on Chriſt, we are more aſſimulated unto him, and are in a ſenſe *made partakers of the Divine Nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. And here we are to obſerve, that our Saviour not only gives a like Precept concerning each Element, but ſeems to put a peculiar Emphaſis on that of the Wine, ſaying, *Drink ye all of it*; as if he had foreſeen and guarded againſt the felonious Acting of the *Papiſts*, in taking away the other Element from the *Laity*, and reſerving it for the Prieſts only: whoſe Pleas for their ſo doing are moſt abſurd, and their Uſurpation moſt audacious, in daring to ſet their Carnal reaſonings directly to oppoſe a plain Command of Chriſt; as if he would not have foreſeen whatſoever of Inconveniencies they pretend to: And it is higheſt Arrogance for any to think that they are Wiſer than he who is *the Wiſdom of God*. Thus we have taken the Account of the Sacramental Signs, both Elements and Actions.

II. IT remains that we look into *the other part of the Matter of this Ordinance*, or *the ſpiritual Intendment of it*; or what is repreſented to us under it: and this may be conſidered both in reſpect of the Elements and Actions. And tho' this hath been neceſſarily intimated under the former, and ſo would call for the leſs to be ſaid here; yet by reaſon of the perverſeneſs of Men, we muſt a little more Commorate upon it.

1. TOUCHING *the Elements themſelves*, our Catechiſm intimates, that they do *ſignify his Body and Blood*; and in this regard we find, that Chriſt in the Adminiſtration of the Bread ſaid, *This is my Body*; and of the Cup, *i. e.* of the Wine in it, *This is my Blood*: Theſe therefore are manifeſtly exhibited under the the Signs of Bread and Wine, and are therefore eſſential to the Sacrament. But about the way or manner of their Exhibition, there have been hot and bloody Diſputes, between the *Papiſts*, *Lutherans*, and thoſe whom they call *Sacramentarians*. The firſt of theſe affirming, that by the words of Conſecration the Elements are, by a Miracle, turned into the real Body and Blood of Chriſt, by *Tranſubſtantiation*; and that the whole Eſſence of theſe Elements ceaſeth, and only the Species remain, under which theſe are comprehended: and their great Plea is from Chriſt's expreſs ſaying, *This is my Body*, in which they will allow no *Trope*. The *Lutherans* do confeſs a *Trope*, yet ſtill they affirm the real bodily Preſence of Chriſt, together with the Elements, which they call *Conſubſtantiation*; and accordingly they will have a Corporeal eating his Body and drinking his Blood. The Abſurdities, Contradictions, Impoſſibilities, and Blaſphemies which attend both of theſe, have been clearly detected by the Orthodox. But the true and deſigned meaning is that the Body and Blood of Chriſt are *repreſented to us* under theſe Elements: Not that they are the ſame *Qualificatly*, but only *Sacramentally*; and ſo while the one is ſet before our *Senſes*, the other is to be looked by our *Minds*, as the thing ſignified to us by them: To that there is a *Trope* in the word, *is*, by which the Subject and Predicate are coupled one to the other: And this is plainly *Metonymical*, in which the Name of the thing ſignified, is predicated of the Sign; which ſort of Metonymy is very frequent in human Language, and often uſed in the Word of God, with reſpect to the Sacraments. Thus *the Circumciſion* is called *the Covenant*, Gen. 17 10. And is therefore ſo interpreted, *Ver.* 11. Thus *Chriſt* is called *our Paſſover*, 1 Cor. 5. 7. And Chriſt is ſaid to be *the Rock*, Chap. 10. 4. and to be the *Corner ſtone*, Eph. 2. 20. And in this ſenſe is the Bread in the Sacrament, called *Chriſt's Body*, and the Wine ſaid to be *his Blood*. And indeed, if we ſhould take it in any other ſenſe, the whole end & deſign of a Sacrament muſt be denied, which is to be a ſacred Sign of ſome other thing: for if the Sign, and the thing ſignified be one and the ſame thing, the very notion of a Sign muſt ceaſe. Only we are here cautiouſly to obſerve, that *Chriſt is not divided*, but the ſame Chriſt is ſet before us in each Element: But there being a great Deficiency in all Created Beings to ſet him forth in his fulneſs of ſufficiency, there are two Elements choſen to advance the repreſentation of his fulneſs to us. There muſt be Meat & Drink uſed to preſerve our Life; and Chriſt anſwers both of theſe; but becauſe theſe in Natural things are diverſe, they are both uſed the more diſtinctly to repreſent him ſo to us.

2. TOUCHING the *Rites* or *Sacramental Actions*, which are to be uſed in the Adminiſtration, they are ſummarily expounded to us, in the Conſideration of the things themſelves; and that both in reſpect of the Adminiſtrator and the Receiver. I ſhall therefore only obſerve, that as the next Deſign of this Ordinance is, to ſet forth the great Love of Chriſt to thoſe for whom his Father gave him; and that is emphatically ſet forth in the things which he ſuffered for us, which are expreſt by his Dying for us; ſo our Catechiſm tells us, that in it *his Death is ſhewed forth*: Hence the breaking of the Bread, and the Effuſion of the Wine, are very ſerviceable to give us an heart-affecting repreſentation of it: And for this reaſon our Saviour tells them, *It is my Body which was broken for you*; and it is *the Blood of the New Teſtament, that was ſhed for you, for Remiſſion*: And by obſerving theſe Actions, our Eyes ought to affect our hearts, with that incomparable Love of his, in thus Dying for us.

3. FROM the *Premiſes* we may gather, what is *the entire Form of the Sacrament*, which is from the Union which there is between theſe two parts, *viz.* the Signs and the things

things ſignified by them. It is true, Men are in common ſpeech ſaid to receive the Sacrament, when they receive the Elements, becauſe it is the Duty of Chriſtians to receive Chriſt in and with them : but they do not really receive it as a Sacrament, except with theſe external things, they do Spiritually receive Chriſt with them, and apply him to their Souls by Faith. We then truly receive it, when we take it as he offers it to us ; but he, and his Miniſters in his Name, offer the Elements to us, as they do repreſent his Body and Blood, and as they are Inſtituted Inſtruments, of the Conveyance of the Vertue and Efficacy of theſe to our Souls, and as a Seal of the Covenant. So that if we do only Feed on the Element with our Bodies, and do not together Spiritually Feed upon Chriſt by Faith, we Eat and Drink Unworthily ; and ſo inſtead of Benefit, we receive Judgment to ourſelves.

NOW the Union that is between theſe Signs, and the things ſignified by them, is not Phyſical, or Local, or Coexiſtent one in the other Naturally, but it is *Relative* and *Sacramental.*

THE Sign is *Arbitrary*, it is not ſo becauſe it is Bread and Wine, but becauſe it is by Inſtitution appointed, and accordingly Conſecrated to ſuch a uſe ; by Vertue of which Conſecration, this Relation is made, and on which the efficacy of it doth depend. And that (as we formerly obſerved concerning a Sacrament in general) conſiſts in its being a Sign and a Seal, and an Inſtrument of Communication : For in and with the Adminiſtration of this Ordinance, the Spirit of Chriſt comes into the Souls of his own, and gives the ſaving Efficacy of it to them ; whereby the Covenant is ratified and confirmed to them, and the Spiritual Benefits thereof are conveyed to them : and hereby it comes to paſs, that tho' there is neither a Tranſubſtantiation nor a Conſubſtantiation to be acknowledged in it, yet a *real Spiritual Preſence* of the Body and Blood of Chriſt, whereby the Vertue of his Death and Merits, in our humane Nature, is conveyed to us, as effectually as if he were Corporally preſent with us ; although he is in Heaven, and we upon Earth.

USE. FROM hence we may Learn this Leſſon, *To take heed to ourſelves, that we be not content with only receiving of the Signs, but wait upon Chriſt for his Spirit, that with them we may receive him as the Life of our Souls.*

SERMON *CCXXXVII.*

WE have conſidered of the ſpecial Nature of this Sacrament, in which an account hath been taken of the matter or parts of it, in which we have detected ſundry groſs Errors in our Adverſaries : but there are ſome other things obſervable, contained in the Deſcription, which we may a little take into conſideration.

AND here obſerve,

1. *WE are told who they are that do partake in the true & ſaving Benefit of this Sacrament*, viz. *The worthy Receivers.* Who theſe are, will come under a more diſtinct Conſideration at the next Queſtion, when we inquire what is requiſite to render them ſo. Here only we are given to underſtand, that *all* are not ſuch, otherwiſe ſuch a note of diſtinction had been ſuperfluous. Only we are here to obſerve, that it is not a Worthineſs of *Merit* that is here conſidered, for ſo none can deſerve this Privilege ; but it is given freely to every one that partakes in it. And if we tarry from this Ordinance, till we can pretend to *ſuch* a worthineſs, we ſhall never come there. It is a Seal of the Covenant of Grace, and is to Seal up to us the Grace of that Covenant ; which utterly cuts off all perſonal merit of our own.

WE are here to obſerve, if we would not be miſtaken, that the Apoſtle when he ſpeaks, (1 *Cor.* 11. 26.) of receiving unworthily, is not inquiring who have an external right, and ought to be admitted to the Lord's Table, to partake of the Sacramental Elements ; but to diſcover who they are that partake in the Sacrament it ſelf ; which is a vaſtly different thing. We muſt remember, that in a Sacrament, there are two parts, viz. the Sign and the thing ſignified ; and he doth not really partake in the Sacrament, who doth not participate in them both : for the very *form* of the Sacrament, conſiſts in the Union there is between theſe two ; ſo that where this Union is wanting, it is not a Sacrament to ſuch. Altho', becauſe we cannot judge Mens Hearts immediately, we charitably acknowledge them to partake who do receive the Elements, that are ſet apart for this uſe. They therefore who receive *Chriſt* together with theſe, who diſcern him repreſented under them, and do receive them under that Conſideration, are ſaid to be worthy or meet, becauſe according to the tenor of the Goſpel, they are qualified to receive the promiſed Bleſſing with them. Though therefore ſuch as keep the Doors of God's Houſe, cannot know certainly who they are, and are often miſtaken in their charitable perſwaſions ; yet it is certain, that it is an important duty on every one that approacheth to this Ordinance to take heed that he be in this regard worthy, elſe it will not be beneficial to him for the end to which it is appointed, but procure him God's diſpleaſure. But theſe things will come under a more particular Conſideration in the next.

2. *WE have the things which theſe worthy Receivers are made to partake of in this Ordinance*, viz. *the Body and Blood of Chriſt, with all his Benefits.* Under theſe words is contained both the Perſon of Chriſt, and all the Good that is laid up in him for his Redeemed. Under the Body and Blood of Chriſt is comprehended *whole* Chriſt ; and it hath a peculiar reference to his Mediatorial Sufferings, which he ſuffered in his Humane Nature, to make Satisfaction to offended Juſtice ; which is therefore

nextly

nextly exhibited under the repreſentation of his Body and Blood. But his whole Perſon is to be had regard to, and the Love herein manifeſted, was the Love of the Son of God, and the Vertue whereby the Atonement was made valuable, was from its being the Body and Blood of God. How theſe are received, will come under an after conſideration; but it is the ſame Chriſt who gave himſelf *for* us, who now gives himſelf *to* us. And here let it be obſerved, that we do acknowledge, that it is the real Body & Blood of Chriſt which, although not all who receive the Elements, yet all worthy receivers do partake in, tho' our Adverſaries do accuſe us for denying it. And that we do not contradict ourſelves by denying theſe to be *Materially* preſent in or with the Elements, but that his Glorified Humanity abides in Heaven, will appear under the next Head. And that in this receiving his Body and Blood, we do alſo partake in all his Benefits, is truly here aſſerted, and fully evident from the Goſpel. It is certain that Chriſt and his Benefits go together inſeparably: as we cannot receive his Benefits except we receive his Perſon, ſo if we do entertain his Perſon, according to the tenour of the New-Covenant, we are therewithal entituled to all theſe Benefits. Hence that Rom. 8. 32. *He that ſpared not his own ſon, but delivered him up for us all; how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things?* We are therefore told, what it is that God makes him to be to all ſuch, 1 Cor. 1. 30. *But of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus who of God is made unto us wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption.* What theſe Benefits are, we have formerly taken the account, and they were all purchaſed by Chriſt for thoſe whom his Father had given him; and are all of them Sealed up to every worthy receiver, and confirmed to him, and he is made to participate of the Conſolation of them. Not that every one who is admitted to ſit down at this Table, is owner of this Priviledge, for there are ſome that *Eat & Drink Judgment to themſelves*, but thoſe that are worthy, ſhall not fail of it. It is therefore a matter of greateſt concern, that we rightly underſtand the way in which this is obtained.

Hence,

3. *WE are told after what manner theſe muſt participate, that ſo they may enjoy that happy Priviledge.* And this is expreſt both *Negatively* and *Affirmatively*.

1. NEGATIVELY; *It is not after a Corporal and Carnal manner*: And this rightly underſtood, will cut off all the groſs Opinions of our Adverſaries, who like the *Capernaites*, interpret all theſe Spiritual Expreſſions of Chriſt, *Joh. 6.* according to the reſentments of the Fleſh. We are here to obſerve, that the Sacrament, being an Ordinance appointed for our Spiritual Nutriment, this is repreſented to us by the Ceremonies of Eating and Drinking the external Elements; for except we thus receive our Bodily Food, let it be never ſo rich, and ſuitable for us, it cannot anſwer the end of it to us, or do us any real good. Now that which theſe Sacramental Actions ſignify, is that though Chriſt is in himſelf the Life, and indeed the only repaſt of our Souls, yet he cannot profit us unleſs we do that which anſwers this Sign; *i. e.* apply him to ourſelves in like manner as we do our Meat and Drink. But the great diſpute is, *after what manner* this is to be done: and our Adverſaries, will needs have it after a *Corporal* and *Carnal manner*, which is the thing here denied; and this is the ground on which they do ſo hotly plead for the real preſence, which though in a ſound ſenſe we deny not, but in their ſenſe we cannot admit; for they tell us, that we muſt with our Bodily Organs, receive the ſame Body and Blood of Chriſt, and it muſt be incorporated with us; from whence they plead the neceſſity of *Tranſubſtantiation* or *Conſubſtantiation*, becauſe they ſuppoſe that otherwiſe this cannot be, and if the former were true, there would be a ſtrong plea for the latter, but it is altogether vain: and it is ſo far from being eſſential to the Sacrament, that it altogether ſubverts the very Nature of it. Chriſt himſelf therefore makes that remark, Joh. 6. 63. *The fleſh profiteth nothing.* For though he is not there ſpeaking of this Sacrament, which was not then Inſtituted, yet he ſpeaks *Tropically* of the way in which his Fleſh and Blood becomes real Nouriſhment to our Souls. Beſides, this abſurd Tenent, hath introduced the monſtrous Doctrine of *Ubiquity* which is inconſiſtent with a Created Body, and all the Rules by which we are to judge of the Nature of it; yet it makes neceſſary multiplication of Bodies, ſuppoſing that the whole Body of Chriſt is fed upon at every Adminiſtration, which may be no leſs than a thouſand times at the ſame time in the Chriſtian World; and, which adds to the Bruitiſhneſs of it, it makes Chriſt to be Bodily Crucified every time this Ordinance is diſpenſed, whereas we are told, Heb. 10. 14. *For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified.*

2. AFFIRMATIVELY, *But by Faith.* There muſt be actual participation in the Body and Blood of Chriſt, *i. e.* in the Vertue and Efficacy of that one Sacrifice which he offered up to appeaſe God to us, and purchaſe Eternal Life for us: and this muſt be together with our Bodily partaking in the outward Elements, which are offered to our ſenſes, for this is the proper Union of the parts of the Sacrament: but becauſe one is given to be a Sign of the other, there muſt needs be a difference between the Sign and the thing ſignified. As therefore the Bread and Wine do ſignify the Body and Blood of Chriſt, ſo the Sacramental Actions of Eating and Drinking muſt ſignify ſome other thing that is ſhadowed or repreſented by them; and that muſt be ſomething, by which we do as truly derive this Vertue from him, as we do from our Food by Eating & Drinking of it; and this

We are told is doſſe by the lively exerciſing of our Faith upon Chriſt. This is the great and only *Inſtrument* by which, we derive all from Chriſt; this is the *Hand* that receives him; this is the *Mouth* that feeds upon him; this is the *Stomach* that digeſts him. Now Faith may be conſidered, either as it is a *Grace* of the Spirit, and therein it agrees with all the other Graces mentioned in the Word of God; or as it is an *Inſtrument* made uſe of by us, to apprehend Chriſt and his Benefits, in which it is peculiarly diſtinguiſhed from all other Graces in the Man; in that this alone, is the *Medium* through which it is laid up in Chriſt for us, derives to us, and becomes efficacious for the ends of it. And this will appear if we conſider,

1. *THAT all the diſtinguiſhing Benefits that are provided for God's Elect, are laid up in Chriſt.* He is the great Store-houſe of all theſe, *Col.* 2. 3. and they were therefore ſtored in him, that they might be communicated by him, to all thoſe for whom they were deſigned: and the reaſon is, not only becauſe he was the purchaſer of them, but alſo becauſe he was delegated by his Father, to be the diſpenſer of them, as he was the Conſtituted Mediator. And as he was the high Prieſt of our Redemption, to reconcile God to us, ſo he was the Prophet and King, to reconcile us to God, and give us a title to his whole purchaſe. And hence he had the Office of a Mediator, becauſe he ſtands between both, 1 *Tim.* 2. 5.

2. *THAT theſe may actually enjoy theſe Benefits, there muſt be an application of them made to the Subjects.* It is true, in the Covenant of Suretiſhip, all theſe have a right to them in him, for therein God the Father made a firm Promiſe of them for all ſuch in whoſe behalf he became a Surety. But for all that they abide under the Curſe, and can make no challenge of theſe, becauſe there is a New Covenant opened to them, in which there is a way diſcovered by which alone they are to be brought under the Promiſe. And this is that which is done in the *Work of Application*, which belongs to his Spirit to make. And before this Application was made, *Paul* tells them what they were, Eph. 2. 3. *And were by Nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

3. *THERE are the Means appointed, in and with which this application is to be made.* This application is made firſtly in the Work of Converſion or Effectual Calling, in order to which they have the Goſpel afforded to them, in which God treats with Sinners: And God uſeth the ſame mediate courſe in the carrying on of this Work in Men. Hence Believers have that direction, 1 Pet. 2. 2. *As new born babes deſire the ſincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.* And for this reaſon the Children of God are required to attend upon theſe means, in order to their ſpiritual profit, after they have been united to Chriſt in Converſion. Now this Sacrament is one of thoſe *Media* Inſtituted for this end; for that reaſon it is called our *Communion with Chriſt*, 1 Cor. 10. 16. Not that the Elements themſelves are ſo, but that they are the *Sanctified Media* of this Communion.

4. *THAT as in the Covenant, there are the offers of theſe made by God to us, ſo he requires of us, that we receive them according to the terms made in the Offer.* Though it is he alone that can make us willing, yet he treats us as Voluntary Agents, and thereupon he ſets them before us, urgeth them upon us, & uſeth potent Arguments in pleading with us to accept of them: and hereby he intimates to us, that we cannot apprehend the good of them, but by our acceptance, and free compliance with the offers, and that not only in Converſion, but alſo in our Progreſſive Sanctification. And our non-acceptance will certainly put an Obſtruction in the way. And this is the reaſon why we ſometimes profit not by the Ordinances, but they leave us in ſome regard worſe than they find us. Now there are the terms on which this offer is made, and unto which the Promiſe is reſtrained, which is therefore our Duty to comport withal, if we would not miſs of the Benefit. For God applies himſelf to us in his own way; and where he intends the Bleſſing, he will work us to ſuch a Compliance.

5. *THAT according to this Covenant, Faith is the appointed Medium of our receiving Chriſt and his Benefits.* This therefore is given as the reaſon why the Word did not profit them, in *Heb.* 4. 2. And indeed there is nothing elſe that can be ſuitable to the deſign of the New-Covenant; which is to exalt the Glory of the Grace of God, in all the ſaving good that is done for the Children of Men. It is by *Faith* that God opens the Hearts of his People to entertain Chriſt into them, whereas Unbelief will ſhut the Heart againſt him, and keep him out: It is by *Faith* that the Believer ſucks and draws out the Vertue from him, by which he derives all that ſupply from him, which he ſtands in need of: It is *Faith* that receives the Promiſe, & enables him to place an entire reliance upon him, which ſatisfies his longing Soul. And all that the Soul wants is in Chriſt, and therefore he hath nothing to do but fetch it from him: the whole Vertue muſt come from him, and we have nothing to do here but to conſent to the Offers of Grace, and open our Hearts to it, and place our reliance on him for it.

4. *WE have the Efficacy of this Ordinance upon thoſe who do worthily receive it*, viz. *it becomes ſervicable to their Spiritual Nouriſhment, and growth in Grace.*

HERE obſerve,

(1.) *THAT the whole deſign of this Ordinance, and its Operation is Spiritual.* And this ſtands in oppoſition to that which is Corporal and Carnal; and gives us to underſtand, that if the end and uſe be Spiritual, the *reception of it* muſt be ſo too: and though it is true, that there is a Corporeal part in the Sacrament, for the Elements are ſuch, and the Body and Senſes are to be uſed in our receiving and partaking

partaking of the Sign, yet this is not the end of it, but only a *Medium* to obtaining of the end by a right improvement of it, which is all Spiritual. And though we are to conſider, the natural Vertue of theſe Elements, to ſupply the bodily wants, and ſupport our natural Lives, yet we are not to tarry there, but to apply them to our Souls by Faith, in viewing and affecting ourſelves with the ſuitableneſs and ſufficiency of Chriſt, more fully to anſwer all our Spiritual wants. And tho' in the conſideration of this Ordinance as a Seal of the New Covenant, we are to act our Faith on the whole Promiſe of that Covenant, of which, 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. Yet, as a Sign, repreſenting Chriſt to us as the Bread of Life and the Fountain of Living Waters, the whole Analogy cometh under a Spiritual conſideration: Hence the Apoſtle calls Chriſt the *Spiritual Meat and Drink*, 1 Cor. 10. 3, 4. And this farther confirms the neceſſity of receiving it by Faith, for that only hath an Eye to diſcern Spiritual things.

(2.) *THE ſubject of application for which it is to be uſed is Grace.* Now though Grace hath a diverſe Interpretation to be put upon it, in the uſage of the Scriptures, yet in the ſenſe of our *Catechiſm*, it is in this place to be underſtood of the New Principle of Sanctification, which is planted in the Soul, by the Spirit of God in Regeneration. And it ſuppoſeth that this *New-Principle* is already wrought in the Man; for it is an Ordinance of Communion with Chriſt, and ſo it ſuppoſeth our Union with him, without which we cannot have Communion with him. And every Grace of the Spirit is concerned in this, all of them being to be ſupplied from him, on whom our Spiritual Life entirely depends. And Faith itſelf is not here exempted, in that it alſo is a Grace, equally dependent with all the other; and if our Faith do not fail, it muſt be by influences from Chriſt, who alone can preſerve it, and help our Unbelief.

(3.) *THE Efficacy of this Ordinance with reſpect to our Grace, is to nouriſh it, and give it growth.* There are two things which the Graces of God's Children in this Life do ſtand in need of, viz. *Preſervation in Life & Vigour, and Encreaſe.* Grace is a Creature, and therefore dependent, and without ſupply for the Preſervation of it, would Languiſh, Decay and Dy: And for this it depends on Chriſt, who *is its Life.* And as well may the Body Live without Food, as Grace without Influence from him. Grace alſo is little at firſt, and therefore is compared to an Infant, which though entire in parts, is yet imperfect as to degrees; but it is appointed to grow *to the Stature of a Perfect Man in Chriſt*, for both which it is under the care of Chriſt, who hath ſecured them to every Believer in the Promiſe of the New Covenant, *Joh.* 14. 19. *Pſal.* 92. 13. Now, it is the Duty of the Children of God, to endeavour after theſe. Hence that Precept, 2 Pet. 3. 18. *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt: to him be glory both now and for ever. Amen* And for this there are the means appointed in the uſe whereof he is to wait upon Chriſt for the Bleſſing, among which this of the Sacrament is one, which is by deriving of Vertue from Chriſt for the nouriſhment & encreaſe of Grace in him.

BUT it may here be enquired, *How doth the right participation in this Ordinance, help to nouriſh and encreaſe Grace in a Believer?* And here we may conſider theſe things;

1. *THAT Chriſt is the great Object offered to us in this Ordinance to Live upon.* He is the thing ſignified, and we are called to look thro' the Signs to him; and no farther to apply ourſelves to them, than as that may be made ſerviceable to lead us to him. And as by the Signs we are entertained with ſuch things as are appointed and adapted for our Bodily Livelihood, ſo the end of that is to tell us, that our Life is laid up in Chriſt, and that we muſt continually derive it from him: and no farther than we make this Application, do we receive them Sacramentally: And this is one reaſon why he calls them his Body and his Blood, becauſe they are purpoſely to repreſent them to us.

2. *IN this Ordinance we have an affecting diſcovery of the bitterneſs of Sin, for the mortifying of it in us.* The mortification of ſin, is very ſerviceable for the preſervation and encreaſe of Grace: theſe are two contrary Principles in the Believer, as the one grows weaker, the other grows ſtronger. So much of the activity and prevalency of ſin as there is in us, ſo much is our Grace endangered, & ſo weak it muſt needs be. Hence mortification of ſin, is reckoned to be one part of Sanctification, and a Duty enjoyned on all the People of God: and the root of this mortification is, a cordial hatred of it, ariſing from the apprehenſion of the evil, and bitterneſs of it, of which there is a moſt lively repreſentation in this Sacrament. Herein we ſee what indignation God hath at ſin, in that he ſpared not his own Son, when under the imputation of it; and how terrible a thing it is, in the Sufferings that our Lord underwent to expiate the Guilt of it. So that Chriſt's Croſs will help us to crucify our ſin.

3. *HERE is Chriſt ſet forth in his fulneſs of ſufficiency, for our Faith to rely upon for the ſupply of our Graces.* The Elements here choſen to repreſent him, are the things that are moſt neceſſary and uſeful for the Bodily Life, both for its ſupport and comfort: And they are Signs to certify us, that he is a fountain of Grace, and that he is a fountain opened, and we are invited to come to it, and may by faith plentifully fetch in ſupplies for our Souls, for the ſtrengthning of all our Graces: and what can be more encouraging than to ſee that there is a full treaſury of all that which we can ſtand in need of; and that it is in this *Feaſt of fat things* ſet before us: and we have Chriſt himſelf ſaying to us, Cant. 5. 1. *I am come into my garden, my ſiſter, my ſpouſe; I*

have gathered my myrrh with my spice, I have eaten my hony-comb with my hony, I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.

4. *HERE we have an open view of his incomparable Love to us, to engage us in holiness.* The Love of God to Sinners, is a proper Obligation to bind us to Love and Serve him; and we are assured, that this is the *Teaching of the Grace of God*, Tit. 2. 11, 12. And where can we have a better prospect of this Love of Christ, than in this Ordinance? Surely his free and voluntary Offering himself to revenging Justice, to bear our Iniquities, and suffer our Punishment, was unparralel'd kindness; there is *Emphasis* in that, Isa. 53. 5, 6. *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray: we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* And this is set out at this Ordinance in lively Colours, *Gal.* 3. 1. *Before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?*

5. *THIS Ordinance is a Seal of the New Covenant, and so it serves to strengthen our Faith, and reliance on him, for all the Grace that we need.* That it is such a Seal we before observed, and the things which it Seals up to us are the Promises of the Covenant; and one thing is, that he will give us Grace, and more Grace; and by Faith we are so to receive it, for our establishment in the confidence of this: and in this confidence we may come for, and receive from him, all the good that we need: when we look upon it as a Seal, it will strengthen our Faith and Hope, whereby our Grace must needs grow stronger and stronger.

USE. THIS may then serve to *reprove the Neglect of this Ordinance*, which too generally Men are guilty of: and out of doubt, the consideration of the nature, end, and use of it, will carry abundant conviction of this sin and folly: And let it awaken all from this Negligence, who desire to enjoy abundant Communion with Christ in this Life.

SERMON CCXXVIII.

QUESTION XCVII.

WHAT is required to the worthy receiving of the Lords'-Supper.

ANSWER.

IT is required of them that would worthily partake of the Lord's-Supper, that they examine themselves of their Knowledge to discern the Lord's Body, of their Faith to feed upon him, of their Repentance, Love and New Obedience, least coming unworthily they Eat and Drink Judgment to themselves.

WE have taken an Account of the Nature of the Lord's Supper. Under the Description of which, not only was the Sacramental Usefulness of it laid down, *viz.* Our *Spiritual Nourishment & growth in Grace*; but also a general Note offered of the Qualification of such as may groundedly expect to receive this Benefit by their Participation in it, *viz.* Such as do *worthily receive it*; which is a matter the Apostle Commorates upon, 1 *Cor.* 26, &c. whereby he intimates that it is a thing of great moment for Christians to be well acquainted withal, if they would not miss the saving Good which is to be gotten by it, and incur the greatest Damage. The Question before us hath a proper respect to the qualification of all such as have a true spiritual Right to this Ordinance, and are suitably disposed to come to it profitably. And there are these two things in general supposed in the Question;

1. *THAT a bare partaking of the Elements, is not sufficient to entitle a Man to the Saving Efficacy of it.* Men may enjoy the one, and yet go without the other; and it is to be feared that a great many so do. A meer partaking in the Sign, is done by the exerting of natural Actions of Eating and Drinking, which may be done as easily by a Wicked as a Godly Man; and a Wicked Man may make as semblable a shew in the external manner as the most sincere Believer; there being nothing in all this, but what a formal Hypocrite may perform in all the parts. But as to Participation in the thing signified, which is essential to the making of it a true Sacrament to a Man, it is Spiritual, and cannot be done without Grace, both in being and in exercise; for it is certain that such as do not receive Christ together with the Elements, lose the better part, and frustrate themselves of the great End of the Ordinance.

2. *THAT great Care is to be used about the meetness or fitness of all such as come to the Lord's Table.* For were it not for this, our Duty of Self-Examination were superfluous. But the ground and weight of this will come to be Discoursed afterwards, in our considering of the Answer here given. Here I only in general observe, that there are such Qualifications required, the want whereof renders the Person unfit for coming to the Lord's Table. The thing therefore which here lies before us is, the great Duty of Self-Examination, in order to our right Partaking: And to make way for a distinct laying open this matter, a few Considerations may be premised;

1. *THAT the Lord's Supper in respect of actual Com-*

Communion in it, is a barred Ordinance; and that, not only in regard of thoſe who are ſtrangers from the Goſpel Covenant, but ſuch alſo as do ſtand externally related to it. This was formerly obſerved, when we conſidered the Subjects of Baptiſm; where we conſidered the difference between a right *in* an Ordinance, and a right *to* it. Every viſible Chriſtian hath a right in the External Privileges of the Goſpel Covenant; but he may not thereupon be admitted immediately to come to this Table: and there needs no more at preſent to be ſaid to make this good, but that it is evident from the Word of God, that there are ſuch things as may exclude a Perſon from this actual Communion; inaſmuch as this Excluſion is one of the Ordinances of Diſcipline in the viſible Church And doubtleſs ſuch things as may put a Man from it, do by a parity of Reaſon deſervedly keep him from it.

2. THAT hence *there are the Qualifications of Perſons to be enquired into; for the diſcovery of their fitneſs for ſuch a Participation*: And this is a natural Conſequence from the former; for if all that belong to the viſible Church are not fit, then there muſt be a Rule whereby this fitneſs is to be diſcerned; and this muſt be found in the Perſons ſo concerned: how elſe ſhall they be known? And this can be nothing elſe but ſomething to be in them, whereby they may be differenced from others that are not meet.

3. HENCE it follows, *That all Comers ought to paſs under an Examination in regard of theſe Qualifications.* This is the proper way by which ſuch a diſcovery is to be made of them. Now tho' our Catechiſm only ſpeaks of Self-Examination; yet becauſe we know that according to the Goſpel there is a double Examination that is to be made of ſuch, we may here make a glance at them both.

1. *THERE are thoſe Qualifications that are requiſite for the Satisfaction of others, for their Admiſſion to this Table.* God of old appointed Door-keepers to the Tabernacle, and they were to Examine all Comers, and ſhut out ſuch as by reaſon of Ceremonial Uncleanneſs were prohibited to come; and the neglect of this was charged as a Sin upon them, and God threatned them for that neglect, Ezek. 22. 26. *Her prieſts have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they ſhewed difference between the unclean and the clean.* And doubtleſs there was a Moral conſideration in this, to be carefully obſerved in Goſpel times; and the Goſpel Miniſters cannot without Guilt, neglect this, and ſet open this Ordinance to all that will come whoſoever they be; provided they have firſt received Baptiſm. But as to this matter our Catechiſm waves it, and I ſhall not inſiſt upon it; only obſerve, that tho' the Orthodox are agreed in the thing it ſelf, yet there are various thoughts among them about the Qualifications themſelves, which it would be too tedious a digreſſion to enter upon the diſcuſſion of in theſe Exerciſes: I ſhall therefore here only mention two general Rules which ought to be obſerved in this Affair;

(1.) *THAT thoſe who indiſcriminately admit all Baptized Perſons, for that reaſon, without putting a difference, do manifeſtly tranſgreſs the Goſpel Inſtitution.* That ſome do ſo, and compel Men to it, is too notorious: Altho' it muſt be acknowledged that they do not admit Infants, but ſuch as are Adult, yet at ſuch an Age they are to come, however otherwiſe qualified they be; whereas upon an eaſy Examen it will be found that many of theſe are ſcandalouſly Ignorant of the firſt Principles of the Chriſtian Religion; and others have been Guilty of horrid Crimes, and lead leud Lives, to the reproach of the Goſpel Profeſſion, and never profeſſed or practiſed Repentance; but go on in a Courſe of ſuch Abominations: Now ſuch as are known to be ſo, or upon proper enquiry are found ſuch, are Subjects of a Cenſure, & ſo not to be admitted.

(2.) *THAT thoſe who make other Terms of Communion than the Word of God preſcribes, Uſurp upon Chriſt's Authority, and unwarrantably Impoſe on Mens Conſciences.* There are too many that ſo do, ſome upon one Pretence, ſome on another; and whatſoever plauſible Pleas they have for it, they will not excuſe them, nor will Chriſt thank them for preſuming themſelves to be Wiſer than he is. I ſhall here only obſerve in general, that Men can only judge according to appearance; and when we have done all, there will be Tares mixt with the Wheat; and all that are *of Iſrael* will not *be Iſrael.* And if none be admitted but ſuch as are Knowing and Orthodox in Principles, make a Profeſſion of Subjection to Chriſt, and their Converſations are as becometh Chriſtians, or if they have been Scandalous, teſtify they Repentance and Reformation; there will be no blame upon the Churches of Chriſt who entertain them.

2. *THERE are thoſe Qualifications which the Perſon himſelf muſt have in him; and for that reaſon ought to Examine himſelf, in order to his right Partaking.* And this is that which our Catechiſm aims at, and gives Direction about: And this is another manner of Examination than the other; and can by no means be ſuperceded by the former. A Man may paſs under the ſevereſt Examen of the ſtricteſt Queriſts, and obtain their moſt enlarged Charity and Approbation, and yet remain an odious Hypocrite in the ſight of God: if therefore he truſts to that, he will deceive himſelf, and ly open to the Divine Diſpleaſure; others may help him in it, but he alone can make the proper Application: And becauſe it is Heart-work, he muſt get inward acquaintance with that.

WE may proceed then to take a particular Account of the matter as it lies before us. And here obſerve that the Duty it ſelf is *Self-Examination*; and here three things will come under our Conſideration; *The Thing to be examined*; *The Manner of the Examination*;

and, *The great importance of the Duty*: Every whereof will call for ſome thoughts.

1. *THE thing it ſelf that is to be Examined*: i. e. Our *worthineſs* to partake at this Ordinance. And doubtleſs the deſign of it is to know whether we are worthy, and that if we do, we ſhall do it worthily: and this is a thing which every ſerious and ſenſible Communicant ought to uſe endeavours to be ſatisfied in. And that we be not miſtaken in this matter, we are not to think that either *Paul*, in 1 *Cor.* 11. or the Compilers of the Catechiſm, who borrowed this word from him, did by worthineſs at all intend a Perſonal Merit, by which we may upon our own worth challenge a Title to this favour; for when in a Legal ſenſe we are moſt ſenſible of, and affected with our own Unworthineſs, we are Evangelically moſt Worthy; and the word itſelf properly ſignifies, *meet for a thing*: And a Man is then ſaid to be Worthy in a right ſenſe, when he is fit, ready, prepared for the thing. Nor indeed can any other Worthineſs be here intended becauſe in the Ordinance it ſelf, every right Communicant renounceth his own Worthineſs, and takes hold on the Worthineſs of Chriſt, and placeth his whole hope and expectation upon him. There can therefore be regard had to no other Merits but thoſe of Chriſt, in them we are only to look for our acceptance.

AND here give me leave to obſerve, That that which is nextly and chiefly aimed at in our Catechiſm, is that Preparedneſs we are in, to receive the Sacrament profitably, to our own Advantage and Edification: and in general obſerve, that as the Ordinance is in its deſign Spiritual, ſo muſt our fitneſs or worthineſs be; and that is the thing about which our ſelf ſearch muſt be. It is true there are other things about which we are to examine our ſelves, that we have true Conſolation in our Participation: But the thing under preſent Conſideration is about our Preparation or readineſs to come, that we may not loſe the Benefit; and this is according to that Direction given us, 1 Cor. 11. 28. *But let a man examine himſelf*. Which is nextly aimed at by our Divines.

BUT here a puzling Queſtion is ſtarted, viz. *Whether if the Perſon finds himſelf unworthy, he ought not for all that to come?* And the reaſon of it is becauſe Chriſtians are bound to attend on all the Ordinances; and it will be a Sin in them to omit it. But this is to be received with great caution. For though it is a truth, that ſuch Chriſtians as are capable of it, cannot voluntarily live without this Ordinance, but with their own Sin, it being the duty of all ſuch to endeavour to be fit for it, and accordingly regularly to ſeek it; and their very unfitneſs for it is their Sin: yet this Conſideration will not juſtify their coming raſhly. And their caſe may be circumſtanced ſo as not only will they Sin in coming, but their Sin would be aggravated by it. And though it is not ſufficient to fright a ſerious Soul from this Table, that he labours under ſome darkneſs and doubts, but rather humbly to come and wait upon Chriſt to clear up his doubts, and remove his fears. Nevertheleſs, a Perſon may lye under the guilt of ſuch Sins, which no other knows of, or can accuſe him for, that as long as the Guilt abides, and his Peace is not made with God, it would be daring preſumption in him thus to come, and it would be to add Tranſgreſſion to Sin, and profane the holy Ordinance. In the Moſaical Pædagogy, if a Man knew himſelf unclean, he might not dare to come to the Paſſover, till he had attended the Law for his cleanſing. And it was a Precept given by our Saviour, which had a regard to Goſpel times, Mat. 5. 23, 24. *Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remembreſt that thy brother hath ought againſt thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, firſt be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.* And when the Apoſtle ſaith, 1 Cor. 11. 28. *But let a man examine himſelf, and ſo let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup*; it cannot intend, let him however he finds himſelf upon his Examination; for what uſe would there then be of it? But the meaning muſt be according as he finds himſelf, and there be no juſt let or impediment. So that, as ſometimes Men are Providentially debarred, and it is no fault if they come not, when by Sickneſs, or any other juſt avocation they are taken off; ſo when their own falls throws moral bars in their way; they ought not to leap over them, but ſeek orderly to get them out of the way. And doubtleſs this is one improvement which they are to make of their Self-Examination, if they would not trifle in it. And it is not ſufficient for Men to abſtain, which they cannot do without Sin, as if that were ſufficient to expiate their Guilt.

BUT we may now proceed to conſider what is that Worthineſs or Preparedneſs, which they are to Examine themſelves about. Tho' this will be more particularly conſidered under the next Head; yet ſomething may be here remarked in general. We before obſerved that a Man is then worthy when he is fitted and prepared to meet with Chriſt at his Table, and to partake in the great Benefits of his Death, which are there diſpenſed to the Worthy Communicants. And here we are to obſerve, that there is a double fitneſs which is requiſite, & therefore both are to be brought under this Inquiry, viz. Habitual & Actual. Each whereof may be conſidered.

(1.) *THERE is an Habitual fitneſs which is beſtowed on Perſons when they are put into a ſtate of Grace by a thorough or ſound Converſion.* Of ſuch it is therefore frequently ſaid, that they are *worthy*, Rev. 3. 4. and elſewhere. And the reaſon is, becauſe the worthineſs of Chriſt is made their's by Imputation, and by a new Principle of Grace infuſed into them, they are made capable of receiving him and his Benefits; and this no Man while in his natural ſtate hath any right to, or preſent

capacity

capacity of. And the ground of this is evident from the Nature and Design of this Ordinance; of which we have formerly considered. This Sacrament, is not only a Sign, but also a Seal of the Covenant between God and us: it is also an Instrument for the conveyance of all that good to us, which is laid up in the Promise of this Covenant. Now this necessarily presupposeth that the Covenant is first indented, for it must first be, before it can be ratified. Now whatsoever Claim Men may have to this Ordinance as to Men, by vertue of an open Profession, it is certain that the Promise is setled upon them, only on their cordial closing in with the terms on which it is exhibited to them. And this is only upon their Conversion, in which these terms are wrought in them; who before were under the threatning which is denounced against all who are without them. No Man can exert a vital act, till he is alive; and before Conversion we are told how it is with us, Eph. 2. 1. *Dead in trespasses and sins.* And this quickning is wrought in Conversion; by putting into him the new Principles of Spiritual Life, which before he had not. And when this Grace is once conferred upon him, he is now a Subject habitually prepared to receive the Benefits of Christ; and they belong to him according to the Promise. This therefore must necessarily be inquired after by such as would worthily partake.

(2.) *THERE is Actual fitness or worthiness to be considered here.* This always presumes the former, and so till we are well satisfied in that, we in vain inquire after this, any further than by this we may gather some comfortable evidence of that: for it is not to be denied, that by the Effects we may argue to the Cause, provided they be such as cannot otherwise be produced. Now to this Actual worthiness or fitness, it is requisite that these Graces of the Spirit which are put into us, have their dispositions raised, and he in a ready posture to give a suitable Entertainment to Christ who is set before us in this Ordinance. And it is certain, that a Man may be Habitually prepared, and yet Actually unprepared, and be very unfit for present Communion in it, and so lose the benefit of it. And the reason of this is, because of the remaining Corruption which in this Life abides in the best of God's People, which puts a woful impediment to their receiving of Spiritual good by any Ordinance; and as long as this indisposition continues, it suppresseth the activity of their Graces. It is therefore the duty of every Communicant, in order to his coming to the Sacrament, not only to inquire into his state, but also his present frame; that he may be able to say as the Psalmist, Psal. 57. 7. *My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise.* And he ought to be the more heedful to himself in this, because, if he hath any acquaintance at home, he cannot but know how apt he is to be out of frame. And there are many respects in which this may be, the principal whereof may be afterwards considered. And that he ought to do this every time he is to approach to the Ordinance, needs no greater conviction than his own experience, which cannot but tell him that his good frames do frequently go off, and indispositions do insensibly steal upon him; which, if he do not carefully and strictly observe, will render him unfit; and he ought to be afraid of the deceitfulness of Sin. Now the proper design of this inquiry, is not to drive him from coming, in case he finds himself unready, but to quicken him to take the Opportunity to get ready, to call in his wandring affection, to stir up his drowsy paces, to get all things into a right order; that so he may not run rashly on such a Duty.

2. *WE are now to pass over to consider the Manner of this Examination*; or how we are to Examine our selves, and what are the Things about which this Duty is to be employed: And this may be generally gathered from the former. For, if it be our worthiness which is to be inquired after, then those things are to be sought for, which will serve to give Evidence thereunto. And for our more orderly proceedure here, we may first consider the Nature of this Examination, and then the Things themselves about which it is to be employed in the search after them.

1. AS to the *Nature of this Examination*, a few Words may suffice. And here two Things may be considered, viz. *the Duty it self*, and the *Subject of it.*

(1.) *THE Duty it self is to Examine.* The word used, 1 *Cor.* 11. 28. δοκιμαζω, properly signifies to make Trial of a thing, to find out what it indeed is, that we may come to a certain knowledge of it, and not be mistaken about it: It is a metaphorical word, borrowed from Goldsmiths, who least they should be imposed on, and have Counterfeit Metal put upon them instead of that which is genuine, and for that end they bring it to the test; and have their Rules by which they can distinguish one from another. So that this contains in it, not only an Examination whether such things be, but a Trial of them, whether they be right or no. And the reason is, because not only there are such things as glister, but are not Gold; that makes an appearance as if they were right, but upon a more thorough inquiry will be found wrong: And the more importance it is of, that we be not mistaken, the more need to be curious and critical; as also in regard of the deceitfulness of our own Hearts, which, by reason of carnal Concupiscence in us, will put a cheat upon us if possible, *Jer.* 17 9.

(2.) *THE Subject of it, is our own selves.* The matter about which it is to be imployed, are not other Mens concerns, but our own: Our business in this regard is not abroad but at home. We are in it to sit in Judgment upon our selves; it is our own state & frame that is to be brought to the Trial; and in this affair

affair our own Conſciences are to be Witneſſes, Jurors, and Judges: and it cannot be left to any one to do it in our behalf. We may make a fair ſhew to the World, but they may be deceived in us; but our own Hearts are conſcious, or may be acquainted with the truth of things, if we do not ſhut our eyes againſt the light; but are willing to bring ourſelves to the light of thoſe Rules which are given us in the Word of God for our help in this matter. And becauſe it is our ſelves, we have the more need to take great care that we may judge righteous Judgment; becauſe of thoſe prejudices which are apt to ariſe in us, and good opinions that we are too apt to entertain concerning our ſelves; and the advantage which Satan the Adverſary of our Souls takes from hence to perſwade us to draw falſe Concluſions: for which reaſon we had need not only to entertain an holy fear and jealouſy of our ſelves, to make us the more critical in our Examination, but alſo, not daring to truſt our ſelves, earneſtly to call in Divine help, and beg of God that he would aſſiſt us in, our Search, and give us a right judgment and determination: As *Pſal.* 139. 23, 24.

USE. AND from what hath been hitherto ſaid on this Caſe, we may learn, *that it is not a matter of light moment, whether in our outward partaking at this Ordinance we have Communion with Chriſt or no.* For were it ſo, it would not be ſo urged upon us to bring our ſelves under ſo ſtrict an Examination. It may therefore put us upon it to be more earneſt in this matter; the neglect whereof is none of the leaſt of the reaſons, why we go to and come from this Ordinance, and get no more true profit by it.

SERMON CCXXXIX.

WE have taken a general Account of the Nature of the Examination, and may proceed to conſider,

2. *THE Things about which we are thus to call our ſelves to an Account.* And we muſt here remember, that the enquiry is to be, both as to the being of theſe in us, and the readineſs of them for Exerciſe. And tho' this Examination is of conſtant Uſe, and we are to be at it every Day, and we can perform no ſolemn Duty of Worſhip without it as we ought; yet it is of more ſpecial Uſe in order to our coming to the Lord's Table, it being a Royal Feaſt which we are now to be entertained at, where we hope to have intimate Communion with our Lord and Saviour, and therefore ought to get our ſelves ready to meet with him in the moſt comely manner, that ſo we may ſit under his ſhadow with delight, *&c.* And here, leſt any ſerious and ſenſible Soul ſhould be diſcouraged, let me premiſe, that we muſt expect in a thoro' Self-ſearch, to find enough to humble us, by reaſon of ſo much Corruption that we ſhall diſcern to be ſtirring in us, and ſo much Infirmity attending on all our Graces: Our firſt Care then is to enquire after the Truth and Sincerity of theſe things, and then in what degree of Activity they are. And now we may proceed to a brief Conſideration of the particulars:

1. THE firſt thing to be examined, is, *Our Knowledge to diſcern the Lord's Body.* The Apoſtle intimates, that without this we cannot partake worthily, 1 *Cor.* 11. 29. Such is the neceſſity of *Knowledge* in all acts of Religion, that without it the mind of Man cannot be good. God in all the Communion that he holds with Man, treats him as a reaſonable Creature, and applies to his rational Powers; and whatſoever true Good the Man gets by any Ordinance, it muſt paſs thro' his Underſtanding, to his Will and Affections. God therefore mentions that as a ſingular Bleſſing, Jer. 3. 15. *And I will give you paſtours according to mine heart, which ſhall feed you with knowledge and underſtanding.* Now the Knowledge that is here required is a Skill and Ability to *diſcern the Lord's Body* in the Ordinance, without which he can get no Good by it; for tho' God's Bleſſing on it, can only render it Efficacious for the End of it, yet it doth not work as a natural Inſtrument, but morally, as on a Cauſe by Counſel: And let us here peculiarly obſerve, that the Sacrament is *Symbolical*; there are in it Carnal Signs, but that which is aimed at in them is ſomething that is Spiritual; & except we diſcern that which is Spiritual, thro' that which is Carnal, we altogether miſs of the End of it, and loſe the only true Benefit that is to be gotten by it. By the Body of the Lord is here intended Chriſt himſelf, who is exhibited under the ſhadow of theſe Signs; and we are to receive him with them by Faith, elſe we are not Profited by them: Now that we may ſo do, it is of abſolute Neceſſity that we have this Knowledge ſo to diſcern him. And there is a twofold Knowledge here required, a *Literal*, and a *Spiritual*; and tho' the former of theſe is not ſufficient without the latter; yet without ſome good meaſures of this, the other cannot be.

(1.) *THERE is a Literal Knowledge; by which we are to be acquainted with theſe Truths Doctrinally, in which the great Myſtery of Man's Salvation by Chriſt is revealed to us in the Word of God.* I do not here diſpute to what meaſures of this Knowledge God may pleaſe to Communicate his Grace; but it is certain, that there muſt be ſuch a meaſure of it, as may apprehend Chriſt to be a ſuitable and ſufficient Object for us to rely upon for Salvation; and we are ſure that there is an Ignorance of theſe things that is deſtructive to them who labour of it, Hoſ. 4. 6. *My people are deſtroyed for lack of knowledge.* And the more diſtinct this Knowledge is, the more helpful it will be to a Chriſtian in his work, when it is ſanctified by the Spirit of God. Now the things which do more peculiarly belong to this Knowledge are, an Underſtanding of the Covenant to which this

Sacrament

Sacrament is a Seal, what are the Promises, and what are the Conditions, on which these Promises are ratified; for if we are ignorant of the Covenant, how shall we be able to apply the Seals thereof after a right manner? what is the misery befallen us by Sin, and how our recovery from that misery is made way for by Christ, that so we may feel our need of him, and look upon him as an Object every way suitable for us to apply our selves to for Salvation; what are the Terms on which he is offered to us, and we invited to accept him, under a promise of saving us if we so do, that so we may know whether we have an Interest in his Purchase; and particularly the Nature of the Sacrament: what are the Signs which are used in it, and what is signified by them; what is the union between these, and after what manner they become Sacramentally beneficial to us. And tho' it is not to be expected that every good Christian should be able critically to discourse of all the Cases that may be moved on these Points; yet a neglect of being able with judgment, to put the difference between these things, must needs obstruct his edification by the Ordinance: nor indeed can he without this, exert that Faith which is necessary to a right participation; for how can a Man Believe unless he knows what he believes? for though Faith receives the Divine Testimony, yet it must know what that Testimony is, else he cannot receive it with assent; and then much less can he place his recumbency on it, which is also essential to true Faith. So that where this gross Ignorance is found, it puts a necessary bar to Communion, and for that reason neither Infants nor Naturals, nor Persons that can give no competent account of their knowledge of these things, are to be admitted.

(2.) *THERE is a Spiritual Knowledge or discerning that is here requisite.* And without this the other will not render the Person fit or worthy, but will aggravate their guilt. And this peculiarly belongs to the Man's own Inquisition. Others may be Judges of the former, but this is more secret between God and his own Soul. And this may be wanting where there are the greatest measures of discursive knowledge, which may be gained by the improvement of the natural Faculty, and is but a common Gift of the Spirit. We read of a Spiritual discerning, to which the natural Man is a stranger, let him be of never so penetrating understanding in other respects. 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. There is a great difference between the bare knowing of the Truth, and knowing it as *it is in Jesus.* By this knowledge we discern the inamorating Excellency, Beauty and Glory which there is in Divine Truths, which creates an high value for them in the Soul. The Church therefore says of her Spouse, Cant. 5. ult. *He is altogether lovely.* And for this there must be a gracious illumination, to open the eyes of the mind, which are in themselves blind: And for this reason *David* prays for it, *Psal.* 119. 18. And this is the knowledge on which Christ puts that encomium, Joh. 17. 3. *And this is Life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* And except we have such a sight and discovery of Christ, we cannot entertain him worthily.

2. *THE next Enquiry is to be made about our Faith to feed upon Christ.* This also is a Grace indispensibly requisite for our worthy partaking: We must therefore have it in the Habit, else we cannot Exercise it; and we must have it in a readiness, that we may Exercise it at the Ordinance, else we cannot receive the Elements Sacramentally; and the reason of this is expresst in the Use that is to be made of it, *viz* that we may feed upon him. It is not enough for us to feed upon the outward Elements, for the Flesh profiteth not; but we must feed upon Christ, who is there set before us as the Bread of Life. Now in order to our so feeding on him, it is requisite that we have those Organs which are accommodated for our so doing. Now as this Food is Spiritual, so must the Organs be by which we apply it to the Use and End of it; and this cannot be done by those that are Corporeal. Our Graces stand in need of being nourished, both to keep them alive, and to add growth and encrease to them: This Nourishment is laid up in Christ, and is set before us and offered to us at this Table; and that we may derive this Good from them to our Souls, we must suck & draw the Vertue from them; they must be as it were incorporated in us: Now the great Instrument by which this is to be done, is Faith, by which alone we can receive Christ, and live upon him; so that the want of this, and that also in actual Exercise, will inevitably prevent our deriving of this great Benefit from him, and leave our Souls withering and starving. Unbelief puts Christ away; it shuts the mouth of the Soul against him, and stops the entercourse between Christ and our Souls, by which only we can thrive in Grace.

NOW in our enquiry after this Faith, we must see that it is not meerly an Historical, but a true and living Faith; and accordingly examine ourselves about the proper Characters of it. And here we must try,

(1.) *WHETHER we have been effectually perswaded to receive the Testimony of God concerning him*: That there is Salvation in no other but him; and that he is able to save us to the uttermost; that all they are Blessed that put their trust in him; that he hath fully satisfied the demands of Justice for the Sins of his People, and purchased the Eternal Inheritance for them; that all such as have him, have Life; and that the fulness of the God-head dwells in him; and whatsoever is needful to make us Blessed here and hereafter, is treasured in him: For, except we have this Faith we can never go to him for Life, inasmuch as this is the very Reason and Motive of our so coming to him: And this Faith is ever built upon

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the Teſtimony which the Father hath given of his Son; tho' it is farther confirmed upon the experience of his having been ſo to us: And this is wrought by the irreſiſtible energy of the Spirit of God, who hath perſwaded us thus to believe; for it is his Gift.

2. *WHETHER we have been perſwaded by this Teſtimony to adventure our ſelves upon him, and place our Affiance in him.* And this evermore follows upon the former, if it be right and genuine; and it is a vain thing for any to plead that, if it hath not produced this effect in them. And herein properly conſiſts the true Bleſſedneſs of Believers: For we are told, Pſal. 2. 12. *Bleſſed are all they that put their truſt in him.* And if we have thus believed in him, we have utterly renounced all our reliance upon every other Object in which we before had placed our Confidence; for they who truſt in Chriſt, do truſt in him alone, and join no other with him, *Pſal.* 62. 5,6. We have abjured our own Righteouſneſs, as inſufficient to ſtand for our Juſtification before God, and count it as filthy rags, *Iſai.* 64. 6. And ſeek it in him alone, *Pſal.* 3. 9. We dare to do nothing in our own ſtrength, but rely on him only for all that influence from him, whereby we may ſerve God acceptably; and rely on his Merits, and not our own worthineſs for acceptance with God, *Eph.* 1. 6. And we have taken him in the offer and promiſe of the Goſpel, and reſolvedly adventured our ſelves upon him, with full purpoſe to go no whether elſe, but if we periſh, to periſh here.

3. *WHETHER we have taken him in all his Mediatorial Offices, and for all thoſe purpoſes which are deſigned in them.* Theſe Offices were conferred upon him, thus to render him a compleat Saviour; nor could we obtain Salvation without them all. And if we pretend to receive him in one of them, and not all, it is but a pretence, and our Faith is hypocriſy and preſumption: And many who would have him to ſave them from Wrath and Hell by his Prieſthood & Satisfaction made to Juſtice, do yet follow the direction of their own Underſtandings, and will not yield Obedience to his Commands, and be under his Government, but be at their own diſpoſe: But if we have truly believed in him, we have wholly reſigned our ſelves up to him to be our *Wiſdom*, &c. 1 *Cor.* 1. 30.

3. *ANOTHER thing about which our Self-Examination is to be employed, is, our Repentance.* Repentance is another of the Graces of the Spirit, and always inſeparable from true Faith, and is therefore to be enquired after, in order to our being able to prove our Faith to be unfeigned; for an Impenitent Believer, is a manifeſt inconſiſtency; and let Men make never ſo fair a Profeſſion of their truſting in Chriſt, and reliance upon Chriſt, and confident expectation of Salvation from him; yet if they remain Impenitent they deceive themſelves; for he hath ſaid, Luke 13. 3. *But except ye repent ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* Now there is a peculiar Reaſon why we ſhould Examine our ſelves about our Repentance, not only in order to our firſt coming to this Ordinance, but to renew it every time we thus approach to Chriſt. For,

1. *IF ever we have Repented of any Sin, we have received the Grace of Repentance, from which the Acts of Repentance do proceed.* And this is a gift of God: Hence that in Acts 11. 18. *Then hath God alſo to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.* And it is neceſſary in order to obtaining Forgiveneſs, Acts 2. 38. *Repent and be Baptized for the Remiſſion of Sins.* So that if we would be ſatisfied about the reality of it, we muſt follow it to this root, elſe we may be impoſed on. For,

2. *EVERY Repentance that Men may plead for, is not this ſaving Repentance, or carries in it the witneſs of our true Converſion.* There is a Legal as well as an Evangelical Repentance; and too many miſtake one for the other. We read of *Judas* that he Repented, and yet it profited him not; but precipitated him into his own Deſtruction. *Saul* alſo Repented, but he ſtill remained in the gall of bitterneſs. We had need therefore to enquire not only whether we have Repented, but whether it hath been after a Godly ſort.

3. *WE have often the continued calls to renew our Repentance after our firſt Converſion.* For, tho' a true Penitent ſhall never fall out from Grace, yet he doth often wound his own Peace, and grieve the holy Spirit: and it is by Repentance that he is to be renewed; all Sin is to be Repented of; and in this way we are to recover the teſtimonies of God's Favour and Love to us. And beſides the Sins of ordinary incurſion, which attend the beſt Actions that we do, there are thoſe of a deeper die, which call us to a more ſoaking Repentance; and till the Peace be made, we cannot expect that true and comfortable Fellowſhip with Chriſt at his Table, which is to be expected and deſired by us.

4. *THE Sacrament is a Seal of the Covenant:* And one great End of it is, to Seal up to us the Good held forth in the Promiſe: And this is to confirm and eſtabliſh our Faith, by which we may ſuck out the ſweetneſs of it, and derive more Life and Vigour from it. Now there are Covenant Promiſes which are thus ſetled; and conſequently they are connected with the Precept, which directs us the way wherein we are to partake in this Good. And one of theſe Benefits which we are to wait for in this Ordinance, is the Sealing up to us the Pardon of our Sins; and in order to our obtaining this Pardon, God requires of us Repentance, as hath formerly been accounted for, under the Doctrine of Repentance. Now there are two things that we are carefully to enquire after, in this part of our Self-Examination;

1. *WHETHER we did ever truly Repent of Sin*; or, *Whether we are in a ſtate of Repentance.* And the rather ought we to be accurate in this matter, becauſe there are not a few that deceive themſelves on this account; and

and the way for our right coming at this, is to bring our ſelves to the Teſt of thoſe Characteriſtical Notes which were formerly given of this Grace: And for our help in this, I ſhall briefly recite ſome of the Principal; and let us put them to our own hearts, and ask our ſelves;

(1.) *HAVE we been truly ſorrowful for our Sin, and lamented our ſelves for it before God?* There is a Worldly and there is a Godly Sorrow; the one works to Death, the other to Life; 2 *Cor.* 7. 10. We may truly ſay, that we have been ſorry, and walked in ſackcloth, ſo did *Ahab*: But whence is our Grief, is it only becauſe we are terrified with Wrath? Or is it becauſe we have ſinned againſt God, and fallen ſhort of his Glory by it? Do we mourn becauſe we have diſhonoured God, and hurt our own Souls? Is it becauſe we find Sin to be an evil and bitter thing? And is it not only for our Actual Sins, but the Sin of our Natures? Is the Body of Death burdenſome, and makes us cry, Rom. 7.24. *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* And do we thus confeſs and bewail it before God, as it is againſt him? So did he, Pſal. 51. 4. *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned, and done this evil in thy ſight.*

(2.) *HAVE we truly loathed Sin, and our ſelves for it?* Hatred of Sin as Sin, is the root of true Repentance; and this proceeds not meerly from a moral Principle in us, which makes many a Man to entertain a deteſtation of theſe and thoſe Sins; but from a gracious Principle, which hates Sin from a reſentment of the Vileneſs of it, as it is Sin; and conſequently it extends to all Sin, Pſal. 119. 104. *I hate every falſe way.* And that not becauſe it hurts us in it's conſequent, but in that it is in it ſelf the greateſt Evil. And this is ever accompanied with a Self loathing on the account of it. When *Job* once comes to that ſenſe, Job 40. 4. *I am vile*; he ſoon proceeds to that, Chap. 42. 6. *I abhor my ſelf.* The very ſtain and pollution of it, makes us odious to our ſelves.

(3) *HAVE we turned from all Sin to God?* Theſe are the Terms of true Repentance: Confeſſion is not ſufficient without forſaking, *Prov.* 28. 13. That Man hath never repented of his Sin, who hath not abjured it; nor hath he truly renounced it, unleſs he hath returned to God; and that on a deliberate Choice: Hence that, Pſal. 119. 59. *I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy teſtimonies.* He that leaves one Sin, and takes up with another, hath not repented, but only traverſeth his ways; and therefore together with hating of his Sin, he loves the ways of God, and delights himſelf in the Command; and he who once tho't the Command grievous, now counts it to be Holy, Juſt and Good.

(4.) *DO we maintain a continual Warfare againſt the remaining Sin in us?* It is God's holy Pleaſure that his own Children ſhall be moleſted with the relicks of Concupiſcence; they carry about with them the old man which hath it's corrupt Luſts, and theſe will always endeavour to lead them into Captivity. But where the Grace of Repentance is, it will withſtand it and war againſt it: See, Gal. 5 17. *For the fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh.* This will put them upon the great work of Mortification: Hence that advice, Col. 3. 5. *Mortify therefore your members which are upon earth.* And they will be ever bringing their Luſt to the Croſs of Chriſt. But this brings to the ſecond enquiry, *viz.*

2. *WHETHER we have Repented of thoſe Sins that have overtaken us ſince our firſt Converſion?* It is awfully evident that Godly Men do ſometimes fall into the mire and defile themſelves: How many inſtances for this have we on record in holy Writ? and theſe are ſometimes more groſs, and grieve the holy Spirit, and are ſcandalous to the holy Profeſſion which they make: It is therefore ſaid, 2 Sam. 11. ult. *But the thing that David had done diſpleaſed the Lord.* And, *Rom.* 2. 24. Now when it is ſo, God expects that a peculiar and ſpecial Repentance be exerciſed about ſuch Sins, if ever we would receive the favourable ſmiles of his Countenance upon us. There muſt be a new Pardon ſought, if ever we would enjoy that familiar Communion with him, and ſit under his ſhadow with delight: For, tho' every Penitent Believer is in a Pardoned State, and there is now no more Condemnation abides for him; yet there is a Guilt contracted by that Sin, and there muſt a new act of Forgiveneſs paſs upon him, in order to his recovering of Peace with Conſcience; and the way to obtain this muſt be by renewed Repentance, and till that be put in practice, he may well expect to be under intolerable remorces; but in this way he may hope to find his broken Bone healed, and a Pardon applied to him: Thus we find it was with *David*, after his great Tranſgreſſion, *Pſal.* 32. 3, 4, 5. Here then we are to examine our ſelves;

1. *BY ſearching for Sin; to ſee whether there have been no ſuch a Breach made between God & us.* And for this we are to reflect, and call over our thoughts, our words and our actions, and bring them to the Word of God, and try them thereby: We muſt know our Sins in order to our Repenting; and this inquiſitiveneſs is a ſign of a Penitent diſpoſition; this is the thinking on our ways, which is the way to turn from Sin by Repentance; and they that will not do this, are far from the other. And here not only the more groſs Scandals are to be ſought for, but our vain Carriages, our paſſionate ungoverned Behaviours, and neglect of Duty, are to be thought of.

2. *BY affecting our ſelves with the proper Aggravations of ſuch Sins.* We are not to ſeek covers for them, but to look to the bottom of them, and to charge our ſelves with the Circumſtances, which may make them the more vile and bitter to us; tho' we Confeſs our Sins, yet if we ſeek extenuations, and that

which may make us the more eaſy in our reſentments of them; this is from a root of Impenitence: *David* tells us he did not hide his, *Pſal.* 32. 5. We cannot give to God his due Glory by our Repentance, unleſs we put it's own colours upon the Sin which we recognize: How doth the Prophet expreſs this? Dan. 9. 5 *We have ſinned and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled even by departing from thy precepts, and from thy judgments.*

3. *BY an humble and hearty bemoaning our ſelves before God for that very Sin.* As we are to ſeek a Pardon for it in particular, ſo to bewail our ſelves diſtinctly on the account of it; and ſeek of God his Grace to ſubdue that Luſt in us, that it may no more have ſuch power over us; but that we may be made more watchful againſt it, and be helped with more power over it, that it may not ſo eaſily draw us away after it; and crying out to God as ſuch who are diſtreſs'd with the ſenſe of it, for his healing of us, as the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 41. 4. *I ſaid, Lord be merciful unto me, heal my ſoul, for I have ſinned againſt thee.*

4. *BY getting into a penitent frame, in order to our coming to his Table.* The ſenſe of ſuch Sins ought not to drive us from him; for, if ever we find help and relief, it muſt be from him: But if under a deep ſenſe of our folly, and grieving for our Sin, we come before him, acknowledging our Guilt and Unworthineſs, and place our whole hope in his Mercy; we have now a Promiſe in the Covenant of Grace, that ſuch as ſo do ſhall experience his Pity, and bowels of Compaſſion extended to them; and entertain them as the Father did his Prodigal returning Son; and give all the tokens of his Reconciledneſs to them. Our buſineſs therefore is to examine our ſelves about this; and if we find it to be ſo with us thro' his Grace, he will take us from the ground, and beſtow on us his endeared Embraces.

SERMON CCXL.

4. *ANOTHER thing that we are to Examine our ſelves about in order to our worthy partaking, is our Love.* It is certain that this Sacrament cannot be rightly attended without Love in exerciſe; for which there muſt be a root of it in the Soul. The Ordinance is called a *Communion*, 1 *Cor.* 10. 16. And there can be no comfortable Communion without it be animated with Love between the Communicants. This Ordinance is called a Feaſt, and Feaſts are made for friendſhip; which ſuppoſeth Love, and that without diſſimulation. It muſt therefore be needful that we call our ſelves to an account about our Love; whether we have it in us, and in what poſture it is to exert it ſelf. In a Word. it is to be a Commemoration of the greateſt Love, which cannot be done as it ought to be, without the reciprocation of our moſt ardent and intenſe Love. Now there is a twofold Love which we are here to Examine our ſelves about, *viz.* Our Love to God and Chriſt, and our Love one to another.

1. *WE are to make trial of our Love to God and Chriſt.* In this Ordinance is exhibited to us the ſingular Love of God in Chriſt unto us; and if our Love be not by it drawn out to him, we muſt needs be unworthy Communicants. We are here to celebrate the Love of God. As the Deity is the ultimate Object of our Faith, ſo of our Love. One God in Three Perſons, is concerned in our Salvation; and each of theſe Divine Subſiſtences hath his peculiar manner of expreſſing his Love to us, which calls for our grateful acknowledgment. God the Father in chuſing of us, which is aſcribed to his Everlaſting Love, *Jer.* 31. 3. God the Son in Redeeming of us; which is alſo aſſigned to his Love, *Gal.* 2. 20. And God the Spirit in Calling of us, which was a demonſtration of his infinite Love, *Jer.* 31. 3. But inaſmuch as God peculiarly ſignalized this Love of his in the great Work of Redemption wrought out by Chriſt; and that in his doing and dying for Sinners, there is a ſpecial Commemoration of this appointed in the Ordinance, and it is ſaid to be to *ſhew forth his Death until he comes*: altho' this muſt always have a regard to what each of the Perſons hath done in it. God the Father gave him for us, *Rom.* 8. 32. God the Son gave himſelf freely to this; he gave his Life for many, and he offered himſelf up by the Eternal Spirit, and it is the Spirit who powerfully applies the vertue of this Sacrifice unto us. Now except we Love Chriſt, he cannot profit us, but we abide under the Curſe. As in 1 Cor. 6. 22. *If any man love not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, let him be Anathema, Maranatha.* Now among others, there are theſe particular Rules by which we may try our Love to him.

(1.) *DO we love God with a Supream Love.* If there be any thing that we love better, or equally with him, we do not Love him at all, *Mat.* 10. 37. So that tho' there is a Love which we owe to the Creature, yet when it comes in competition with this, it is comparatively hatred, *Luk.* 14. 26. Is our Love for him ſuch as we cannot expreſs, but are forced to cry out, as Pſal. 119. 97. *O how love I thy law!* Do we prefer Chriſt before all the World? *Cant.* 5. 10. Have we ſeen his Amiableneſs ſuch as makes every thing elſe contemptible in compariſon of him?

(2.) *HAVE we forſaken all for Chriſt?* And this will follow on the former. If we Love him above all, we have counted nothing too good to part withal for him: Other things have earneſtly ſollicited our Affections, and courted our Love, but we have counted nothing ſo dear as to break on this account, but could readily let all go that offered to part between him and us: We have choſen him, and rejected every thing for him.

That

This was it the Diſciples could plead, Math. 19. 27. *We have forſaken all and followed thee.*

(3.) *DO we expect our whole Happineſs from him?* If we Love him as we ought, he is our all; we go no whither elſe, rely upon no other Object for our Bleſſedneſs but him only. We can ſay, as Pſal. 73. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I deſire beſides thee.* Doubtleſs the ſuitableneſs & ſufficiency of Chriſt is the attractive of this Love: And hence we reſolve to go no whither elſe for any thing, but to him, *Joh.* 6. 68. And hence we are ſatisfied in him, and count him to be a portion ſufficient.

(4.) *HAVE we enflamed Deſires after Communion with him?* And this hath a reſpect to our preſent frame; for there may be a root of Love in us, but the activity of it may be impeded by Corruption in us; and our Affections cooled: and this puts us out of frame. So it was with the Spouſe, *Cant.* 5. *begin.* And this frame will grow inſenſibly on us, if we be not aware: other things will attract us, and our Hearts will be too much engaged to them; and ſometimes prejudices will get room in our Hearts, which will damp our Love to him. This therefore ought alſo to be inquired after; and we are not as we ſhould be, when we come to this Ordinance, unleſs we can ſay with the Pſalmiſt, in *Pſal.* 42 *begin.* If we do not come to enjoy him, and lie in his Embraces, we do not come with a right deſign, nor can we expect to profit. And the more eagerly our Hearts are diſpoſed for this, the more clear is the diſcovery of our Love.

2. *WE are alſo to make trial of our Love to our Brethren.* This Sacrament is ordained, not only for our Communion with God and Chriſt, but alſo one with another. We therefore have ſuch an expreſſion, 1 Cor. 10. 17. *For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.* In which it is intimated, that as the Bread is the ſame in ſignification, though broken and diſtributed to each Communicant; ſo it tells us that we are one in Chriſt, becauſe it is the ſame Chriſt that we live upon; which is Myſtically to be underſtood. Now if there be ſuch a oneneſs in Believers, doubtleſs it beſpeaks them to be one in Heart, Affection and Love. Beſides, this Sacrament tells us, what potent Obligations there are lying upon us to have and maintain the exerciſe of this Love. It tells us that we are the Children of one Father, the Spouſe of the ſame Chriſt, the Temple of the ſame Spirit; that he entertains us as Children at the ſame Table; which is alſo an Emblem of our ſitting together with Chriſt in his Kingdom; that we are engaged in the ſame Profeſſion, and equally hated by the World: All of which challengeth our endeared Love one of another. Now if we have not this Love in its vigour, we put an unavoidable obſtruction to our profitable Communion. If that was a good plea, 1 Pet. 3. 8. *Love as brethren*; it muſt needs be of equal force with regard to our partaking at this Sacrament; nay the want of it will darken our evidence of our ſincere Loving of God. For ſo the Apoſtle argues, 1 Joh. 4. 20. *If a man ſay, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God whom he hath not ſeen.* Yet it is neceſſary to prove that we are truly Converted; as, Chap. 3. 14. *We know that we have paſſed from death unto life, becauſe we love the brethren: he that loveth not his brother, abideth in death.* Now the Rules of Trial on this account are particularly ſuch as theſe,

(1.) *DO we love the Brethren in & for Chriſt?* There is a natural affection of Love which we have to Man, on the account of ſomething in them natural or moral that we ſee in them, which is attractive; a nearneſs of carnal Relation, ſimilitude of Manners, affable and courteous Carriage; Kindneſſes which they ſhew to us, and whatſoever elſe of like nature. But this will not amount to a demonſtration of Brotherly Love, which is the thing here to be ſought. But is it becauſe we ſee ſuch diſcoveries of the Image of Chriſt upon them, and the ſhine of the Graces of his Spirit in their Converſation? This is to Love them for Chriſt's ſake. If we Love a Diſciple in the name of a Diſciple, this is the Love that will declare us to be Diſciples. And the more we ſee of this, the more delight we take in them, *Pſal* 16. 3.

(2.) *DO we live in the due exerciſe of our Charity towards them?* Love is an operative Affection, and will diſcover it ſelf where it is by its overt-acts, in which it will witneſs for it ſelf in our own Conſciences; and there are many things in which this is to be obſerved: We ſhall delight in their Company, and refreſh our Hearts with Chriſtian Communication; we ſhall bear with their Infirmities, allowing them to be in the Body, and cover a multitude of Sins. We ſhall put the beſt interpretation on their dubious Actions, and not ſtrain them to the higheſt. If there be occaſion to reprove them, we ſhall do it faithfully, but with a Spirit of meekneſs and tenderneſs; and eaſy to be perſwaded. If the Providence of God brings them into outward neceſſity, we have a ſpecial regard to them, and open our Hearts and Hands to them, *Gal.* 6. 10. And if Perſecuted for Righteouſneſs ſake, we are not aſhamed of them.

(3.) *DO we carefully ſeek to remove all Prejudices that at any time ariſe between us?* Thro' remaining Corruption there will ſometimes Contention fall out; and either we or they, or both, may be the blameable Cauſes of it: Such there was between *Paul* and *Barnabas.* Now this Love will make us willingly to acknowledge our own fault; and to accept of Satisfaction of them for their's. Hence that Exhortation, Eph. 4. 32. *And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Chriſt's ſake hath forgiven you.* And Love will make us very willing, and not over critical, becauſe the Love of Chriſt will

conſtrain us to be very tender to ſuch as we hope that he hath loved.

(4.) *DO we maintain a placable Spirit, tho' ſometimes they for the preſent diſcover an obſtinate Sprit?* Here it may be asked, Whether if our Brother have offended us, and we ſeek Satisfaction and cannot obtain it, we may juſtly withdraw from the Sacrament, on his account? This is too much practiſed: But the matter may eaſily be decided. If we have not taken the orderly Means preſcribed by Chriſt, we our ſelves are under Guilt, and add one Sin to another, by our withdrawing: If we have done all we can; and either have not proof to make it publick; or if when brought to the Church, they do not ſee ſufficient ground of proceeding to a Cenſure; there is no reaſon that we ſhould puniſh our ſelves for another's offence, by abſtaining, or condemn the Church by this act of ours; but rather to leave it with God, when we have cleared our own Conſciences. And we ſhall thus avoid being partakers in another's Sin; and mean while bear no malice againſt the Perſon, but Pray for him, and wait for his Conviction and Humiliation.

5. *THE laſt thing mentioned which we are to Examine our ſelves about, is our New Obedience.* There is an Obedience due to God from Mankind by the obligation of the Moral Law; and by this was his Allegiance to God as his Lord to be proved, which was to be perfect and indeficient. Now, tho' Man by his Fall loſt this power, yet he is thereby acquitted from his Duty, the Moral Law being of perpetual force, as a Rule. But there is a reinforcement of this Duty in the New Covenant, it being required by Chriſt, as Head and King of his Church, only with this difference, that under the firſt Covenant, the leaſt failure brought the Man under the Sanction of Death; whereas under the New Covenant, tho' it is our duty to aſpire after Perfection, yet Chriſt will accept of ſincerity at the hands of thoſe who are intitled to his Benefits: and for that reaſon it is called New Obedience, becauſe it is accepted in the New Covenant of ſuch as have a claim to it; and by this we are to prove our Faith and Love. For, where there is Faith it will purify the Heart, *Act.* 15. 9. And it will work by Love, *Gal.* 5. 6. And this is the great trial of Love, Joh. 15. 14. *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatſoever I command you.* Except therefore we can approve our ſelves for this Obedience, and are in the exerciſe of it, we cannot come worthily. Now if we would truly prove our ſelves by this, we muſt bring our ſelves to the Teſt of theſe Rules;

1. *HAVE we made a free choice of the Law of God for the Rule of our Life?* If we are Subjects, we are under Government; and that ſuppoſeth a Rule of Government, and for a reaſonable Creature; a Command requires free and voluntary Obedience: And we are aſſured that every one of Mankind is under the Obedience of Chriſt or Satan; and that is one neceſſary Note of diſtinguiſhing them, *viz.* their Service; for which we have that laid down, Rom. 6. 16. *His ſervants ye are to whom ye obey.* Now Chriſt and Satan have their Laws, which are not only diverſe but repugnant, ſo that we cannot be Servants of both at once, *Matth.* 6. 24. And the Law of God contains all the Precepts of the Moral Law, and all the Commands of Chriſt in his Goſpel; and if we are engaged to him in new Obedience, we have cordially choſen this to regulate our ſelves by; which ſuppoſeth that we approve of it, Rom. 7. 12. *Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and juſt, and good.* That we entirely Love it, *Pſal.* 119. 97. and hate all that is contrary to it, *Ver.* 104. And that it is pleaſant and not grievous to us, 1 *Joh.* 5. 3.

2. *DO we regulate our Lives carefully by the Law?* And this will neceſſarily follow from the former, and ſtands for a good evidence of it; hence, *Pſal* 119. 105. And that we may do ſo, we make it our ſtudy to get acquaintance with it, *Ver.* 97. And therefore when we go about to do any thing, we repair to it as the *Man of our Counſels*; and we ask at this Oracle: If the Law approves of it, and calls for it, we diſpute it not, but readily conform to it: but if that forbids it, we dare not to do it, leſt we ſhould Sin againſt God, *Gen.* 39. 9. Nor do we plead excuſe from our Ignorance, but aggravate our fault by the conſideration of our Negligence; and the more watchful we are in this regard, the better evidence we have for our Obedience.

3. *DO we try our Lives by this Rule?* We may be and too often are over-precipitant in our Actions, too many of our Thoughts, Words and Deeds are over haſty; but an obedient Heart will maintain an holy Jealouſy; which will make us to reflect and recognize theſe Actions, as being afraid leſt we have offended: We are not *Antinomians*; if we are Obedient Subjects, we do not think we are freed from Duty or Danger; but are afraid of provoking God, and procuring his Diſpleaſure, Pſal. 119. 120. *I am afraid of thy Judgments.* And this engageth us a daily ſearch.

4. *DO we take pleaſure in doing the Will of God?* There is a ſort of Obedience which is produced by other Principles; the force of Reaſon the inſtigations of a natural Conſcience, the ſenſe of Shame, and the fear of Puniſhment; and there is the Uſefulneſs of all theſe for the Godly, whilſt they have ſo much of ſinful Corruption cleaving to them. But the great Teſt here is our delight in doing the Will of God; we do not do Duty upon force, but on choice; and we take our beſt content when we moſt of all pleaſe God: This is to be like Chriſt; of whom, Pſal. 40 8. *I delight to thy will, O my God. Paul* therefore ſaith, 2 Cor. 5. 14. *For the love of Chriſt conſtraineth us.*

5. *DO we ſhun the Temptations to Sin.* The People of God are arreſted here with many; ſometimes allurements, ſometimes diſcouragements. Now one that hath the root of this

this Obedience in him, is ſenſible of his own Infirmity, of the deceitfulneſs of Sin in him, and the cunning devices of Satan, and the ſnares that ly in his way; and this makes him watchful againſt being drawn into Sin. (*Pſal.* 39. 1.) which makes him to walk Circumſpectly, (*Eph.* 5. 15.) and avoid the appearances of evil. Hence he will not run himſelf upon any Temptation, in carnal Confidence; he keeps as much as he can out of the road of Temptation: Such therefore is the Advice given us, Prov. 4. 14, 15. *Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, paſs not by it, turn from it, and paſs away.*

6. *DO we mourn under the conſtant ſenſe of our remaining Concupiſcence?* There will be a law in our members warring againſt the law of God, as long as we abide here; and it's endeavours are to make Captives of us, and to hinder us in our regular Obedience, and draw us into Sin: And when this Obedience is rooted in the Heart, it will make us to carry this about as our greateſt burden; and we ſhall teſtify it by our groans and bitter cries, as he, *Rom.* 7. 24. *Pſal.* 31. 10. & 38 4. And this is the Frame which beſt becomes us in our approaching to this Table. And let us not be ſuperficial, but thorough in Examining our ſelves upon theſe points.

3. WE are told of what importance it is for Chriſtians, thus *carefully to Examine themſelves, in order to their worthily Partaking*; which is taken from the Danger there is in the neglect of this; *leaſt coming unworthily, they eat & drink Judgment to themſelves.* And there is a two fold Danger intimated in this Argument, which may be conſidered:

1. *THE Omiſſion of this Duty, expoſeth us to the hazard of coming unworthily.* That there may be ſuch a coming is ſuppoſed, 1 *Cor.* 11. 29. And is there brought in to urge the Duty preſſed, *Ver.* 28. And the word there tranſlated *unworthily*, ſignifies *unbecomingly*, or ſo as is not ſuitable to the Perſon doing it, or the thing it ſelf which is done; and ſuch an Unworthineſs as this, will eaſily accompany this Communion, if Men be not very heedful to themſelves in this Duty. If a Man approach this Table, and participate in the Elements which are there ſet apart for this ſacred Uſe, being in his Natural and Unregenerate State, he cannot avoid this Unworthineſs: And this is becauſe he cannot poſſibly Spiritually diſcern the Lord's Body, or partake in Chriſt and his Benefits, any more than a dead Man can receive Bodily Nouriſhment. Godly Men alſo are not out of this danger, by reaſon of the Corruption there is in them, and their aptneſs by the influence of it, to come unprepared and indiſpoſed to the exerciſe of theſe Graces which is here required; and in how many ways this may be done we have formerly taken an account: If he come under the prevalence of a rooted Prejudice againſt his Brother, or under the Guilt of any clandeſtine Sin, whereby he hath debauched his Conſcience; if he know that his Brother hath a juſt Offence at him, and he hath not ſought reconciliation with God, and renewed his Peace; nay the very coming raſhly, without this Examination; it is a manifeſt breach of the Command, and renders him unworthy. And indeed, if he doth not diligently ſearch himſelf for theſe things, he cannot poſſibly be in a fit Poſture for right attendance on ſo ſolemn an Ordinance; and this neglect argues him to be ignorant of himſelf, and lifted up with Pride, and argues great Contempt.

2. THE other Danger is, *That if he do thus come unworthily, he will certainly eat & drink Judgment to himſelf.* This is plumply aſſerted in the fore-cited, 1 *Cor.* 11. 29. and there urged as a forcible Argument to put Men upon this Duty, as a thing very neceſſary: And doubtleſs to one that rightly conſiders of it, it muſt needs carry great aw with it on his heart. The word which is there tranſlated *Damnation*, firſtly ſignifies *Judgment*; and it is ſometimes uſed for the Crime it ſelf which a Man commits; ſometimes for the Guilt which attends on the Crime, and ſometimes for the Sentence of Condemnation which is paſt on the guilty Perſon, and ſometimes for the Puniſhment it ſelf that is inflicted on him; and it may be here in a right ſenſe applied to every one of theſe, and there is a ſort of connection between them. Now theſe Judgments are either *Temporal* or *Eternal*; and are applicable in either ſenſe *diſtributively*, in conſideration of the Perſons ſo offending. Doubtleſs a truly Godly Perſon ſo offending, altho' every Sin deſerves Death, yet doth not come under the Condemnation of Eternal Deſtruction, becauſe his Perſon is Juſtified; and ſo, *Rom.* 8. 1. But he herein lays himſelf open both to temporal and ſpiritual Judgments; and ſuch the Apoſtle particularly ſpeaks of in the following Verſes; although unregenerate Men being already under Condemnation, do by ſuch an Act encreaſe their Guilt, and ſtrengthen their Sentence. And the manner of the Apoſtle's Aſſertion concerning it, is very remarkable, *He eateth and drinketh Damnation to himſelf*; the meaning whereof is well to be conſidered: And we may here obſerve, that the Sacrament is a Seal of the Covenant, and is a Medium of Application; and a Seal not only ſignifies, but alſo confirms ſomething; and that is to be judged of according to the Contents of the Covenant to which it is affixed. Now the Promiſe of the Covenant is Hypothetical; and not only ſo, but hath alſo a Threatning annexed to it; which alſo comes within the compaſs of the Seal; ſo that whoſoever partakes of this Ordinance, comes under this ſolemn Caution, that if he doth it worthily, it will be a confirming Ordinance to him, and a Seal of the Bleſſings of the Covenant, for the eſtabliſhing of his Faith and Conſolation; whereas if he do it unworthily, this ſtands as a witneſs againſt him, and ratifieth the Threatning: Not that in it's prime Deſign it is a Sacrament of Death, but is ſo to him by

by his own default in receiving unworthily; ſo that by thus eating and drinking, he pulls on his own Head the Judgment denounced upon that Hypotheſis; and that whether it be temporal or eternal. Only to prevent a miſtake here, let us obſerve, that this caution is here carefully to be thought of, viz. that under the Diſpenſation of the Goſpel-Covenant, there is a room left for Evangelical Repentance; and God's Sovereign Grace hath a reſerve for diſplaying it ſelf, by renewing the Guilt contracted, and ſo it doth not abandon any ſuch to deſpair of Salvation, who are convinced of the Guilt of this Sin; but it calls them to a ſoaking Sorrow and ſound Repentance for this aggravated Crime, and to fly to the ſame Blood which hath been thus deſpiſed, for the removal both of the guilt and puniſhment. And ſurely, this danger reſented, is ſufficient to rouſe us up to great diligence in this Self Examination.

USE. *LET it be to callon us all to quicken our Care & Diligence in this regard.* We cannot live in the neglect of this Ordinance contentedly, without caſting contempt on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe Love is here to be commemorated, and whoſe Command ought to be obeyed: nor can we come to it ſafely, unleſs in ſome good meaſure prepared; for if we come unworthily we ſhall contract new Guilt, and thereby expoſe our ſelves to puniſhment. If Corruption within, and Satan and World from abroad, can diſcompoſe us, they will not be wanting to do it. Let all this then put us on the greateſt care to try ourſelves in order to our coming, and for that end the better to do it, let us call our ſelves every day to a ſtrict account; and let us take a new Survey of our ſelves, when we are about to come; and keep a guard upon our Hearts, while we are in actual Communion; and after the Solemnity is over, inquire what our Graces have gained by it: and if thus we judge our ſelves, we ſhall better know what our preſent duty is, and be in the proper way to gain the more of ſtrength and comfort in our Chriſtian Courſe.

SERMON *CCXLI.*

QUESTION XCVIII.

WHAT is Prayer?

ANSWER.

PRAYER is an Offering up of our Deſires to GOD, for Things agreable to his Will, in the Name of CHRIST, with Confeſſion of our Sins, and thankful Acknowledgement of His Mercies.

WE have conſidered of two of the outward and ordinary Means which God hath appointed us to attend upon, in order to our Communion in the great Benefits of Redemption, viz. the *Word*, and the *Sacraments*; which are ſtated and eſtabliſh'd Ordinances for the Church and People of God. And are now to paſs over to the third & laſt of theſe, viz. *Prayer*. Which is none of the leaſt Media of Communion between God and his People, while he is in Heaven and we commorate here upon Earth. Prayer therefore is ſo eſſential and principal a part of Religion, that it is put for the whole, which is denominated from it. Hence that, Gen. 4. ult. —*Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.* i. e. they ſat up Aſſemblies for the Worſhip of God. When the Pſalmiſt would expreſs Men to be irreligious, he doth it by their neglect of this duty, Pſal. 14. 4. —*And call not upon the Lord.* And before we proceed to a diſtinct handling of this Head, as laid down in the Anſwer; two things may be premiſed in general;

1. *THAT Prayer truly belongs to natural Worſhip.* That it belongs to Worſhip therein appears, becauſe it hath God for its Object, and is to be addreſſed to him, as will nextly be obſerved: And hence it properly refers to the firſt Table in the Moral Law, in which are the Duties of Worſhip preſcribed; and to the firſt of theſe Commands, as was obſerved in the opening of that Command. Now we formerly conſidered, that Worſhip is diſtinguiſhed into Natural and Poſitive; and that the former of theſe is comprehended under the firſt Command. The very light of Nature teacheth Men to Pray; and the very Pagans did offer up their Prayers to their gods. Thoſe therefore who live in the neglect of this Duty are more brutiſh than the Gentile Nations; many of whom would undertake no buſineſs, till they had paid their Devotions to their gods.

2. *THAT the ground or reaſon of Prayer, is our dependance upon God for our all.* Man is a dependant Creature, his good is not in his own hands, but is under the power and diſpoſal of God, who is a free Agent; and not only our ſenſe of want, but alſo the liberty of him on whom our dependance is, calls on us to bring our Supplications to him, if we deſire to have them anſwered. And he himſelf hath told us that he expects it of us, and will hold Communion with his People in this way, Ezek. 36. 37. *Thus ſaith the Lord God, I will yet for this be inquired of by the houſe of Iſrael to do it for them.* And Men cannot rationally expect other than to miſs of the good they want, if they will not go to him for it, who hath it in his own hands; if we will reſtrain Prayer, we may thank our ſelves if he reſtrains the bleſſing from us which we want. And though Prayerleſs ones may pleaſe

pleaſe themſelves that they fare as well in the courſe of Providence, as thoſe that ſeem to be the moſt devout in their Prayers; yet as they have no aſſurance of any thing in any other way, ſo they have no reaſon to expect any thing with a Bleſſing attending it, but a Curſe; for Prayerleſs Perſons are expoſed to divine fury, *Pſal.* 79. 6. We may now proceed to a more diſtinct Conſideration of the Deſcription of *Prayer* contained in the Anſwer. And it is very comprehenſive, and will lead us to many particular Conſiderations about it; by which we may be directed in our right attendance on this great Duty. And here we may conſider both the Nature of it in General, and the Ingredients & Concomitants of it in Particular.

I. AS to the Nature of it in General; *It is the offering up of our deſires to God.* And here we obſerve,

1. *THE Object to whom our Prayers are to be directed*, viz. *God.* And the meaning is, to him and no other. He is the alone Object to whom our Religious Prayers are to be directed; we are to call upon him: It is true, there are Civil requeſts that may be put up to Men; we may addreſs them with our Supplications: But this muſt not be in a way of Religious Worſhip; for that belongs to God, and it is Idolatry to addreſs any Creature. Hence that in Matth. 4. 10. *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve.* And it is certain that we do, implicitly at leaſt, own him to be God, whom we ſo apply our ſelves unto. Beſides, the very end or deſign of our Prayers points us to him only as capable of hearing and helping us. The reaſon why we Pray is becauſe we want, and would have our want ſupplyed. Hence that which moves us to Pray is that ſo we may obtain this help: and this prompts us to go to no other but one that can both hear and help us; and this can be no other but God. The Saints in Heaven cannot hear us, *Iſai.* 63 16. They are not Omnipreſent, nor can they hear the Prayers that are going at the ſame time from one end of the Earth to another. This is the Divine Prerogative, and commends God to us, Pſal. 34. 15. *The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.* He is not a God afar off. The Saints on Earth cannot help us, our wants outdo their powers: They may know ſome of our wants, and pity us, but are not able to ſupply us. And though God may uſe them as Inſtruments by whom to convey his help to us, yet that they ſhall ſo do depends on him. But he is both able to do for us, and hath promiſed that he will do ſo for all that call upon him in truth, *Pſal.* 145. 18, 19. He is a Fountain and Treaſury of all Good, nor can we want any thing that he is not able to ſupply us withal, *Pſal.* 34. 10. And he hath given his People encouragement to come to him with their wants, aſſuring them that they ſhall not loſe their labour, *Pſal.* 50. 15. And to go any where elſe but to him, is not only to ſeek to that which cannot ſave, and ſo our Prayers muſt needs be vain, (*Lam.* 4. 17.) but alſo to provoke God to reject us when in our diſtreſs we come to him, and reject our Prayers; and ſay to us as he did to them, Jer. 2. 28. *But where are thy gods that thou haſt made thee? let them ariſe if they can ſave thee in the time of thy trouble.* Surely then, all the Prayers which the Papiſts make to the Virgin, to Angels, and Saints, muſt be Idolatrous and vain, and all the Idolatrous Devotions paid by the Gentiles to their gods, which are not the true God, muſt be loſt labour, and provoking Divine Anger. And it was a ſevere reprimand which God ſent him by the Prophet, 2 Kin. 1. 3. *Is it becauſe there is not a God in Iſrael, that ye go to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron.*

2. *THE matter of which Prayer is to conſiſt*, viz. *Our Deſires:* This is a comprehenſive expreſſion, and will be laid open more particularly, when we come to conſider the ſeveral Petitions in which they are engroſſed. And indeed deſire is the foundation of Prayer in regard of the ſubject Praying, and without it there can be no right Prayer Offered. Deſire is an Affection, and is put into the reaſonable Creature, to be an Inſtrument of the Will in the exertions of its Imperate acts. The Perſon is made ſenſible of his wants, and finds a need to have them ſupplied, which makes him unſatisfied till he obtains it: and being apprehenſive that the ſupply is not in himſelf, but he muſt have it from abroad, he is carried forth with longings after it: This longing ſtirs him up to ſeek out for it, and to uſe all probable courſes for obtaining of it: when therefore he is perſwaded that it is to be had with God, and he muſt be ſought to for it; this longing prompts him, and makes him longingly to Pray to him for it. Hence we have that, Pſal. 10. 17. *Thou haſt heard the deſire of the humble:* Iſa. 26. 9. *With my ſoul have I deſired thee in the night, yea with my ſpirit within me will I ſeek thee early.* And this only can be truly denominated Prayer; and when this is wanting, all pretenſions to Prayer are nothing elſe but bablings. If there were no wants, there would be no occaſion for deſires, for this affection is always carried forth after an abſent good; which turns the deſires to ſatisfaction in the fruition when once it comes to be enjoyed: where then this ſenſe is wanting, there can be no other but lifeleſs Prayers, which are never like to obtain the Anſwer of Peace from God. And hence it is, that when Men are in a Proſperous condition, they are uſually Prayerleſs, or very perfunctory in their Devotions. And this tells us, that if we would Pray aright, and with affection, we ought to prepare ourſelves for Prayer, and particularly, by bethinking ourſelves what our wants are, and of what conſequence if that we have them ſupplied; that ſo we may not offer to God a few empty and heartleſs Complements, but may addreſs him with all our Souls, and be in good earneſt;

and

And this alſo tells us that Prayer muſt not be only a lip Service, but it muſt proceed from the Heart, elſe it cannot be ſincere.

3. *THE term of Prayer conſiſts in the offering up of theſe Deſires to God.* This Phraſe ſeems to allude to the Ceremonial Law, in which Sacrifices were to be offered to God: Hence we find the Pſalmiſt making ſuch a compariſon, Pſal. 141. 2. *Let my prayer be ſet forth before thee as incenſe: and the lifting up of my hands as the evening-ſacrifice.* It is true, the Sacrifices themſelves which were offered, did repreſent Chriſt, who is the great Sacrifice, in whom alone we have liberty of acceſs to God, with hope to obtain; but we muſt remember, that theſe Sacrifices in regard of the offerer, were the appointed Media, by which he was directed to come to God to obtain his acceptance, and to find audience with him: We therefore read of offering ſpiritual Sacrifice, 1 *Pet.* 2 5. and of the Sacrifice of Thankſgiving, *Heb.* 13 15. And we find that it was a cuſtom among the Jews, that while the Prieſt was burning Incenſe in the Temple, the People were mean while engaged in Praying without, *Luk* 1. 8, 9, 10. And the meaning of it is, that we are to repreſent theſe our deſires to God after a ſuitable manner; which, how it is to be, will be conſidered in the Sequel: So that the deſire it ſelf doth not amount to a Prayer, but it requires a repreſentation of it unto God, requeſting of him to grant it to us. A Man may have his eager deſires of a thing, and yet not bring them to God, and lay them before him, but uſe other courſes for obtaining them; and it is a thing too frequent for Men to truſt to their own wiſdom and induſtry, and to neglect God in it; which is indeed to caſt off Prayer; but when our deſire to obtain, drives us to the Throne of Grace, and we do ſuitably lay it before him; this is Prayer. But that our Duty in this regard may be performed after a right manner, there are divers things to be conſidered and practiſed. Hence,

II. WE proceed to conſider the *Ingredients and Concominants of it in Particular*; which are ſet forth in the remainder of the Deſcription. And here obſerve,

1. *THE ground or reaſon of our offering up our Deſires to God, it is for ſomething; for the things that we feel a need of.* And when it is ſaid that we go for them, it intends that we go to ask them of him; and ſo in ſtrictneſs of ſpeech, Prayer is nothing elſe but Petition; though in a larger latitude it comprehends other things, as will be conſidered: So that in Prayer it is always ſuppoſed, that we acknowledge God to be the Author of all the Good we want: and becauſe we are needy we go to him for them, and ask them of him. But of this more afterwards.

2. *THE limitation of theſe Deſires in Prayer*; it muſt be *for things agreable to his Will.* It is the duty of God's People to have their deſires regular; and God hath in his Word directed us to mortify carnal cravings, and to nouriſh only ſuch as are lawful. There are the *deſires of the fleſh*, i. e. of ſinful Concupiſcence in us; theſe are ſinful; they are of the Affections that muſt be mortified, *Col.* 3. 5. It would be an affront put upon the holy God for us to ask him to gratify us therein; and if he ſhould Providentially grant our deſires in that regard, it would be a fruit of his Anger, and not of his Love. Such was that of the *Quails*, of which, *Pſal.* 73. 29, 30, 31. But it may be here inquired, what Will of his is here intended, according to which we are to regulate our Prayers, in regard of the Matter of them? Not that there are two diſtinct Wills in God, much leſs contrary; but yet there are ſome diſtinctions which this Will of God admits of for our better conception. And here we may obſerve, that God's Will may be conſidered either as it is ſecret or revealed: The former of theſe we call his Decretive, the latter his Preceptive Will; and there is ground for this diſtinction, in Deut. 29 29. *Secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but theſe which are revealed belong unto us.* Now though we ought to deſire that God's ſecret Will may be done, as will be conſidered under the Third Petition; yet this is not it by which we are to determine what it is, that he tells us what is lawful for us to ask in particular, and what is unlawful; and this can be no other but his revealed Will: And it is therefore called revealed, becauſe in it, he gives us to know what is our duty; whereas when he hath not made his mind known to us, it is ſecret, and for that reaſon cannot be our Rule. And here it may be a duty for us to Pray hard for that which God hath a purpoſe not to give us, becauſe it is a matter fit to be deſired, and he hath enjoyned us to ask it of him; yea though we know that he will not grant us the thing, as is inſtanced in Chriſt himſelf, Math. 26.39. *O my Father, if this cup may not paſs away from me except I drink it, thy will be done.* Now this asking of things agreable to the Will of God, may come under a double Conſideration, viz. either in reſpect of the Matter or the Manner,

(1.) IN reſpect of the *Matter.* And then, as to deſire any thing that God hath forbidden us, is a ſinful Deſire; and conſequently all the Means that we uſe to proſecute this Deſire, is very ſinful; ſo to Pray to God for it, is a profanation of his Name, and a going about to eſpouſe him to our wickedneſs, which is to make him one like our ſelves, by which he looks upon himſelf to be diſhonoured. For us, when we are going about ſome ſinful Deſign, to carry it to God in Prayer, and ask of him his Bleſſing on it, is to undermine his Holineſs, and indeed to imprecate a Curſe upon our own heads, *Pſal.* 92. 7. We ought therefore, that we may offer up right Requeſts to God, to labour to be ſatisfied, that the things themſelves are lawful, and lawful for us to ask, as all lawful things are not, ſo as they may be circumſtanced.

(2.) IN

(2.) IN reſpect of the *Manner*. Here alſo the Will of God is to be enquired; and we may Pray for lawful things, and yet not lawfully: And there are the Rules given in the Word of God for this alſo, which we ought to acquaint our ſelves with, if we would Pray as we ought. We obſerved that we may Pray for things which God's ſecret Will hath determined not to grant us in particular; but as this doth not make it our Sin to Pray for them, ſo it neceſſarily makes it our Duty to ſubmit our Requeſts to the determination of God's Wiſdom & Pleaſure: and that when we urge our Requeſts upon him, with the greateſt importunity, as is inſtanced in the forecited Example of our Saviour Chriſt, *Matth.* 26, 39, &c. And beſides this there are many other things conſiderable in the Manner, *viz.* Earneſtneſs and Fervency, to ſhew that we are cordially engaged, and look for our help from none elſe; that we do not Complement God, and ask with a Spirit of indifference, as if we hoped to obtain elſewhere, if he deny us; and it muſt be in Faith with a true reliance upon him, and confident leaving it with him, *Jam.* 1. 5, 6. and with a patient waiting till he anſwers us, and perſevering in Prayer without fainting, *Eph.* 6. 18.

3. *THE Way in which we are to addreſs our Prayers to God, in order to our finding audience and acceptance with God:* It is to be *in the Name of Chriſt.* And this is ſo neceſſary an ingredient of Prayer, that without it fallen Man can have no acceſs to God.

HERE then let us obſerve,

(1.) *THAT Prayer is one Medium of Communion with God.* Our Happineſs conſiſts in Communion with God, from whom all Good muſt come to us: This Communion is not only reſerved for us till we arrive at the Kingdom above, tho' the Compleature and Perfection of it is reſerved till then; but it is inchoated here in this Life, and we are ſo far happy as we participate in it, 1 Joh. 1. 3. *And truly our fellowſhip is with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt.* Now this Fellowſhip is mediate; and one of the ways wherein we may enjoy it is by Prayer; in which we draw near to God, and addreſs him, and that in order to obtain of him the Good we need: And this is indeed the only way in which we have any grounded expectation of his communicating of his loving Kindneſs to us: Hence that in, Jer. 29. 12, 13. *Then ſhall ye call upon me, and ye ſhall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye ſhall ſeek me, and find me, when ye ſhall ſearch for me with all your heart.* He therefore looks for this in order to our obtaining the Bleſſing laid up in the Promiſe, *Ezek.* 36. 37.

(2.) *THAT our firſt Parents, in their ſtate of Integrity, had the liberty of immediate acceſs to God.* There was no Mediator in that Covenant: God and Man were Friends, and needed no Reconciler. Man ſtood on Terms with God, upon his perfect Perſonal Obedience, on Compliance wherewith he has a Claim to all the Good in the Promiſe of that Covenant; and this is one great difference between the State of the firſt and the ſecond Covenant; but tho' in this regard his Communion was *immediate*, yet in another it was *mediate*; *viz.* He was to hold this Fellowſhip in the way of attendance upon the Duties which were there required of him: and by the neglect of them, he might break this Communion, as he afterwards did; and one of thoſe Duties was that of Prayer, as we have formerly obſerved; but he needed no Sollicitor, but was directly to Addreſs himſelf to one God in three Perſons, and had no reaſon to doubt of entertainment with him; and the free Promiſe of the Covenant was his Security.

(3.) *THAT Man by his Fall did cut himſelf off from this Communion.* That there is a ſeparation between God and fallen Man, is every where aſſerted; and that it was Sin that made it, is no leſs manifeſt, Iſa. 59. 2. *Your iniquities have ſeparated between you and your God.* On this account Men are ſaid to be afar off, to be ſtrangers, enemies children of wrath, *&c.* noting that the Covenant was broken on Man's part; and the holy God, who cannot ſuffer Sinners to dwell in his ſight, ſtand at a diſtance from them; and there was no way for them in themſelves, to approach him who was become to them a conſuming Fire; and his ear was ſtopt at their Cries; and tho' they ſhould make many Prayers to him, yet he would not hear them, *Iſa.* 1. 15. And indeed his Juſtice engaged him to proſecute the Curſe on them, if no help interpoſed.

(4.) *THE New Covenant hath opened a way for the recovery of this Communion by a Mediator.* That God & fallen Man may be reconciled, thoſe things that made the former diſtance muſt be taken out of the way; for, as long as they abide, there is no coming together; & that this may be renewed, there is neceſſity of a middle Perſon to enterpoſe between them; and it muſt be one that can put an end to the Controverſy, and make a thorough Reconciliation on both parts. Hence we have *Job*'s Complaint on this account, Job 9. 33. *Neither is there any dayes-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.* And the reaſon of this Neceſſity is becauſe the demands of the Law muſt be anſwered, in order to the atoning of Juſtice, and opening a door of Mercy; for we are told, Pſal. 85. 10. *Mercy and truth are met together; righteouſneſs & peace have kiſſed each other.* And, Rom. 3. 26. *To declare, I ſay, at this time his righteouſneſs, that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him which believeth in Jeſus.*

(5.) *THAT Chriſt is the one only Mediator, by whom we can have acceſs to God.* It is not any one that can do it, but it muſt be one that can make compleat Satisfaction to the demands of Juſtice, and is able to ſave to the uttermoſt; and this could be no other but the Son of God in our Nature: He muſt be a Man, that he might repreſent us who are Men; and he muſt be God, that he might

put that value upon his Satisfaction which might render it equivalent, that ſo the Law might be compleatly anſwered,& Juſtice be no loſer ; for our Saviour hath told us, Matth.5. 18. *Till heaven and earth paſs, one jote or one tittle ſhall in no wiſe paſs from the law, till all be fulfilled.* And ſuch an One neither Heaven nor Earth could afford, among Created things, but all hope muſt have ceaſed for ever : On this account we are told, 1 Tim. 2. 5. *For there is one God, and one Mediatour between God & men, the man Chriſt Jeſus.* Hence we have him brought in ſpeaking after this manner, Iſa. 63. 5. *Therefore my own arm brought Salvation unto me.*

(6.) *THAT Chriſt opened this way to us by his Redemption.* There are two ways by which Chriſt principally manageth his Mediation, *viz.* He is the Mediator of *Redemption*, and of *Interceſſion* ; and it was by the former of theſe that he was to make way for the latter : Our high Prieſt was firſt to offer his Sacrifice at the Brazen Altar, in order to his preſenting his Incenſe at the Golden one. Chriſt therefore, that he might remove all Obſtructions, gave the Redemption Price that was demanded : Hence we have that, 1 Tim. 2. 6. *Who gave himſelf a ranſom for all.* And for that reaſon we are told, Heb. 10. 14. *For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified.* He made his Soul an offering for Sin, and had our iniquities laid upon him, that he might bear them away from us; and by this means hath procured a liberty of acceſs for ſinful Men to draw near to an holy God, *Eph* 2. 18. And we are told, Chap. 1. 6. *Wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*

(7.) *THAT he keeps this door open to us by his Interceſſion.* When he had paid the Price of our Redemption in the State of Humiliation, he was Exalted to the higheſt Heavens, and is there Reſident at the Right Hand of God ; and we are aſſured, that he went thither for us, *Heb.* 6. 20. His great Employment there is on this account declared to be his Interceſſion, *Rom.* 8. 34. And this is one Argument by which the Apoſtle proves his Alſufficiency to ſave all Comers to God by him, *Heb.* 7.25. He there ſits to entertain all Comers, and preſent their Petitions before his Father, and offer up their Prayers with his Incenſe, *Rev.* 6. 2. to be their Advocate, and plead their Cauſe, and take up all the breaches which their Sin and Folly makes between God and them: Hence that is our Encouragement, 1 Joh. 2. 1. *We have an advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous.*

(8.) IT hence follows, *That all our hope of obtaining the Good that we ſeek for from God, is by and thro' him.* And this is reaſon ſufficient why we ſhould Pray in his Name: Hence he directed his Diſciples to this way of Addreſs ; Joh. 16 23, 24. *And in that day ye ſhall ask me nothing: Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, Whatſoever ye ſhall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name : ask, and ye ſhall receive, that your joy may be full.* And the Old Teſtament Believers were not wholly without this Knowledge, as we find, Dan. 9. 17. *O our God hear the prayer of thy ſervant, for the Lord's ſake.* And this was Typified in that the time of offering the Sacrifice was the Time in which this People were to offer their Prayers ; and to think to approach to God without him, is to loſe our labour ; for out of him he is a conſuming Fire ; and to go in any other Name but his is inſignificant : None but he who was a Mediator of Redemption, can be one of Interceſſion. And this will tell us what need we have to ſecure an Intereſt in him, as we would have God to give us anſwers of Peace; for none but thoſe that are in him, can have this Claim.

SERMON *CCXLII.*

4. WE *are pointed to the diſtribution and diſtinctions which are to be conſidered with regard to Prayer* ; in thoſe words, *with Confeſſion of our Sins, and thankful Acknowledgment of his Mercies.* We may here obſerve that our Catechiſm ſeems to limit the eſſence of Prayer to Petition, and to make Confeſſion and Thankſgiving to be adjuncts of it. And indeed Prayer in propriety of Speech is nothing elſe but our asking of ſomething at the hand of another : Nevertheleſs if we look more narrowly into it, we ſhall find that Petition is of larger extent than it is uſually taken for ; and it graſps in it every right deſire of ours, which we do offer up to God ; as will appear in the Sequel We may therefore begin with the Kinds of Prayer, which are more expreſly contained in the Anſwer ; and then conſider the ſeveral diſtinctions about it, as coming properly and methodically to be here taken notice of.

1. *THE Kinds of Prayer are two*, viz. *Petition, and Thanksgiving.* And here the Word Petition is to be underſtood in a more ſtrict and reſtrained ſenſe ; for more largely it belongs to each ſort ; as hath been obſerved. I know that divers do make theſe two to be the parts of Prayer, or the eſſential Ingredients of it ; as if it were mutilous without them both : but I ſuppoſe them to labour of miſtake. For though it is frequent for Chriſtians in their more ſet and ſolemn Addreſſes to God to make uſe of them both ; yet in ſuch there is a mixture of both kinds, and the nature of Prayer may be comprehended in either of them, in which we may offer up our deſires to God, for things agreable to his Will. We may here take a ſeveral Account of each of theſe,

(1.) *PETITIONARY Prayer, is an applying of our ſelves to God, for thoſe good things which we ſtand in need of, and depend on him for.* We have taken a ſummary Account of this before ; the leſs may therefore here be ſaid : Only there we conſidered Petition in general,

and

and we may here take notice of it more reſtrainedly: And ſo the ground or reaſon of this Prayer is an apprehenſion that we have of our want, and an eager deſire to have it ſupplied, together with a thorough Conviction that we can obtain it of no other but God, and a belief that He is able to do it for us, and hath in the New Covenant given us encouragement to ask it of him. What theſe things are, and what is the encouragement, will come to be conſidered in the Explication of the *Lord's Prayer*. I only here obſerve, that this is made a way of our Communion with God, and to neglect it is to expoſe our ſelves to miſs of the Good which God hath in a readineſs to confer upon us in this way, who hath directed to this Medium, Matth. 7. 7. *Ask and it ſhall be given you.* And here a few things may appoſitely be taken notice of, as more properly belonging to Petitionary Prayer;

1. *PETITIONS may be either Apprecatory, Deprecatory, or Imprecatory.* We have all theſe exemplified in the Word of God, all of which are Petitions or requeſt for favour from God, but only are diverſifyed according to the things themſelves which they are immediately concerned withal. Here then we may conſider them ſeverally, with the Grounds of them,

[1.] *THERE are the good things that we ſtand in need of, and are to go to God for*: And theſe are the ſubject-matter of our Apprecation; and in it we ask of God that he will beſtow them upon us, and uſe Pleas and Arguments with him in order to our obtaining; which is not to be underſtood that God needed to be moved with Arguments, who both knows our wants and his purpoſes; but to exerciſe our Faith, and quicken our ſenſe, and ſo raiſe our importunity: that ſo we may be the deeper affected with his kindneſs, when he affords us audience in merciful returns. As long therefore as theſe wants abide, there will be occaſion for theſe Apprecations. And we have abundant inſtances of theſe in the Word of God.

[2.] *THERE are evil things which we feel or fear; and we are to apply our ſelves to God to prevent or remove them*: And this affords matter for Deprecation. As Good is the Object of our cloſing affections, the apprehenſion whereof attracts them, ſo is Evil of our ſeperating affections, the reſentment whereof makes us to ſhun them, or ſeek to get rid of them. And this prompts us to ask of God that he will relieve us, who only is able to defend us from, or reſcue us out of them. And we are encouraged to this by the Precept and the Promiſe given us on this account, Pſal. 50. 15. *And call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou ſhalt glorifie me.* Now both of theſe are to be offered unto God, with an holy ſubmiſſion to his Sovereign pleaſure, as we are taught by our Saviour's Example, *Matth.* 26. 39. And yet this doth not forbid us to be importunate in our requeſts; as we are inſtructed by the ſame Example. And *Paul* tells us, 2 Cor. 12. 8. *For this thing I beſought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.*

[3.] *THERE is the malice of voluntary Agents, who are inſtrumental in many Afflictions which we meet with:* And this ſometimes gives occaſion for our Imprecations. Inſtances for this we find on record in the Scriptures, and the lawfulneſs of it in ſome caſes is not to be denied. Yet this is to be entertained with caution, elſe we ſhall eaſily treſpaſs in this point. And it is too natural to our corrupt part, to exceed on this account, and do it with a revengeful Spirit. It is certain, that many Scripture-Imprecations are Prophetical, and are not eaſily to be made our Example and Self-Juſtification, who are acted by a private Spirit. Some alſo are ſinful, and ſo they are not recorded for our imitation, but for our avoidance; the Command alſo forbids us to avenge our ſelves, but to leave our perſonal Enemies to God, and requite them love for hatred, and to Pray for them rather than againſt them. Hence that Precept, Mat. 5. 43, 44. *Ye have heard that it hath been ſaid, Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I ſay unto you, Love your enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which diſpitefully uſe you, and perſecute you.* And we ought not to rejoyce in their deſtruction, but be glad of and earneſtly to ſeek their Converſion. Nevertheleſs, it is ſometimes both lawful and a duty, when we are ſpitefully purſued, and that in malice for our Integrity, to make our complaint to God, and ſpread our caſe before him, and pray him to appear for us, and leave witneſs againſt them in his holy Providence; and more eſpecially when they are open Enemies of God and Godlineſs, and grievous Perſecutors of the Cauſe and Church of Chriſt.

2. *THAT Confeſſion of our Sins is a very proper Adjunct to our Petitionary Prayer.* There are ſome that make this Confeſſion to be one kind of Prayer, diſtinct from both the other fore-mentioned; but it rather ſeems to be an appurtenance of it; and indeed it is very proper to uſe it in both kinds, as being ſuitable to put us into a right frame, and to offer up our Prayer after a right manner. Now the uſefulneſs of this Confeſſion of Sin in Prayer, will appear if we conſider,

(1.) *THAT if we hope to ſpeed in our Addreſſes to God we muſt exerciſe Faith in Prayer.* Our great encouragement to Pray, is the hope we have to obtain: Deſpair therefore drives us from this Duty. Now that which excites and ſupports this Hope is Faith: Hence that, Pſal. 116. 10. *I believed, therefore have I ſpoken;* And without it our Prayers are but howlings. We are therefore told what is the Prayer that will ſpeed with God, and obtain the Bleſſing ſought of him; Jam. 5. 15, 16. *The prayer of faith ſhall ſave the ſick. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* When therefore we are directed to ask help of God

for our need, we have that Caution if we would ſucceed, and not loſe our Petitions, *Jam.* 1. 5, 6.

(2.) *THAT the ground of this Faith for ſinful Men is laid in the Covenant of Grace.* There was no foundation for it left in the Covenant of Works for fallen Man; who had not only loſt all title to every Good, but had alſo bro't upon himſelf a fearful Curſe; this hath put a bar to our Communion with God; and we are told that God will not hear Sinners, but ſtop his ears at their Prayers. Now nothing but the free Grace of God could remove this diſtance, and make way for our acceſs to God; and for that reaſon God is ſaid to ſit on a Throne of Grace to give Audience to Men, without which he would be a conſuming Fire.

(3.) *WHILST the Guilt of Sin unpardoned abides, it maintains a diſtance between God and the Sinner.* This was it that made the firſt Breach between God and Man; and till it be forgiven it continues it: Here therefore begins Man's true Bleſſedneſs, *Pſal.* 32. 1, 2. But whilſt it continues, there is no holding up our heads with any good Confidence of Faith: Hence that in Pſal. 130. 3, 4. *If thou, Lord, ſhouldeſt mark iniquities: O Lord, who ſhall ſtand? But there is forgiveneſs with thee; that thou mayeſt be feared.* And not only doth it keep unconverted Sinners far from God, but it makes a Breach between God and his own People, when they fall into any groſs Sins, and he hides his Face from them, as the Pſalmiſt often complains: Hence that in, Iſa. 59. 1, 2. *Behold the Lord's hand is not ſhortned, that it cannot ſave: neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have ſeparated between you and your God, and your ſins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.*

(4.) *THAT God hath required a free Confeſſion of Sin, in order to his gracious Acceptance of us.* Not that we hereby Merit any Favour from him, but that we may hereby be made to acknowledge his free Grace in accepting of us; while we Confeſs our own Unworthineſs, and look only to his Mercy: Hence God ſo often enjoyns this, and encourageth it, as we find, *Lev.* 20. 40. *Jer.* 3. 13 *Prov.* 28. 13. And we are ſaid to give Glory to God by Confeſſing, *Joſh.* 7. 19.

(5.) *THAT becauſe we Sin daily, we have daily occaſion to Confeſs our Sins to God.* We have every hour Dependance on God, which calls us to Prayer; and are never without our Follies, which need a Pardon: Theſe Sins call for Repentance, and Confeſſion is a neceſſary concomitant of true Repentance; by this we Juſtify God in his righteous Diſpleaſure; by this we give him the honour of his free Grace, by this we reſent our own Unworthineſs, and apply to his Mercy: Hence they go together, Dan. 9 8, 9. *O Lord to us belongeth confuſion of face. To the Lord our God belongs mercies and forgiveneſſes.* And in this way it is that we are reſtored to that true inward Peace, by which our Faith is envigorated, *Pſal.* 32. 5. *David* hath that Obſervation, Pſal. 66. 18. *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me* And if we Confeſs not, it is a ſure ſign that we have ſuch a regard: But more of this may be afterwards conſidered under the Fifth Petition.

3. *UNDER Petitionary Prayer, we may alſo conſider a Vow.* The Scripture not only gives us inſtances of Vows that have been made to God by holy Men, but alſo given Precept for them: Hence that, Pſal. 76. 11. *Vow and pay unto the Lord your God.* And *David's* Reſolution, Pſal. 66. 13, 14. *I will pay thee my vows, which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath ſpoken when I was in trouble.* And that Advice, Eccl. 5. 4. *When thou voweſt a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleaſure in fools; pay that which thou haſt vowed.* A Vow therefore properly belongs to Worſhip; and becauſe it hath it's ſpecial Uſefulneſs in Petitionary Prayer, it may here be conſidered as an Adjunct of it: And indeed it is implicitly contained in every Petition we put up to God; inaſmuch as Prayer belongs to Communion between him and us, in which there is mutual Commerce: We ought whenſoever we ask of God for the ſupply of our wants, to ſeek it with a regard to, and aim at his Glory, as our laſt End; and hence we can put up no Petition aright to him, unleſs we deſign his Glory by it; and to terminate in any End beneath this, is to ask amiſs, and to hazard the miſſing of what we ask for, *Jam* 4. 3. And ſometimes there is occaſion for us to expreſs this Purpoſe, and make explicit Vows unto God, that if he will grant us our Petitions, we will ſo teſtify our Gratitude unto him upon the Receipt. Now this is not to bring God under any Obligation to us, for he needs not us, nor any thing of ours; but to bind our ſelves the more faſt to his Service, and make us the more careful to Glorify him. A Vow differs from an Oath, in that a Vow is only a Promiſe made to God for the doing of this or that; and that either *Hypothetical* in caſe that God ſhall ſee meet to anſwer our Requeſt: Such was that of *Jacob*, Gen. 28. 20. *And Jacob vowed a vow, ſaying, If God will be with me*, &c. Or *Abſolute*, when upon Mercy received, we bring our ſelves under the Bond of a Promiſe to do this or that, in Teſtimony of our Gratitude: Such was theirs, Jonah 1. 16. *Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a ſacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows.* And the former of theſe refers to Petitionary Prayer, and the latter to Thankſgiving, to expreſs our real Thankfulneſs. Only it is obſervable here that a Vow may be, and ſometimes is ratified with an Oath; as we find the Pſalmiſt expreſſing it, *Pſal.* 119. 106. Now theſe Vows are either more *general*, and conſiſt in the Renewal of our Covenant Obligation to God, promiſing hence-forward to be more Careful in our ſerving of God, and more Conſtant in our avoidance of Sin, and ſhunning the Temptations to it: Such was that, *Pſal.* 79. 13. & 80. 18. Sometimes more *particular*; and theſe regard either

either ſome peculiar Duties which we may have been more remiſs in, to be more diligent in attendance on them; or ſome Sins that we have been often drawn into, or find our ſelves more apt to be overcome by; to be more watchful againſt them, and look more to our ways in regard of them; as he, *Pſal.* 39. 1. Or elſe in regard of things in themſelves lawful: and in which we enjoyed a Liberty before, but bind our ſelves by ſuch a Promiſe: And this alſo comes under a double Conſideration, *viz.* either in regard of ſuch things as we have found to be ſnares to us, and we could not uſe them, but we are too apt to abuſe them: Thus when we have Experienced ſuch things to be ſnares to us, and occaſions of evil to us: Thus to Vow Abſtinence from ſuch things as always draws us into Sin; as to abſtain from ſtrong Drink, when we cannot uſe it, but to Exceſs; to ſhun ſuch Company as draws us away, and leads us to tranſgreſs, and we find our ſelves not able to withſtand the Temptation. Or in regard of free will Offerings to God, of that which is in our own power; as to Dedicate ſuch a part of our Eſtate to God, and Religious Uſes: ſuch was that of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, of which we have an Account, *Acts* 5. *begin.* Only here we are to obſerve, that there are theſe Limitations to be ſet in ſuch Vows, *viz.* That we do not Vow any unlawful thing; the price of a Dog, and the hire of an Whore, were not to be Conſecrated to God; or ſuch things as are unlawful in their Circumſtances; ſuch was the *Jews* Corban, when they robbed their Relations of what was due to them by the Bonds of Nature, under the pretence of a Dedication to God; as alſo it muſt be in things which are within our power, in the ordinary Courſe of Providence to Perform; and it muſt be with a full purpoſe of heart to Perform, and a ſuitable Proſecution of it: Hence that, *Eccl.* 5. 4, 5.

2. *THE other kind of Prayer, is Thankſgiving*: Which is a Duty frequently preſſed upon the People of God in Scripture; and the obligation which lies upon us to it, by all the Mercies we receive from the Hand of God, is indiſſoluble; and indeed the neglect of it muſt needs interrupt the Commerce we have with God. For theſe Thankſgivings are the only return that God requires, and we are capable of paying to him; and thus our Trade in Heaven keeps in a round, according to Pſal. 50. 15. *And call upon me in the day of trouble*; *I will deliver thee, and thou ſhalt glorify me.* Hence that ver. ult. *Whoſoever offereth praiſe, glorifieth me.* But the enquiry here will be, How this giving of Thanks to God, comes within the general nature of Prayer, which is an addreſs of our deſires to God, and leaving our requeſts before him? And that we may take this up aright we muſt obſerve, that we are to diſtinguiſh between the act of giving Thanks to God, and the manner of our addreſſing it to God. Doubtleſs Thankſgiving in its ſtrict ſenſe, is an adjunct of Prayer, as well as Confeſſion of Sin; and for this reaſon ſome have hither reſtrained it, and have made Prayer to be only Petitionary. But if we conſider it in the manner of our addreſſing it, it will alſo come under the general notion of Petition, though diſtinct from that which goes to God for Mercies, to be beſtowed upon our ſelves or others: In the former we go to him for our Good, in the latter for his Glory: In the former we are engaged by the ſenſe of our want, in the latter our concernedneſs for his Honour prompts us. Here then let me make theſe Obſervations,

(1.) *THAT every true Chriſtian is ultimately bound for the Glory of God.* Not only doth God ſeek his own Glory in all his Works, but every godly Man propoſeth this to himſelf as his laſt End: there are indeed other ſubordinate ends, which it is not only Lawful but a Duty for us to propoſe to ourſelves and ſeek the Advancement of; but the laſt End is but one, and hath no other Co-ordinate with it. And this are all the Children of God by Grace been taught to acquieſce in, and cannot tarry at any thing ſhort of it; and this ſways him in all his Actions ſo far as Grace is Active and Vigorous in him, according to the Precept given, 1 Cor. 10. 31. *Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatſoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*

(2.) *HENCE he ſeeks to have his deſires gratified ſubordinately to the Glory of God.* We before obſerved, that our Prayers are to be offered to God with ſubmiſſion to his holy Sovereign Pleaſure; now the reaſon of this is becauſe Grace hath taught him, that he owes himſelf and his Will to the Glory of God, which ſets the bounds to his cravings and requeſts. Hence his requeſts are thus guarded, as we find in the Man Chriſt; Joh. 12. 27, 28. *Father, ſave me from this hour*: *but for this cauſe came I unto this hour*, &c. He can for this cauſe take no content in any thing which he obtains, if God's Name ſuffers Diſhonour by it. And though he ſhould ſuffer, yet if this may redound to the Honour of God, he is well content; ſuch a Spirit we find was eminent in *Paul*, *Phil.* 1. 18.

(3.) *HENCE he infatiably longs that God may have the Glory of all that he doth for him.* The Carnal Man is a Lover of himſelf, and ſeeks his own gratification in all that he asks of God; it is to uphold his fleſhly Luſts, and obtain a ſupply for them: if then he obtains this, he hath that which bounded his cravings, and accordingly he takes up with this, and looks no farther. But this will not give content to a gracious Soul, when Grace is in exerciſe, but he looks farther: and as he is afraid to ask any thing, unleſs God may be ſerved with it; ſo thereupon in his offering his deſires, he ſeriouſly enquires, Will ſuch a thing bring Honour to God? And is this upon my Heart and the chief ſpring of my deſires? as being ſenſible of his infirmity, and afraid of his carnal Affections: and this puts him upon enquiring how God may be Glori-

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fied by it, that ſo God's kindneſs may not loſe its end, and he may not miſs of the true good of it. And hence with his requeſts he endeavours to get an Heart prepared for the right improvement of it, if God ſhould favour him with it ; that ſo God may not loſe his juſt expectation ; and this ſeems to be intended in that, Pſal. 65 1. *Praiſe waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion ; and unto thee ſhall the vow be performed.*

(4.) *HENCE when God anſwers his Prayers, it moves him to endeavour gratefully to own his Obligation to him for it.* He doth not only deſire that God may have Glory for it, but that he may ſhew forth his praiſes on the account of it ; and this ariſeth from a Principle of gratitude which he hath in him ; which he deſires to exert ; and this ſets him in ſtudying how and wherein he may ſignalize this both in words and actions. Hence when the Pſalmaſt had received great Benefits from God, it put him upon ſuch a deliberation, Pſal. 116. 12. *What ſhall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits toward me* ? He acknowledgeth the Obligation, and that puts him upon meditating of Duty, and exciting himſelf to the practice. He knows that he can never compenſate this favour by any thing that he can do, but confeſſeth that he owes the greateſt Thankfulneſs, and that both in words and deeds ; and that if he forget any of theſe benefits, or do not apply them to the right end of them, he ſhall come under the juſt cenſure of Ingrateful ; whereby he ſhall offer juſt Provocation to God againſt him ; and in this reſpect the acts of Praiſe and Gratitude, are not of the eſſence of Prayer, but are the proper returns made to God ; and on that account are appendices of Prayer, and ever due to God from thoſe that taſte of his Bounties every Day ?

(5.) *THIS ſenſe of Inſufficiency drives him to God to ask of him that he will glorify himſelf by all, and enable him to pay him the tribute of Praiſe.* As it is our Duty to give Thanks to God for Mercies received, as well as requeſt him for Mercies wanted ; ſo it is certain, and experience will teach it us, that we as much depend on him to give us an Heart to be Thankful for Mercies, as to give us the Favours to be Thankful for. For as we receive every Grace from him, ſo we muſt have help from him for the exerciſe of it, as Phil. 2.13. *For it is God which worketh in you both to will & to do of his good pleaſure.* God therefore hath not only promiſed to his People that he will anſwer them when they call, but alſo that they ſhall glorify him when anſwered ; *Pſal.* 50. 15. The ſinful concupiſcience that abides in us, tends both to make us forgetful of kindneſs received, and to make us proud & lifted up with our own worthineſs, which nouriſheth ingratitude in us. The ſenſe of this, teacheth us to maintain an holy Jealouſy in ourſelves ; and to ask of God that he will put it into our Hearts to Glorify him, imprint the Law of Gratitude on us, and aſſiſt us in our Duty, and exalt his own Honour in us, and by us.

(6.) *IN this Dependance he ſets about this Duty, waiting upon God for his gracious acceptance.* As he knows that he can do nothing without help from God, and for that reaſon he asks it of him ; ſo he knows his very offerings of Thankſgivings have ſo much of imperfection and impurity adhering to them, that he can have no acceptance but in and through Chriſt ; and this puts him upon humbly waiting on God for this help, as knowing that without him he can do nothing ; and asking his kind entertainment of him in the Beloved ; through whoſe Sacrifices alone, his Thankſgivings can be cleanſed ; and not returned upon him as Dung. Hence that Petition, Pſal. 119. 108. *Accept, I beſeech thee, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O Lord, and teach me thy judgments.* And this is the right way of our paying this tribute of Praiſe to God which is his due ; and this is that which God juſtly expects of all his People, that hereby they may teſtify the due ſenſe they have of all his Mercies ; that they ſo confeſs to him, that their all comes from him, and their own unworthineſs of, and their inability ever to retaliate to him for the leaſt of them all : bewail their Deadneſs and Indiſpoſition ; earneſtly beſeeching him to imprint it on their Hearts for ever ; that he will ſmell a ſweet ſavour in all their Offerings, and enable them rightly to improve all which they receive from him, for him ; and be now Watchful, Faithful, Chearful and Conſtant in his Service ; and in this way, we do make him the firſt Cauſe and laſt End of all.

AND would we maintain an open Trade with Heaven, let us fetch all from God by Prayer, and return all to him by Thankſgiving, and this is the way never to want.

SERMON *CCXLIII.*

WE have conſidered the Kinds of *Prayer* ; which are more directly pointed at in this Anſwer : And it will not be impertinent here to ſubjoyn ſome more obſervable diſtinctions of Prayer ; which will be helpful to us rightly to attend our Duty in regard of the ſeveral Circumſtances that attend it.

I. PRAYER is either Ejaculatory, or more Continued. The reaſon of this diſtinction is becauſe Prayer is of conſtant uſe to maintain Communion with God : And there are very frequent occaſions for our ſending our Deſires to Heaven, beſides our ſet and ſeperate attendance on this Duty.

1. *EJACULATORY Prayer is a ſhort & ſudden lifting up our Hearts to Heaven ; while we are engaged in other Duties.* Many Inſtances of this we have in the Word of God ; particularly *Gen.* 49. 18. *Pſal.* 84. 3. This doth not

not call us off from the buſineſs that we are engaged in, to lay it aſide, and ſeperate our ſelves to this duty; nor need it at all to hinder us in our Duty by giving us interruption, but will help us in it to do it with a more ſpiritual frame; it is but a pertinent and pathetical parentheſis in our work; which will make no baulk in it, but advantage us in proſecution of it. And there are uncountable occaſions for this in a day: and the more frequent we are in it, the greater teſtimony we have that we are ſpiritual. And it will be a good evidence that we are ſenſible of our dependance on God for all. Thus in our ordinary ſecular Employments; when we find difficulty in them, to lift up our Hearts to God to help us: When we find our Hearts too much engaged in the World, to ask him to mortify our fleſhly affections; when we are eagerly ſet upon the Succeſs, to beg that we may be ſubdued to the good Will of God; when we are at a loſs in our Work, to Pray that he will direct us; when we are diſcouraged in our Buſineſs, to ask him to give us encouragement; when we find our work to ſucceed, to give him the praiſe of it. Thus alſo in our Religious Duties; when we are hearing the Word, and we find our Hearts dead, or wandring, or ready to entertain Prejudices at the Word, or at the Inſtrument, to lift up a groan to God for relief againſt theſe; and when we find the Word to touch our Hearts, to acknowledge his Grace in it, and to Pray that he would fix this on us, and give it an abiding impreſſion; and in reſpect of others, if we meet them, to Pray that God will bleſs them; if they are Sick, to ask God's Mercy for them both for Soul and Body; if we hear of their Troubles, to deſire of God to be with them. Theſe and many more of ſuch things belong to this; and are the right poſtures of a gracious Soul: and it is the way to have Communion with God in all, and to enjoy great inward tranquility of mind, and to dwell in Heaven whilſt upon Earth; and thus alſo ſhall we be always in a readineſs for our more ſolemn Addreſſes to God. And would we thus do, we might maintain his frame, Pſal. 16. 8. *I have ſet the Lord always before me.* And maintain reverend and delightful thoughts of him.

2. *MORE Continued Prayer is when we ſet our ſelves to pour out our Hearts before God after a ſolemn manner.* We are not to ſatisfy our ſelves in Ejaculatory Prayer; but God hath required of us that beſides the frequent lifting up of our Hearts to him in a ſigh, a groan, a petition, we take our opportunities to ſeperate our ſelves to this duty, and laying aſide other occaſions, do engage in it as a Buſineſs without interruption by other things. Prayer is compared to wreſtling with God; and we are to enter the liſts with him, with an holy purpoſe not to let him go till we have gotten the bleſſing of him; as *Jacob*, *Hoſ.* 12. 3, 4. It is our duty to pour out our Hearts before God, to ſpread our caſe before him; *Pſal.* 62. 8. And we are to perſevere in Praying, *Eph.* 6.18. We have a great many wants, and we ought to ſpread them before him: Not as if he ſo needed to be informed; for he knows our needs better than we do, but he would have us ſenſible of them, and lay open this ſenſe before him, and therein teſtify our entire dependance upon him. And this is the way to bring our ſelves under the more potent Obligations of Gratitude, when he receives our Prayers, and grants us our Requeſts. Such Prayers as theſe have the Godly uſed at all times, and though we can merit nothing by them, yet we do therein take a proper way to maintain Communion with God. And in theſe Prayers we are to offer our diſtinct Petitions, and make uſe of Arguings and Pleadings with God, becauſe this is the way in which God hath encouraged us to hope for his Mercy. He hath for that reaſon given us direction about it, *Hoſ.* 14. *begin.* Not that we are to think that by our long Prayers, and multiplication of words, we ſhall command the Bleſſing: Nay, we are enjoyned, Eccl. 5. 2. *Be not raſh with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be haſty to utter any thing before God.* And our Saviour gives that caution, *Mat.* 6. 7. But we ought to inſiſt, ſo as to get our Affections raiſed, and our Hearts warm; and not to content our ſelves with a few inſipid Expreſſions. And doubtleſs we ought to be longer or ſhorter in this Duty, according as the occaſion is; which may much vary: And if it be asked how often we are thus to ſequeſter our ſelves to this Duty? it muſt be anſwered; that there are is no limitation ſet in the Word of God; and there may be incident occaſions which may call us off to Prayer oftentimes beſides what is ordinary: And the Word of God ſeems to intimate, that we ought not to omit this *Morning* and *Evening*, at leaſt: And God appointed the Morning and Evening-Sacrifice, which were times of Prayer. And we find *David* reſolving, Pſal. 55. 17. *Evening and morning, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud.* And 119. 164. *Seven times a day do I praiſe thee.* As for ſet and ſtated Hours for this there is no Religion in it, making one more holy than another; but there is Chriſtian Prudence, in having Seaſons for this Duty to be attended ſo conſtantly as may be, leſt by excuſes and delay, we ſhould forget our Duty, and loſe the Opportunity: Nor is it neceſſary that in all our ſet Prayers we ſhould inſiſt upon all things that afford Matter for Prayer; but there may many times be particular Caſes which call for our preſent intenſeneſs; for ſometimes there may be ſuch things as will take up the preſent Opportunity; inſtances whereof we have in the Word of God. But if Chriſtians think that a ſuitable time ſpent in Prayer, is ſo much loſt from their Wordly Concerns, and will thereupon omit or curtail the Duty, they wofully impoſe on themſelves; and it will be found that that is redeemed time, which is employed to obtain God to be with us in all that we are concerned in.

II. ANOTHER diſtinction of Prayer is, that which is either Solitary or Social. It is either done by a Perſon alone, between God and his own Soul; or by a Company joining together in offering up of their Petitions to God. And for both of theſe we have Precept and Pattern in Scripture: and there are moral Reaſons for them both.

1. *THERE is Solitary Prayer, which is to be practiſed by the People of God.* And this is not to be neglected upon a pretence of attending upon Publick Worſhip, or that which is Social. A Chriſtian is to ſeparate himſelf, and get alone from all Company, and to be as ſecret in it as may be. And for this we have our Saviour's direction, *Mat.* 6. 5, 6. It is therefore very proper, that we have our Places of Retirement, where we may get alone, and pour out our requeſts before God, where there may be no witneſs but God and our own Souls. And ſuch Prayer if rightly performed, carries the greateſt evidence of our ſincerity; and beſpeaks our real ſenſe of our wants, and hath the leaſt hazard of hypocriſy: though we are not to reſt in this; for if we look not to our Hearts we may be formal and hypocritical in this too. Now there is great reaſon why this Prayer ſhould be duly and conſtantly attended; for every Perſon hath his particular wants which he is to repreſent unto God; and many of theſe are ſuch as it is not convenient that others be acquainted withal; but are proper to be repreſented to God, who knows all. There are the Sins to be confeſſed to God, which it is not meet that others ſhould be acquainted withal; the Diſtreſſes to be bewailed, and help to be ſought for in regard of them, which others are and muſt be ſtrangers to: And here a Child of God may uſe the more freedom of Spirit. Others poſſibly would inſult over us, & reproach us; and God knows how to pity us; & the more open we are with him, the more ready he will be to entertain us kindly. For we are told, Pſal. 103 13. *Like as a father pitieth his children: ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* And indeed, never hath a Believer more enlarged Communion with God, than when in his ſolitary Retirements he draws near unto God, and opens his whole Soul unto him. How often when he goes into his Cloſet ſad, doth he come out again glad; being abundantly refreſhed with thoſe cloſe Embraces which he receives from him whom his Soul loves? And that Soul that hath had experience of the ſweetneſs of this, will count it his happineſs to enjoy ſuch a Priviledge, and will not eaſily neglect it. And tho' we are not upon every pang, to run from our buſineſs to this; yet it is very proper for us, to prepare for it, and to lay by matter in our daily Obſervations, to bring before God, when we come to addreſs him in Secret. It is alſo very proper for Chriſtians in their Secret Applications, to avoid all that will have a ſavour in it of oſtentation and hypocriſy. Doubtleſs the loud ſpeaking in this Praying, ſo as to tell all that are near to us, or paſs by, what we are doing, is little better than to ſound a Trumpet.

2. *THERE is Social Prayer, which the People of God are concerned to attend.* Which is in the joyning of more than one together in offering up their Deſires to God: And the reaſon of it is becauſe Man is made a Sociable Creature; and there are the common Concerns of Chriſtians, which invite them to carry their requeſts to God, and join in their Praying to him. We may have more particular occaſion to Diſcourſe of this matter under the Preface of the *Lord's Prayer.* I ſhall therefore here only obſerve; that there is a frequent diſtinction of Social Prayer into that which is Œconomical, or Congregational; or that which is more Private, and more Publick: For each whereof we have Precept & Example in the Word of God.

1. *ŒCONOMICAL Prayer is that which is performed in Private Families of Chriſtians.* We obſerved that Man is made for Society: Solitarineſs, or living alone being a treſpaſs againſt Humane Nature. Hence there are the ſeveral Families of Chriſtians, who live and converſe together; and it is their Duty to live together as Chriſtians, which they cannot do unleſs Prayer be upheld in their Society. And here we may obſerve,

(1.) *IN general, that in Social Prayer, there is one that is to be the Mouth of the reſt, in expreſſing to God their wants, and putting up Petitions in their Name:* And all the reſt are to join heartily in theſe Requeſts, and ſend up their deſires with them unto God; for if all ſhould ſpeak together, it would bring confuſion and diſorder into the Duty; whereas God is a God of Order, and not of Confuſion. They therefore who will have all at once to ſpeak in Prayer, do certainly diſturb the Duty, and render it vain and unedifying.

(2.) *THIS Duty doth more peculiarly belong to the Head of the Family*: For God hath committed to ſuch the Charge and Care, both of the Bodies and Souls of thoſe that belong to their Society, they are to Pray for them, and Pray with them; not as if they may not make Uſe of the Gifts of ſuch who may occaſionally be caſt into their Families; but it belongs to them to ſee that this Worſhip of God be upheld; and in the Time when the Church was in Families, the Maſter of it was in the room of a Prieſt to it, to offer Sacrifices to God.

(3.) *THERE are the common Concerns of a Family, in which they have to do with God as ſuch.* In every Relation there are Relative Duties, which thoſe have to diſcharge one to another, and they muſt go to God for Grace and help to perform them; there are Family Bleſſings to be ſought, and Family Afflictions to be deprecated; there are Family Sins to be Confeſſed and Bewailed, and Family Benefits that are to be obſerved, and God to be Thanked and Praiſed for: Hence there is Family Religion to be upheld, and Communion with

God

God to be upheld in it, and that as a Society which is devoted to God's Service; and Family Governours are carefully to ſeek their own Salvation, and the Salvation of all that are under their Care; and all theſe are potent Arguments to excite and oblige them to this as a neceſſary Duty: And hence we have his Reſolution, Joſh. 24. 15. *As for me and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord.*

(4.) *HENCE it is the Duty of all that are Members in a Family to attend Carefully and Conſcientiouſly on the ſeaſons of Religious Worſhip in it.* Tho' there be no Time in the Day more Holy than other, yet it is convenient that Families have their ordinary ſtated Times of Worſhip both for the Morning and the Evening, that ſo every Member of it may not be at a loſs about it; and tho' unforeſeen Providence may ſometimes prevent it, yet in the ordinary Courſe, both Heads of Families and all that are Members of them, ought to obſerve them, elſe there will be Diſturbance and Confuſion; nor ought any to exempt themſelves from this Duty careleſly, leaſt they bring the diſpleaſure of God upon themſelves: And we are ſure that Wrath is threatned againſt ſuch Families as do not call upon the Name of God, *Jer.* 10. 25.

2. *CONGREGATIONAL Prayer is that which is to be offered to God in a Publick Aſſembly.* The diſtinction which is between Secret, Private and Publick is very obſervable: And tho' both the latter conſiſt of a Community, yet there are more Private and more Publick Societies, and not only is Prayer to be uſed in the former, but in the latter too. Theſe Publick Societies are either Civil or Sacred; and they Convene together upon Publick Occaſions, in which the Community are concern'd; and as they depend upon God for his Direction and Bleſſing, ſo they ought to offer up their joynt Requeſts to God for it, and may well expect to be croſſed in their Buſineſs, if they endeavour not to have God with them. But that which I peculiarly here deſign is *Eccleſiaſtical*; or Prayers which are to be made in Church Aſſemblies; which, as they are appointed by God, ſo he hath Inſtituted a Worſhip to be attended in them by his People; and one of theſe Inſtitutions is, That there be Prayers offered up to him, in and with ſuch Congregations: And tho' Prayer it ſelf be a part of Natural Worſhip, yet offering it up to God in and with the Aſſemblies of the Saints, is of Inſtitution; and for this reaſon God's Houſe is called, *An Houſe of Prayer*: Not that there are no other Acts of Worſhip there to be attended, but becauſe this is never to be Omitted. As God hath appointed the Aſſemblings of his People to Worſhip him, as well under the Days of the Goſpel, as before under the Law; ſo tho' the ancient Ceremonies are ceaſed, to give place to a more Spiritual manner of Worſhip in the times of the New-Teſtament; yet the moral Duties of Worſhip, being perpetual, do abide and will ſo do till the time comes when Ordinances will be of no uſe, and that will be to the end of Time: And that Prayer is one of theſe Duties, hath already been obſerved and proved. Now that Publick, as well as Secret Prayers are to be attended by God's People, will be evident,

(1.) *FROM Chriſt's Precept, and the Example of Chriſtians in Goſpel Times.* That there is Precept for this, not only under the Old, but alſo the New Teſtament, is evident, in the Pattern of Prayer given by our Saviour; this is plainly intimated, in that he bids us to Pray, *Our Father*, which tells us that Social Prayer is a Duty, as may be further obſerved, when we come to take that Prayer into Conſideration: This alſo is implied in that general Precept, in 1 Tim. 2.8. *I will therefore that men pray every where.* And that of our Saviour, Matth. 18. 29. *Again I ſay unto you, that if two of you ſhall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they ſhall ask, it ſhall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.* And for this reaſon the places where Chriſtians meet together to Worſhip God, were called Oratories, or praying Places, *Acts* 16. 13. And as for Examples, we find that Chriſt himſelf often Prayed with Publick Aſſemblies, in which he ſet an Example for his People to imitate him; and this was the practice of the Apoſtle; and we have that inſtance in, Acts 4. 24. *They lift up their voice to God with one accord.*

(2.) *THERE are the common Concerns of ſuch a Society to be offered up unto God.* And it is moſt proper that they ſhould do it joyntly. Many things might here be inſtanced, but I only offer, that they are concerned as a Society to Glorify God; and that they may ſo do, God is to be implored; all ſcandalous Sins at any time breaking out among them, are a reproach to the Society, and therefore they are to deprecate them, and to ſeek direction and help from God, rightly to bear witneſs againſt ſuch Scandal, and ſucceed their endeavours therein. There are other Ordinances, which are appointed for the Edification of the People of God; and the Preſence of God with them is neceſſary that they may obtain this Deſign; the Preaching of the Word, the Adminiſtration of the Sacraments depend on his Aſſiſtance and Bleſſing, who only can give the increaſe: It is of him to give Aſſiſtance to the Diſpenſers in their work, elſe it will not attain; and it is of him to help the Partakers in the Word & Sacraments to profit by them; and for theſe alſo he is to be ſought. There are the Troubles which come on the Church in regard of their Profeſſion; and doubtleſs all are to joyn in their Prayers to God, that he will Sanctify them, and remove his hand from them; for God hath ſaid, Ezek. 36.37. *I will yet for this be enquired of by the houſe of Iſrael, to do it for them.*

(3.) *GOD hath declared how acceptable the Joynt Prayers of his People are to him, and how prevalant they are.* This is not from any worth in them, but becauſe herein the Declarative

Glory of God is the more acknowledged before Men. It is God's Honour to have his Throne of Grace besieged with a great many Petitioners at once; and he hath encouraged this by telling us, that if *two* do thus agree, it will be accepted, *Matth.* 18. 19. God Loves his Children, and delights to hear from them; & the more of them that ly prostrate together at his feet, the more united is their force in besieging Heaven: We have therefore such an Encouragement offered, Jam. 5. 14. *Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him.* And we have that encouragement offered, 2 Chron. 7. 14 *If my people which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways: then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.* Now concerning these publick Prayers, there are these Rules to be observed,

1. *THAT it is the proper work of those whom God hath called to the Service of the Ministry, to go before the People in offering up these Prayers to God.* We before observed, that there must be one that is to be the Mouth of the Assembly in this work, else there would be Confusion: Now this most properly belongs to the Ministry, who are to stand between God and his People; and as they are God's Mouth to them in Preaching his Word, so they are to be the Mouth of the Assembly in bringing of their Requests to God. As it belongs to Heads of Families in Family Prayer, so to the Leaders in the Church, in Publick Prayers, to whom God hath given the Charge publickly to Administer his holy things; and therefore ordinarily none but such as bear such an Office, or are Probationers to it, are to do this.

2. *THAT these Prayers must be offered in a known Language.* And the reason is plain, because they are to represent the Desires of God's People, whose hearts are to go along with them; which how shall they do, if they do not understand the Requests that are offered up to God in their Name: They are to set their *Amen* to such Prayers, and that not as Brutes, but as Men who know what they do. This therefore the Apostle insists on as a thing necessary for Edification, 2 *Cor.* 14. 14, 15, 16. If a Minister or a Christian, Pray in a Language which he understands not himself, he cannot Pray in Faith; and if he does, yet if he Prays with those that do not, he is to them but as a Barbarian, *Ver.* 11. which shews the Vanity of those, who enjoyn Men to Pray in a Language to them strange, in which their Hearts cannot go with their Tongues.

3. *THERE is nothing to be offered in these Prayers, but what the whole Congregation may or ought to put their Amen to.* And the reason of this is, because that in such Requests there's a Mental, if not a Vocal *Amen* to be used, because all are joyned together to offer up joynt Prayers to God; and therefore Care is to be used that nothing be laid as a stumbling-block in their way, but only such Petitions as are agreable to the Will of God; so that if any are prejudiced it must evidently be their own fault; which therefore the greatest Care ought to be used to prevent. Prayers should be offered with one heart; and therefore the Mind of God ought to be well considered by such as present them.

4. *THAT it is the Duty of those Individually who joyn in this Duty, to give diligent Attendance to the Prayers which are so put up.* It is not enough that the Speaker be intent & deliberate in his presenting the Case of God's People to him: But because Prayer is in the name of all that are present, they ought to have their Hearts fixed, and their Judgments exercised, that so they may not offer the Sacrifice of Fools; and therefore ought to attend the Duty with equal Solemnity with the other: And to have their Eyes wandering, and their Minds roving, is a profanation of the Ordinance. We ought therefore whensoever we go to the House of God, to remember that we are to approach the presence of Him, who searcheth the hearts of Men; and if we offer up mock-Service to him, we may expect to be answered accordingly; and have our Prayers returned upon us, and thrown in our Faces as dung.

SERMON CCXLIV.

III. *ANOTHER distinction of Prayer is, that it is either Mental or Vocal.* The reason of this distinction is, because there is in Man a Soul and a Body; which though both are concerned in the Duties of Worship, yet the Soul is the Principal; and though the Body is used by it as an instrument, in its imperate acts for the most part, yet there are some operations which it can perform, without making use of the Bodily Organs in the doing of them; and this gives a foundation for the distinction now under consideration; which may be more particularly considered.

1. *MENTAL Prayer is when we only send up our Desires to God in our Thoughts*: And of such Praying we have an account given; thus *Gen.* 24. 45. 1 *Sam.* 1. 13. We observed that Prayer is an offering of our desires to God; now as the desires themselves are inward, so also they may be inwardly expresst to God; and this doth properly belong to Secret Prayers, and cannot be used alone in such as are Social; And though Christians may use their Tongues in Secret Prayer, provided they do not thereby make them Publick; but only as may help to keep their minds more intense; yet there is no occasion for it in regard of God's audience; nor needs there any external Sign at all, to acquaint him with what we are doing; for as he sees, so he hears in Secret: And it is the Heart which he principally regards in Duty, *Psal.* 51. 6. And as, if that be away, all the noise that we can make, will be but howling; so if that be thus employed sincerely,

ſincerely, it will be a Sacrifice acceptable to him; *ver.* 17. And a Child of God ſhall find a great deal of occaſion for his uſing of his manner of Praying in his courſe here; and it is a Priviledge which all the World cannot take from him: the Heart hath a Language as well as the Tongue, and he who is the Father of Spirits underſtands it as well: for the Pſalmiſt confeſſeth, Pſal 139. 2. *Thou underſtandeſt my thought afar off.* Now theſe tho'ts may be ſent up to God, whether in Ejaculations, or in a more continued Prayer, when there is not a word uttered by the Lips, nor any external ſign in any Bodily geſture, that can acquaint by-ſtanders that we are Praying to God; and this is the advantage of God's Children, that they can hold Communion with him in their Prayers, in every place, in all Companies, & upon all Occaſions. Sometimes God's People are debarred in his Providence, ſo that they cannot get alone to pour out their Hearts before God; but this hinders not their Precious converſe with him: though this doth not diſcharge them from their Secret Retirements where they may have more ſcope, and freedom from impediments, when they can have opportunity ſo to do; but if they cannot, it need not to cut off this Duty; but they may be alone with God in their Minds, when they cannot get alone with their Bodies; though Perſecutors may reſtrain their Bodily freedom, ſhut them up in Priſons among Wicked Men, and not ſuffer them to be alone, yet there is a way to Heaven which they cannot block up; but in ſpite of their Enemies, they may mount up to Heaven, and carry their requeſts to the Throne of Grace, and leave them before God; and whilſt this Door is open, they are ſafe.

2. *VOCAL Prayer is the offering of our deſires to God in outward expreſſions.* This indeed is not eſſential to Prayer, for the whole eſſence of it is contained in the former; but it is a circumſtance in ſome caſes neceſſary; that it may be done in Secret Prayer we before obſerved, provided it take not from the Secrecy of it: And God's People have found by experience, that it hath been helpful to them to keep their thoughts more intent, and prevent their wanderings; but, in regard of Social Prayer, it is neceſſary. A Child of God may have Fellowſhip with him in Mental Prayer; but Chriſtians cannot offer up their joynt Prayers to God but in that which is Vocal; for we before obſerved, that in Social Prayer one is the Mouth of the reſt in offering requeſts to God, who may teſtify their concurrence with their Amen; whereas none can know the Heart immediately but God; but we are to impart our thoughts to others by external Signs, and peculiarly by Words, which are the Interpreters of the Mind. And here we may more particularly take notice of theſe things,

(1.) *THAT Mental Prayer muſt always accompany Vocal, in order to our obtaining Audience with God.* We muſt uſe words to edify others, but our Hearts muſt go with them if we would Pleaſe God; it is therefore charged as hypocriſy, Ezek. 33. 31. *For with their mouth they ſhew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetouſneſs.* Lip-Services, when the Heart is abſent, are the way to procure a Curſe inſtead of Bleſſing: if Men come with an Idol in their Hearts, they ſhall be anſwered according to their Idol, *Ezek.* 14. *beg.* Meerly Lip-Prayers, be they never ſo loud, are no better than howlings in God's eſteem.

(2.) *THAT God hath given to Man his Tongue to Glorify him withal, after a ſpecial manner.* Other Creatures beſides have their Tongues which are of uſe; but it is a peculiar Priviledge of Man, that he hath a Tongue beſtowed on him, by which to expreſs his inward tho'ts to others; and this is called Man's Glory, becauſe by it he is furniſhed for rational converſe with Men, far excelling hereby all brute Animals; for though they hear the various Sounds they make which may be differenced, and is helpful in their ſenſible Communion; yet they have not a power of forming theſe into a Language or Speech, which may interpret the mind; but this Man is favoured withal; and without it humane Society would be very lame and imperfect: And this may be included in that, Job 35. 11. *Who teacheth us more than the beaſts of the earth, and maketh us wiſer then the fowls of heaven.*

(3.) *GOD requires of his People that they do employ their Tongues to Worſhip and Glorify him.* Prayer therefore being one part of his Worſhip, theſe are alſo to be employed in it: The Apoſtle joyns theſe two together, Rom. 10. 10. *For with the heart man believeth unto righteouſneſs, and with the mouth confeſſion is made unto ſalvation.* And the Pſalmiſt when he calls upon himſelf to Praiſe and Glorify God, particularly calls upon his Tongue in this employment, *Pſal.* 57. 8. It is not enough for Chriſtians to Pray in their Cloſets, but they are to Pray in the Aſſemblies, and it belongs to the open Profeſſion of the Goſpel. And for this reaſon a Profeſſing People are deſcribed by their calling on the Name of the Lord.

(4.) *THIS ſhows the Vanity of thoſe that appoint and applaud their ſilent Meetings for the Worſhipping of God.* There is a ſort of Men we know ſo do, and tell us how greatly edifying they are; but it is meer Enthuſiaſm. We acknowledge that there are ſilent Prayers, but then they are not Social; and it is hard to tell how ſuch may be rationally edified by ſuch pretended Communion; where they uſe nothing but exotical Geſtures, and ridiculous Poſtures of Body, which others cannot underſtand: Social Prayers they cannot be, and if Secret they ought to be done in Secret; or ſo as though we are in Company, yet they are known only to God and our own Souls.

(5.) *THAT theſe Prayers may be preſented in any Language, provided it be known.* The Folly of Praying in a Language unknown hath been before conſidered; and what we here

further observe, is that every Language is a like Elegible, provided it be understood; it is Superstition in those that will have it in one of the three Languages which Christ Sanctified on his Cross, as if it added Holiness to the Duty: that Language which is Barbarous to one, is Native to another; and let it be one of those expresst, if not understood by such as use it, it is Barbarous to them; according to the Apostles sense, 1 Cor. 14. 11. *Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a Barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a Barbarian unto me.* God will in Gospel times be Worshipped by all Kindreds and Tongues, and they must do it with Understanding.

IV. ANOTHER distinction of Prayer is into Ordinary and Extraordinary. The ground of this Distinction is because besides the daily calls that we have to set apart some Time to invoke God, and present our Supplications to him; there are some Occasions wherein the People of God are called to separate themselves to this Duty after a more extraordinary manner; not that we should at any time do this Duty after a perfunctory manner, but with suitable Solemnity, as such who adventure into the Presence of the great King, to present our Petitions to him, which ought not to be with common Frames; but the occasions of the one and the other, come under different respects in regard of the Circumstances of them, which may be here briefly considered.

1. *ORDINARY Prayer is that which is to be used on all Occasions, in which we are to separate our selves from other Employments to draw near to God*: And that both in Secret, and in private Families daily, and in the publick Assemblies, in their usual Meetings for this end; of which we have already considered, and no more needs here to be added.

2. *EXTRAORDINARY Prayer is when upon more Solemn Occasions we set apart some longer portion of time to present our Prayers to God.* And these are either for Humiliation or Thanksgiving; either to deprecate God's Judgments, or to celebrate his Mercies. Concerning these in general, observe,

(1.) *THAT there are no set or stated times for these prescribed in the Gospel.* In the times of the Law there were three Feasts, and one Day of Fasting appointed by God, and these Days were sanctified by God to be Sabbaths, or holy Time; but as they belonged to *Moses*'s Pædagogy, so they ceased with that, when it was antiquated: And there are no other surrogated in their room, under the Gospel-Institutions; though the duty do still abide; nor are we to revoke these. Hence that objurgation, Gal. 4. 10. *Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.* But there are the same occasions for them during the abode of the Church in this World.

(2.) *THAT the People of God ought to use their Prudence in their observing of these things*: And that both in respect of the time when, and the time that is spent in such Duties; which may be longer or shorter as occasion suits. There is no time but the Lord's Day that is made holy in Gospel times, by a stamp of Divine Authority, by separating it from Common to Sacred uses; though there must be time taken up in Religious Duties, according to the nature and importance of them. And though not for the times, yet the duty's sake, it is to be spent in sacred Employment; and so is every part of time to be occupied for Religious Worship whensoever it is attended. And God's People may separate more or less time for this as occasion is; though this calls for a more enlargedness than in our ordinary Prayers. And we have Examples of this difference in the Word of God.

(3.) *THAT the Providence of God is to be observed for a call to this.* The duty is directed to in God's holy Word; but as we are not always to attend it, for then we must interfere with other necessary Duties, which do also require time to be performed in; but there is a Voice of God, which it is our duty to hearken to; and there is not only a voice in his Word, but also in his Providence which he expects that we should understand and comply withal. Hence that Precept, Mic 6. 9. *The Lords voice cryeth unto the city, and the men of wisdom shall see thy name.* And that rebuke, Isai. 22. 12. *And in that day did the Lord God of hosts call to weeping and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth*, &c.

(4.) *THAT hence the People of God have no Rule to appoint stated Anniversary Days for this.* The sanctifying of time by putting a relative Holiness on it in its revolutions, whether Weekly, Monthly, or Annually, is a Divine Prerogative; but if on these extraordinary Occasions, we are to take the call of Providence, whether for returning or giving of Thanks, the Seasons for this Duty must depend on him who disposeth of these Changes at his pleasure, and hath given us that Precept, Eccl. 7. 14. *In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider.* Jam. 5. 13. *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any man merry: let him sing psalms.* And such was the practice of the Church under the Law, on other occasions, besides the days which God himself had fixed by a positive Precept.

(5.) *THERE may be occasions to begin the duty with Humiliation, and shut it up with Thanksgiving.* There have been, and still are such things in the Providence of God, which give a sudden turn to the affairs of God's People; and whilst they have been covered with Sackcloth, under deepest sense of sorrowful things, God hath turned the Scene, and cloathed them with Garments of Praise, *Psal.* 32. 11. Thus we find it was in *Jehoshaphat*'s time, 2 *Chron.* 20.

(6.) *THESE Duties are to be attended more Privately or more Publickly.* And we have instances for both these in the Word of God.

And

And the reaſon for this is, becauſe the Providence of God affords the occaſions for both. There are Perſonal and Family Concerns, as well as thoſe which concern the Body of a People; and theſe are to be obſerved, and anſwerably improved as well as thoſe: yea it often ſo falls out, that when it fares well with a People, there may be ſore trials upon a Perſon or a Family; and when a People are in diſtreſs, there may be ſingular Bleſſings afforded to a Perſon or Family. Now God's dealing with either of theſe are to be carefully conſidered, and application to be made to God accordingly. We are deeply concerned with the Church of God, and ought to mourn when they mourn, and rejoyce when it goes well with them. *Rom.* 12. 15. And yet we are to reſent the dealings of God with our ſelves and ours; Nature teacheth it, and Grace directs it.

NOW concerning the Nature of theſe Duties, that may be gathered from what was before obſerved of Petition & Thankſgiving; only remembring, that they call for a more ſolemn ſeparating of our ſelves to them, and ſpending of our time in the proſecution of them; and for that reaſon we ought to ſanctify our ſelves to the Service: And there are ſeveral Circumſtances to be obſerved about them. And here,

1. *THAT there is difference to be made in the external Carriage in the Secret, and the Publick Attendance on theſe Solemnities:* This is plainly intimated in that of our Saviour, *Mat. 6. begin.* where our Saviour ſpeaks deſignedly of a Secret Faſt; it being improper for one that is Social; and the reaſon is not, becauſe we ſhould be aſhamed of our ſerving of God, but to prevent vain Oſtentation, with which the Phariſees had ſpoiled their Devotions, and ſhewn their hypocriſy.

2. *THAT there were divers things in the Levitical Law, which were appendices to theſe Duties, which ceaſed with them.* God then treated his People more by external things, which were Ceremonial, which do not belong to the eſſence of the duty; ſuch as a total abſtinence in days of Faſts, putting on Sackcloth, and lying in the Aſhes; which had no moral holineſs in them, but did ſtand to ſignify ſome ſpiritual thing, which we are to learn to practice by them. Hence that, Joel 2. 13. *And rent your heart and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God.*

3. *NEVERTHELESS there are thoſe external Obſervations, in theſe Duties, which do very well become ſuch Solemnities, and are ſerviceable to help us in them.* The outward, as well as the inward Man, are to be employed in the Duties of Worſhip; and to be improved to help us in our Devotions; and there is a decorum in our Carriage differently to be uſed upon Days of Faſting, and Days of Thankſgiving; Days of Humiliation are to abaſe ourſelves before God, to lay ourſelves low, and affect ourſelves with our own unworthineſs, it then becomes us to abſtain from our Bodily Comforts by Faſting, that we may be ſenſible of what our deſerving is; but yet not ſo, as inſtead of helping will hinder us in the performing of the Duty of Worſhip, and God requires Mercy & not Sacrifice; and we ſhould leave off our Ornaments on ſuch Days, and not come to Solemnize our Mourning and Lamentation, as if we were going to ſome jolly Meeting. On the other hand, on Days or Occaſions of extraordinary Thankſgiving; there is a ſuitable external deportment of ourſelves that we may make it appear that we do rejoice; and to help ourſelves in it, we may now put on our Ornaments, and make a more liberal uſe of the good things of God, but not ſo as to render our Service Carnal, and hinder our Spiritual Rejoycing: but that by it we may affect ourſelves with the kindneſs of God, and ſhew forth our Thankfulneſs. And if in theſe things we only reſt in outward Ceremonies, we ſhall but offer the Sacrifice of Fools.

4. *THOUGH there be nothing in Prayer but what may be ſerviceable to each of theſe Duties; yet there is ſomething which more peculiarly belongs to each of them; and we are to ſet our ſelves to improve them to promove this Service.*

And here obſerve,

(1.) *THAT in ſolemn Humiliation,* our great Buſineſs is, *To humble our ſelves before God in deep ſenſe of our own Sins, and ſo juſtify him in our Afflictions, and wait on him for the Atonement.* It is to implore his Mercy, under an apprehenſion of our want and unworthineſs: And for this end we ought now to make a diligent ſearch into our Hearts and our Lives, to find out our Sins, in order to a ſoaking Repentance, Lam. 3. 40. *Let us ſearch and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord.* And to go to God and beg of him earneſtly to diſcover to us what is the Controverſy, that we may know it, and a-right bewail it, *Job* 10. 2. And we ſhould obſerve it in it's Circumſtances and Aggravations, that we may be the more deeply abaſed, and vile in our own eyes: We are therefore upon this ſearch and diſcovery made, to make cordial Confeſſion of our Sins unto God; to lay our ſelves open before him in our vileneſs, and expreſs it with deep ſelf-abhorrence; and not only to Confeſs the thing that we have done, but our own juſt deſervings by reaſon thereof, as, Dan. 9. 8. *O Lord to us belongeth confuſion of face,* &c. And to ly low and acknowledge that God would be juſt if he ſhould reject us, and that it will be his meer Mercy to Pardon and Accept us, *Ver.* 9. And this ſenſe is to put us upon rejecting our own righteouſneſs, and relying upon that of Chriſt alone for the acceptance of Prayers, and obtainment of Anſwers of Peace; and by all of this to quicken our ſelves to the greater Earneſtneſs and Importunity in our Addreſſes to the Throne of Grace; and to make us to ly there, waiting on God till he ſpeaks Peace to us: And doubtleſs ſuch and ſo ſolemn a Duty of it's own Nature calls for our laying aſide all other

and

and worldly Business, because it requires intenseness, both of Body and Soul.

(2) *THAT in solemn Thanksgiving* our next Business is, *To offer our cordial Praises to God for signal Benefits received from him.* The usual Order of this is, when in a time of straits we have solemnly sought God, and obtained the Mercies wanted; and now the law of Gratitude obligeth us to study our returns of acknowledgment, and Practice accordingly; this put the Psalmist upon that reflection, Psal. 116 12. *What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits towards me?* And this is the Order which God himself hath put it into, Psal. 50. 15. *Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.* And that we may be helped to a right discharge of this Duty, it properly belongs, that we affect our selves with the greatness of the Kindness received; and for that end to reflect upon our selves, what we have done to procure our Troubles, how righteous God was in bringing them, how merciful in moderating of them, how unsuitably we carried it under them, and what poor Improvement we made of them, and how frowardly we went on notwithstanding them; what our Distress was, how helpless we were in our selves, and what Kindness there was contained in it, and that in all the Circumstances, which calls for our sequestred Reflections and Meditations: And in our giving Thanks we are to acknowledge all these to God, and bind our hearts with them, the more firmly to him, and our cheerful serving of him. And in the pursuit of this Duty, we are to take a particular notice of those glorious Perfections of God, which are remarkably signalized in such Providences; the Mercy, Pity, Wisdom, Power, Faithfulness of God, which are here made Illustrious, *Psal.* 145. 5, *&c.* And by this we are to endeavour to get our Hearts raised to highest strains of Love to God, and cheerful serving of him.

5. *SOME there be who bring in Singing of Psalms as a distinction of Prayer; and lay down the Doctrine of it under this Topick.* I shall not here dispute whether it be an Ordinance different from Prayer, or be an Appendix to it, and one Media of offering it to God: But that it not only was an Institution in Israel of old, (*Psal.* 81. 4.) but that it abides in the Instituted Worship of the New-Testament is very evident by the Precept given about it there, Col. 3. 16. *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.* And that it was not only practised in the Publick Assemblies, but Privately too, is instanced in *Paul* and *Silas*, Acts 16.25. And tho' this Service seems to be more specially adapted to giving Thanks to God, and setting forth of his Praises; yet we find the sweet Singer of *Israel* composing his Psalms to sundry sorts of Matter, sometimes in an Elegiack strain, in sorrowful Moans, sometimes to be Commemorative and Historical, sometimes to Prophesies and Meditations, and most frequently to Commemorate the glorious Works of God for his People, and to set forth his Praises therein. For this reason the Spirit of God hath indited and committed to Writing many of these, for the use of the Church in all Ages; and these are doubtless the most proper to be used by the People of God in their Devotions, because they are not only accommodated to all the cases of particular Persons, or a People together, that can evene; but also because they are Inspired Writings, and therefore most proper for them to exercise their Faith in the Singing of them: Certainly no ordinary Gift can indite better, however some luxuriant fancies please themselves therewithal. And although there is melody to be used in this Service, Skill wherein is an excellent Gift of God; yet there are many Godly Men who are not Priviledged with it, & God will accept of their broken Musick, if their Hearts be right with him; who are therefore to Sing with Understanding, and Affection, *Psal.* 47. 7. And it must be done with a fix'd Heart, *Psal.* 57. 7. And with the whole Heart, *Psal.* 111. 1

AS to the Question, *Whether Instrumental Musick is to be used in the Worship of God?* All that I shall offer is, that tho' this was appointed in the Pædagogy of *Moses*, yet it was part of Ceremonial Worship, which as such is ceased, and we have no Institution for it in the Gospel; and it is most agreeable to New Testament times to omit it. And let us intend our care to do it with our Hearts as well as Lips, and so it will be acceptable with God through Christ.

SERMON *CCXLV.*

QUESTION XCIX.

WHAT Rule hath God given for our Direction in Prayer?

ANSWER.

THE whole Word of GOD is of Use to direct us in Prayer; but the special Rule of Direction, is that Form of Prayer, which Christ taught his Disciples, commonly called, *The Lord's Prayer.*

WE have taken a summary Account of the Nature and Necessity of Prayer, together with the more remarkable distinctions of it. It now follows, that we proceed

to

to a more particular Conſideration of the Rule by which we are to be directed how to order our Prayers to God, ſo as they may be acceptable to God, and profitable for us. Not only is Praying to God a duty incumbent on all Perſons, nor can he be a Chriſtian who lives in the neglect of this Duty; but there is a *ſo* Praying, which thoſe that would enjoy Communion with God in it, ought to get acquainted with, if they would not offer vain Oblations. There are Prayers which in God's eſteem are no better than howlings, and will not find anſwers of Peace, but he will ſtop his Ears at them; as *Iſai.* 1. 15. It is not the leaſt part of fallen Man's miſery that he knows not how to Pray as he ought, and for that reaſon ſtands in need of Divine Teachings. And although ſuch is God's pity and compaſſion towards us, who knows our frame, that where there is truth and ſincerity of Heart, he will accept of our chatterings, and kindly entertain our unutterable groans, which are wrought in us by his holy Spirit. And for this reaſon, our ſenſe of infirmity ſhould not drive us from, or diſcourage us in duty, but animate us to it; yet as it is our prime duty to ſee that our Hearts be right in it, ſo we ought to endeavour after a diſtinct acquaintance with the true Method of Prayer, and obtaining the Gift of it. And becauſe we have not this of our ſelves, we muſt wait upon God for his teaching. And for that end we muſt Pray to him, that he would teach us to Pray, as the Diſciples did to Chriſt, *Luk.* 11. 1. We before obſerved that the Matter of Prayer is our Deſires; but then we muſt remember, that all our Deſires are not to be preſented to God, that he would grant them: There are ſinful as well as regular deſires, and thoſe are to be mortified. And to Pray to God for ſucceſs in Robbery, Fornication, Murder, *&c.* is Wicked, and ſavours of Atheiſm: And becauſe we were told that theſe are to be regulated and reſtrained to things agreable to his Will, our beſt way is to go to him to inſtruct us in this great affair: and we have encouragement ſo to do from the kind reception and aſſiſtance that we may expect in ſo doing, Jam. 1. 5. *If any of you lack wiſdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it ſhall be given him.* And there are two things which we ought to ſeek information and help in, on this account, *viz.* the Matter of our Prayers, and the Manner in which we are to preſent them to God, ſo as may be for his honour, and the encouragement of our Faith in our addreſſing of him. Now that God hath given us a Rule for this is ſuppoſed, and is neceſſarily ſo, becauſe it is a part of Religious Worſhip. And as this hath God for the Author of it, ſo it muſt have its direction from him, who only can tell us how he will be Worſhipped by his reaſonable Creatures: And there are two Things in the Anſwer, which may be briefly conſidered, viz.

1. *THAT the whole Word of God is of uſe to direct us in Prayer.* By the Word of God we are to underſtand, the Holy Scriptures, which God hath committed to Writing, in which he hath revealed to us what is his Will and our Duty; and is therefore given us to regulate us in our Religion; and we are obliged to regulate our whole Lives according to it, Deut. 29. 29. *The ſecret things belong unto the Lord our God: but thoſe things which are revealed, belong unto us, and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.* Prayer therefore being an eſſential part of Religion, muſt needs have its regulation laid down in this Word, elſe it would not be a perfect Rule; as we are told that it is, 2 *Tim.* 3. 16, 17. But we are not only told that theſe Directions are contained in the Word, which muſt for that reaſon be ſought for in it; but that the whole of it is uſeful to direct us in it; which is emphatical, and acquaints us, that there is no part of the Holy Scriptures but may be improved by us for our help in this duty. And this direction hath a reſpect not only to the Matter, but alſo to the Manner; and the Motives that may excite us to, and encourage us in it. We may therefore here make ſome brief remarks on the uſefulneſs there is in the Word of God for this purpoſe in a few Particulars,

1. *IN the Word of God we have all the Matters offered for which we are to Pray.* Theſe are there laid down by way of Precept; for there are we told, what are all our wants, both of Soul and Body, for the ſupply whereof we may lawfully deſire; and theſe deſires none can fulfil but God, who expects to be ſought to for it: There are we directed whom to Pray for, and what we are to ask of God in their behalf; whether it be the World, or the Church of God, or our dear Relations, whom we are to love as our Souls; and all the Caſes which may be before us: and this both with reſpect to Mercies received, or Afflictions felt or feared; what to appreciate, and what to deprecate, and both with reſpect to Soul and Body, things Temporal and Spiritual. As might be particularly inſtanced in all theſe regards.

2. *WE are there pointed to all the Graces which are to be exerciſed in right Prayer.* Prayer requires not only the elocution of the Tongue, and a formulary of apt words; but Grace alſo in the Heart, and the Improvement of it in our coming to God, who regards the Heart, and judgeth of us accordingly; and how this is, we are there directed. It therefore tells us, that we muſt Pray in Faith, *Jam.* 1 6. and how this Faith is to be applied; by a firm belief of his Ability to ſuccour us, and that no other can do it for us; and that we can obtain on no other ſcore, but that of Chriſt, thro' whom we are to offer our Prayers to him: That we are humbly to leave our Requeſts with him, ſubmitting our all to him, and his diſpoſe; with hope in his Grace, with patient waiting on him, and perſeverance in it, tho' he ſeem to delay us. Theſe, and whatſoever

whatſoever other Graces are to be employed herein, are there fully directed to.

3. *IT gives us an account what we are to do in order to our ſpeeding in Prayer.* It not only requires us to call upon God, but tells us how we may ſo ask as not to miſs of ſpeeding in it; warning us againſt ſuch things as will obſtruct the commerce between God & us; and ſhewing us how we may draw near & find acceptance; how we are to prepare for this Duty, how to behave our ſelves in the performance of it; to come not in our name, or for any works of our own, but in Chriſt's Name, and with an eye to his Righteouſneſs; to come acknowledging our own unworthineſs; confeſſing our Sins; with full purpoſe to forſake them; and with a ſincere reſpect to his Glory; and that we may improve all our Mercies to his Honour, and not to lay it out on our own luſts; that we may lift up pure Hands, and upright Hearts to him. Hence that caution, Jam. 4.3. *Ye ask, and receive not, becauſe ye ask amiſs, that ye may conſume it upon your luſts.*

4. *IT regulates our Importunity and our Faith in Prayer.* As it tells us of the Neceſſity of Faith in order to acceptance with God; ſo it directs us in the right exerciſe of this Faith: for we are apt to miſtake Preſumption for Faith; as if we believed not, unleſs we firmly believe that every thing we ask ſhall be granted us juſt as we would have it; whereas this directs us how to carry our requeſts to God, and leave them with him, firmly believing that he can do it for us, reſolving to go no whither elſe, waiting on him, and ſubmitting our ſelves to his Infinite Wiſdom and Love: it opens to us the nature of the Promiſe, and how it ſtands in the Covenant, and what are reſerves of his holy Sovereignty. And though importunity in Prayer is a duty, yet it alſo regulates us in this, and teacheth us how to diſtinguiſh of things, and wherein we are to uſe our greateſt earneſtneſs, and what are the things that we are moſt of all to call upon him for. Hence that, Mat. 6.33. *But ſeek ye firſt the kingdom of God, and his righteouſneſs.*

5. *IT tells us after what manner we are to carry our ſelves after we have Prayed.* There is a ſuitable & becoming behaviour required of the People of God, after they have opened their Hearts to him, and ſpread their Caſe before him. For, though we ought in Faith to commend all our matters to God, yet there is ſomething elſe incumbent on us to do, in the exerciſe of our Faith in waiting on him for the anſwers of Peace. There is ſomething more to be done in a right waiting on him for the Bleſſing; and we are to be found in the way of Duty; doing what is required, and avoiding what is forbidden: And for this we have abundant direction given us in the Holy Scriptures; and it is of greateſt importance that we comport with this; nor doth Faith in Prayer diſcharge us from other Duties, but prompts us to a more chearful attendance upon them, in expectation of his Bleſſing; and all the Rules for this are therein clearly ſet before us.

6. *IT ſupplies us with all ſuitable Expreſſions to be uſed in Prayer; and that both in our Words and in our Carriages.* It both tells us how to behave our ſelves before God when we come to open our Condition to him; of which we may hereafter take a more diſtinct account, in the Preface of the *Lord's Prayer.* And it alſo puts words into our Mouths. The Apoſtle tells us, Rom. 8. 26. *Likewiſe the Spirit alſo helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought: but the Spirit it ſelf maketh interceſſion for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.* And the Spirit doth not only do this, by inward ſuggeſtions, but alſo by thoſe directions which he hath preſcribed to us in the Word of God. Thus we have God himſelf telling his People what he would have them to ſay when they put up their Petitions unto him, *Hoſ.* 14. 2, 3. And though we are not bound always to tie our ſelves to the words uſed in Scripture, yet to take our meaſures from them; and order our Matters accordingly.

7. *IT furniſheth us with the Examples of holy Men, ſhewing us for what, and how they Prayed, for our imitation.* It is true, there are ſome inſtances of the unſuitable Carriages of Good Men, in their hours of Temptation, which are for our caution, and avoidance: But there are the various Caſes of God's Children, in which they addreſſed God; and their ſuitable behaviour in them; how humbly, how penitently, how earneſtly they ſought him; and how ſubmiſſively and patiently they waited upon him: And all of theſe are written for our admonition, and we are directed thus to be followers of them, *Heb.* 6. 12.

8. *IT ſhews us the great danger there is in neglects of Prayer; thereby to awaken us to our duty and to conſtancy in it.* We are too apt to with-hold Prayer; and how many are there who call themſelves Chriſtians, that live in a total neglect of it. But the Word of God ſhews us the Peril we expoſe our ſelves to by ſo doing, and how much we expoſe our ſelves to the Divine diſpleaſure by it; which carries ſtrong motive in it to make us afraid of living in the neglect of ſo important a duty. Hence we have ſuch menaces againſt ſuch: It is given as the character of an ungodly Man, Pſal. 10. 4. *He will not ſeek after God.* And hence that Curſe denounced, Jer. 10. 25. *Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy Name.*

9. *IT gives us all Encouragements to Pray.* Tho' neceſſity, if rightly reſented would be enough to ſtimulate us; yet God is pleaſed to ſhew how he is delighted in the Prayers of his People; and hath afforded them great perſwaſives to animate them in it. And this he doth,

(1.) *BY the Promiſes which he ſets before us in it.* There are many peculiar Promiſes with reſpect to this, recorded in the Word of God, wherein

wherein he promiſeth us audience and acceptance; tells us that he will hear when we call, and anſwer us when we cry to him; aſſures us that he never bad us ſeek him in vain, but that if we look to him from the ends of the Earth, we ſhall be ſaved; that he is a God who hears Prayer, and will reject none that come to him aright. And what greater encouragement can there be afforded to us than this is? eſpecially when it is from a God who is Truth it ſelf.

(2.) *By the Inſtances of the good ſucceſs of thoſe who have ſo Prayed to him.* How many Teſtimonies are there given in the Word, of thoſe that have ſought him and found him, who have ſet their Seal to it, that they did find him as good as his Word; that he ſometimes anſwered them before they cried; and that when they ſought him he delivered them, which made them to reſolve to call upon him as long as they live: And they have called on others to improve their Examples, to eſtabliſh their Faith in calling upon God; as, *Pſal.* 34. 6, 8. And thus uſeful is the whole Word of God for our help in this neceſſary duty, which tells us how profitable it is for us to meditate much on it, for our better attending on the duty of Prayer.

II. *THAT the ſpecial Rule of Direction, is that Form of Prayer, which Chriſt taught his Diſciples, which is commonly called,* the Lord's Prayer. Chriſt's Diſciples, being deeply ſenſible of their own Ignorance in this great Duty, earneſtly beſought him to inſtruct them in this matter, whereupon he directed this Prayer to them for their help in this; on which account it hath this Title put upon it; and though there is nothing in it, but what is agreable to the Word of God in general, yet it contains in it a ſummary or compleaſent Rule for our guidance in this affair; and whatſoever belongs to a right Prayer is to be gathered from it: for that there is ſpecial uſe to be made of this by us if we would know how to Pray Methodically, and after what manner to repreſent our deſires to God. But there is not a little diſpute in the World about this Form of Prayer which Chriſt hath left us for our Direction, *viz.* Whether Chriſt hath left it on record as a preſcribed Form to be uſed in our Praying in the very Words of it; or only as a Pattern from which we are to regulate ourſelves in the manner of our Praying to God: nor are all Proteſtants agreed in their Judgments on this account. I ſhall not here, long inſiſt, but only offer a few Conſiderations to be weighed in this regard.

Here then obſerve;

1. *THAT it is beyond juſt doubt, that it is lawful to Pray to God in the Words of the Lord's Prayer.* There is the moſt exact and comprehenſive Form of a Prayer in it; as will be evident when we come to conſider it in all its parts: if it contains in it the ſubſtance of all Prayers, and there can be nothing uſed aright in it, but may be reduced to one head or other in it; and that according to the Preſcription of Chriſt himſelf, who is the Lawgiver in his Church, it may ſurely then be uſed in the expreſs Words of it; always provided, that it be without Superſtition, and vain Repetition, or making of it a Charm, or as if there were more Vertue in theſe Words than in others of a like import.

2. *THAT it is a Pattern of Prayer given by Chriſt to all Chriſtians to regulate their Prayers by, is alſo not to be doubted*: For he gave it to his Diſciples to teach them to Pray, *Luk.* 11. *begin.* And it muſt therefore needs be a perfect Rule by which all our Prayers are to be meaſured: There is nothing we are to Pray for, but is comprized in it; it therefore ſets the bounds to our Deſires and Petitions, if we would have them agreable to God's Will. It points us to the Object of Prayer; to the Manner of our attending on it that we may have Communion with this Object; and to the Circumſtances which are to be attended in it, and to the Kinds of Prayer and Graces to be exerciſed in it: all of which come will into conſideration in their place.

3. *THAT we are not bound preciſely to keep ourſelves to theſe Words, and not to uſe others in our Prayers.* Some there are who Preface their Prayer with ſuch a formality, Let us Pray for the Pardon of our ſins; for the Converſion of Sinners; for the Peace of the Church; for the Succeſs of the Goſpel, for the Ruine of its Enemies; and let us do it in the Form preſcribed by Chriſt, and only ſay over the *Lord's Prayer*; but we have no Rule or Precept for this Mode; and Formaliſts themſelves acknowledge that we are not tied up to this in all our Prayers: and we have no inſtance in the Goſpel of Chriſt himſelf, or any of his Apoſtles that ever uſed this Form, though we have many of their Prayers there upon record; though they ever kept themſelves within the limits of this Directory. Nor do the Words of this Prayer work as a ſpell, for we are to Pray with underſtanding, and to know what we go to God for, and to Pray not by Rote, but with our Hearts, ſenſible of our wants. Beſides we are not bound always to inſiſt upon every Article of Prayer, but there are the ſeveral Caſes of the Children of God, which are particularly to be carried to him; as we have ſeveral inſtances for in the Goſpel. And as in Preaching of the Word; though we are to Preach nothing but what is agreable to it, yet we are to open the Word, prove it, and apply it, in other words ſuitable. So in Prayer we are indeed to Pray for nothing but what God hath revealed his Will in; but we are to expatiate both in our Petitions, Confeſſions, and Thankſgivings as the caſe before us calls for. Beſides in the Goſpel this Prayer recorded by the two Evangaliſt, *Matthew* and *Luke*, is laid down in different words, and there is more in *Matthew* than in *Luke*; which makes it at leaſt uncertain whether the whole of Chriſt's Directory is here recited, but only the ſummary heads of it. And we read of Praying all Night,

which ſurely cannot be thought to be nothing elſe but a meer Repetition of the *Lord's Prayer*; but a purſuing of the matter, with words and arguments ſuitable.

4. *THAT there is no Rule in the Goſpel, binding us to uſe the Lord's Prayer in the cloſe of our other conceived Prayers, to put any more perfection to them.* Some there be who think, that though we are not tied up to this Form, yet that it is proper for us, when we have preſented our Deſires to God in ſuch expreſſions, as our reſentments either of Wants or Mercies have put us upon offering up to God, we ought in ſenſe of our imperfection and ſhort coming, to rehearſe the Lord's Prayer, to fill up thoſe defects, and this is practiſed by many, who would not allow themſelves willingly in any Superſtition: But theſe ſeem to labour of a groundleſs miſtake, and build upon a wrong Principle, without Scripture warrant. To plead that this is the Word of God, whereas our other expreſſions are the words of Men, ſeems inſufficient; for doubtleſs as whatſoever is agreable to God's Word, may truly be ſaid to be his; ſo we may make the expreſs Words of Scripture to be our own words, and ought to be ſo when we put them into our Petitions, though directed to by God; and though we plead this is the unerring Rule, & therefore to be adhered to, yet if we know nothing of the mind and meaning of it, it is no Rule at all to us, but expoſeth us to a deluſion; and to pretend it to be to ſupply the defectiveneſs or forgetfulneſs of any thing in our Petitions, is, I think, a miſtake, or a weak argument. For as we are not obliged to offer up every thing in every Prayer; ſo if we do not underſtand what is therein contained, we cannot expreſs our particular enlarged deſires in it. Not that we are to condemn thoſe who make uſe of it; but to caution againſt making it a neceſſary Duty, which cannot be proved by any Precept given for it, nor Example of it in the whole Scripture: and for Chriſtians to condemn thoſe who do not uſe this Mode as guilty of the neglect of a moral Duty, is ungrounded uncharitableneſs. And for any to think that they have attained hereby to more perfection in the practice of Religion, is to deceive themſelves. And tho' we muſt not deny the lawfulneſs and uſefulneſs of Perſons uſing a Form of Prayer, eſpecially ſuch as labour of much ignorance about the concerns of Religion; yet let it be conſidered, that every Chriſtian that would Pray acceptably to God, and obtaining gracious returns from him, ought to be very careful of Formality in it, as knowing that although this may be an help to them who want the Gift; yet if they do not labour to get theſe things imprinted on their Hearts, ſo as in them to preſent their true & ſincere deſires unto God, their Praying will certainly prove to be nothing better than vain babling; and will be an abomination to God, who looks at the Heart, which if abſent, he and his Prayer will be rejected.

BY what hath been thus offered, of the ſpecial uſefulneſs of the *Lord's Prayer* for our direction and help in Praying to God, we are given to underſtand the neceſſary Duty incumbent on us, to labour to get a diſtinct acquaintance with it, and the particular Rules contained in it, in order to our being the better able to make the right improvement of it in our attendance upon it. And for this end we have a particular account given of the mind or meaning of every Article contained in it, in the remainder of the Catechiſm; which we may take into diſtinct Conſideration: And to make way for this, we may obſerve the diſtribution of it in its parts; and the uſual diſtribution given, and which our Divines do follow; *viz.* the *Preface*, or Introduction; the *Body of the Prayer*, including in it the ſeveral Petitions, which ſtand as ſo many Heads of Matter, or the ſeveral things about which our Requeſts are to be made, and preſented to God: And theſe do contain in them comprehenſively all the Concerns about which we are to offer our Supplications to God: And *the Concluſion*; containing in it a Doxology. Every of which will ſtand in need of being enquired into by the People of God. And touching theſe Petitions, there are divers thoughts about the dividing of them; which I ſhall not labour in, it being moſt neceſſary that we know what is contained in them. Some there be who make Seven of them; but our Divines, with many others, reduce them to Six, whom we may ſafely follow in it; as will appear in the Explication of them. And this Method of Prayer is moſt agreable to the nature of it; and moſt proper to the Subjects who draw near to God in it. It is meet that we ſhould come into the Preſence of God duly prepared, eſpecially in our more ſet and ſolemn Addreſſes, and not to ruſh into his Preſence indeliberately. It is alſo neceſſary that we know what we have to ſay when we put up our Petitions to him; for we do not Pray to inform him, but duly to affect our own Hearts with our wants, and for that reaſon to conſider what we have to requeſt when we come before him: It is meet alſo that we both uſe argument to fortify our Faith in our Praying to him, and to give him the due acknowledgment of his Glorious Perfections, which are both the encouragements of our coming to him, and by which we are to reach after the laſt end of all our ſerving and worſhipping of him, *viz.* that he may have the Glory of all aſcribed to him: For if we do not thus, we do not Pray aright, and do but beſpeak a rejection from him. Let us then ſet our Hearts upon theſe things; which may, God willing, be hereafter offered to us.

SERMON

SERMON *CCXLVI.*

QUESTION C.

WHAT doth the Preface of the Lord's Prayer teach us?

ANSWER.

THE Preface of the Lord's Prayer, which is, [*Our Father which art in Heaven,*] teacheth us to draw near to GOD, with all holy Reverence, and Confidence, as Children to a Father, able and ready to help us, and that we ſhould Pray with, and for others.

WE obſerved that the Lord's Prayer is diſtributed into Three parts, *viz.* The *Preface*, the *Petitions*, and the *Concluſion*; and each of theſe carries matter of Inſtruction and Direction to Chriſtians in their Addreſſing of God in this great Duty, and may therefore come under a diſtinct Conſideration. The former of theſe lies now before our Contemplation; and tho' the Inquiry is Anſwered in few words, yet hath plenty of Matter in it. The thing which we are in queſt of, is what Leſſons we are taught by it; and the principal are ſuch as theſe,

I. *THAT we ought not to run precipitantly into this Duty, but with ſerious Deliberation.* This is inferred from the general Conſideration that Chriſt preſcribes a *Preface* introductory to the *Petitions*; to let us underſtand that we are to endeavour to get our ſelves into a right Poſture when we would offer our Requeſts before the Great GOD. We ſhould get our Hearts and Thoughts into a right order, and well ponder what we have to preſent to him; that we may do nothing raſhly, nothing ſcurrily, or unbecomingly; we ſhould ſee both to our Words and Demeanours, that all our management may be ſuch as befits ſuch as we are, in our drawing nigh to him who is a great King, and Lord of Heaven and Earth. And this tells us that we ought to uſe Meditation in order to right Praying. And altho' Ejaculations be ſudden dartings up of our Souls to God, yet it ſaith that we ſhould maintain right Frames in us, that we may be always in a readineſs for this.

II. *THE more particular Leſſons that are to be learnt from the Words themſelves are ſuch as theſe,*

I. *THAT all our Prayers ought to be directed to God, and to no other.* This is intimated in the word, *Father in Heaven.* We have had our Earthly Fathers, but they are not the Objects of our Religious Prayers, but God only: Hence that, Iſa. 63. 16. *O Lord, thou art our Father, our Redeemer, thy Name is from everlaſting.* The word, *Father*, when attributed to God, is uſed ſometimes Perſonally, and ſometimes Eſſentially; and it ſeems to comprehend both in this place: it both limits to the Divinity, and directs to the Firſt Perſon in the adorable Trinity. It ſuppoſeth one God in three Perſons to be our Object, and we ought always to look upon him as ſuch in our acceſs to him; for in no other way hath fallen Man any grounded hope of obtaining his Audience and Acceptance. It points us alſo to the order of the Perſons in their Subſiſtence, and manner of working; and tells us that we ought ordinarily to direct our Prayers to God the Father in and thro' Chriſt, by the help of the holy Spirit. And the reaſon of this is becauſe as all our Good is fountained in God, ſo we cannot come at him but in and thro' a Mediator; nor can we Pray as we ought but by the Spirit: Hence that, *Rom.* 8. 26. Hence we ſhall find the Apoſtle to Addreſs his Prayers to the Father nextly, tho' it was thro' Chriſt, who ſtands between an angry God, and ſinful Worms, *Eph.* 3. 14. *Col.* 1. 12. Yea Chriſt himſelf thus addreſſeth him, Matth. 11. 25. *O Father, Lord of heaven and earth.* If it be enquired, *But may we not immediately Addreſs our ſelves to any other of the Divine Perſons?* I Anſwer, Doubtleſs we may; and we have Inſtances of it, ſo *Stephen*, Acts 7. 59. and *Paul*, 2 Cor. 13. 14. But then it muſt be with this Caution, that we do not Superſtitiouſly look upon our ſelves more likely to ſpeed by ſuch an application; as if Chriſt or the Spirit were more propitious to us than the Father: Chriſt therefore hath ſuch an Expreſſion, Joh. 16. 27. *For the Father himſelf loveth you, becauſe ye have loved me.* Only we muſt remember, that this Love derives to us thro' Chriſt, who hath purchaſed all the forfeited Benefits of it for us, and ſo we muſt go in his Name: We ought therefore to have a regard to all, who do Co-operate in the Works of Efficiency. But tho' we are to go to God thro' a Mediator, yet we are to have no other Mediator but him who is God.

II. *THAT if we would Pray and ſpeed, we muſt be able to apply our ſelves to God, as to our Father*: And for that reaſon we ought to make ſure of an Intereſt in him as ſuch. There is Emphaſis in his directing us to uſe the word *Father*, in our applying our ſelves to him. Sin hath ſeparated Man from God, and he muſt look on him as a conſuming Fire; How then ſhall he dare to come near theſe everlaſting Burnings? But God hath in Chriſt opened a way to Reconciliation; and through Faith in him we come not only to be his Friends, but his Children. There are two reſpects in which God is ſaid to be a Father, *viz.* By *eternal Generation*, and ſo he hath but one only begotten Son who is our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and by a *gracious Adoption*, and ſo he hath many Sons and Daughters, who are made ſo upon their Believing, *Joh.* 1. 12. Now

the way in which we come thus to be his Children, is through the Relation which on Believing is plighted between Chriſt and us: It is therefore by our being United to him in the New Covenant, that we are Adopted to be joynt Heirs with him: And becauſe he and we are one, God hath a Father's Love for us, as we are in him, in whom we are accepted: And no other but ſuch as are ſo, can call God Father, or make any Claim to the Bleſſings of the New-Covenant. But it may then be enquired, *Are none then to Pray but ſuch as are aſſured of their Sonſhip, and can in Faith call God Father; or will the want of it diſcharge them from this Obligation? Or ſhould this diſcourage them from this Duty?* We had need to be Cautious here: Let us then obſerve, That Prayer is a part of Natural Worſhip, and owing to God as we are Creatures depending on him for all, and are to Confeſs him in all: Nor can our want of Ability to Pray acceptably, diſcharge us from the Duty; but ought to convince us of our miſerable Condition, and drive us to enquire how we may be delivered from it. And doubtleſs, when God intends us ſaving Good he makes us to Pray: But ſtill it ſaith that we ought not to reſt our ſelves ſatisfied in a formality of words, as if that were ſufficient; but it is of greateſt Importance that we Pray in Faith, and be able to Commend our ſelves to God in our Supplications, to know that he is our Father; and for that reaſon, as we ſhould ſeek after it in the way diſcovered to us, ſo to endeavour to clear it up according to the Rules given us in the Word of God. All our Arguments by which we can plead with any force are to be fetch'd from this Topick; for all muſt come through Chriſt to us, and that can be in no other way but that of our Sonſhip: And this further tells us that we muſt come through the Mediation of Chriſt; for as he is our Father, becauſe he is Chriſt's Father; ſo all our Claim is made over to us on this ground, becauſe he hath bought and paid for it on account of his Children.

III. *THAT we ought in Praying to get our Hearts ſuitably diſpoſed to come to him as to ſuch an one.* And in this regard alſo the Title of a Father carries great Emphaſis in it, and is very directive to us after what manner to manage our ſelves, in the performance of this part of Worſhip. It therefore tells us,

1. *IN general; That we ought to Pray to him, in ſuch manner as Children ought to do to a Father, in their asking any thing of him.* God aſſumes Relative Titles to himſelf for our Inſtruction, to inform us familiarly in our Duty, and acquaint us how to behave our ſelves in it becomingly; not as all Children do to their Parents, for it is too lamentably obſervable, that many Children carry themſelves to their Parents vilely and unbecomingly; but that there is a Rule of the Behaviour of Children to their Fathers, which hath ſome Analogy to the Obligation lying upon the Children of God, in their Behaviour towards him: And it is here particularly accommodated to their Duty and Carriage in their asking of Good things of them, in which they are to pay to them all the deference of a Father: And unleſs we Pray to him after that manner, we forget our ſelves, and offer Him matter of Provocation.

2. *IN particular*; There are two things more eſpecially to be conſidered in this matter, in which this is to be expreſſed;

1. *IT is to be with holy Reverence.* This Reverence is to be rooted in the Heart, and to be expreſt in all our Behaviour: There is an Awe which becomes Children to maintain in them, of the Authority and Power of their Parents: Hence we have God himſelf ſo arguing, Mal. 1. 6. *A ſon honoureth his father, and a ſervant his maſter: if then I be a father, where is my honour?* And one part of this Honour conſiſts in an high eſteem entertained of our Parents, a deſire to pleaſe them, and a fear to offend them; and this ought to influence our whole Carriage towards them; and becauſe God is our Father, this is due to him; & becauſe he is our heavenly Father, it carries with it the greater force; Hence, Heb. 12.9. *We have had fathers of our fleſh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: ſhall we not much rather be in ſubjection unto the Father of ſpirits, and live?* For this Duty is enforced both from the Relation of a Father, and from the conſideration that he is in Heaven, and is infinitely above us in Glory and Majeſty; *Eccl.* 5. 2. And in this Reverence there is more eſpecially conſiderable;

(1.) AN acknowledgment of his Sovereignty in diſpoſing all our Concerns. He hath an incontrolable Liberty to do his Pleaſure in granting our Requeſts: Nor can we oblige him by any thing of ours that we can offer to him; as ſuch therefore we are to Addreſs him; not with Demands, but humble Supplications, acknowledging that if he grant our Requeſts, it is his Kindneſs; and if he denies them, he doth us no Injury: We are therefore to ly proſtrate at his foot-ſtool, and come to him as Beggars, relying alone on his Benignity, hoping on his Mercy; and ſo have all his Children been wont to do when in a right Frame.

(2.) THAT we ſubmit our ſelves cordially to his diſpoſe, in his Returns to our Prayers. Not but that it is Lawful, nay a Duty, for us to uſe Importunity and Aſſiduity in our Prayers, which God is not angry at, but is pleaſed withal: Hence that, Iſa. 62.6,7. *Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not ſilence: And give him no reſt, till he eſtabliſh, and till he make Jeruſalem a praiſe in the earth.* Yet our Importunity muſt ever be under this regulation, that when we have uſed our utmoſt, we do quietly leave it with him; and that under the conſideration that he is our Father, conſidering that we are Children; and becauſe he is our Father, to acquieſce in this, that he Loves us, and will do what is beſt for us; and that he underſtands what that is, better than we do; reſolving that if he gives us our Requeſts, it is becauſe it is for our Good; and if he with-holds

with-holds from us the things asked, it is becauſe he knows that it is moſt for our Benefit, and we, being Childiſh would hurt our ſelves by it; and ſo not to fret and mourn, but be quiet: And this belongs to us as Children, and is no ſmall part of the Reverence we owe to him: Such a frame we find to have been in *David*, 2 *Sam.* 15. 25, 26

2. *THAT it muſt be with holy Confidence.* This alſo flows from the conſideration of our Propriety in him, as he is our Father in Heaven. Nor is there any Contradiction between the former *Reverence*, and this *Confidence*; but they do perfectly Harmonize in this Duty: For tho' a Father will maintain his Prerogative, yet he cannot forego his bowels of Pity towards his Children, *Pſal.* 102. 13. Now we may conſider here, what is implied in this Confidence, and what Grounds there are of it.

1. *IN this Confidence we are told that two things are mainly intended*, viz. That he is both *Able* and *Ready* to help us. The thing we Addreſs him for is, That he would help us in all our needs: For if we are not ſenſible of our wants, we cannot Pray to him as we ought. Now as we ought to Pray in Faith; ſo theſe two things are the main ſupports of our Faith in Prayer.

(1.) *THAT He is Able.* And without this Faith we cannot offer one acceptable Petition to him. This therefore was the firſt demand that Chriſt made of the blind Man, Matth. 9. 28. *Believe ye that I am able to do this?* It is the infelicity of earthly Parents, that they cannot do all that for their Children which they know they want; and therefore muſt fail ſometimes, not thro' defect of good Will, but thro' Inability: But it is not ſo with our heavenly Father; for he is able to out-do all our wants and cravings, let them be never ſo large and extended, *Eph.* 3 20. His help is not limited; nothing is too big for him to do; no Power in the whole Creation can hinder him; nor needs he to ask any or all Creatures to give him leave to do it: And this is the Privilege of his Children, that they have ſuch a God to be their Father: Hence he often in his Word directs us to the Contemplation of his Infinite Power; and this is intimated in his being in Heaven, in that he is above all ſecond Beings, and Rules over all; and all Creatures are diſpoſed by his irreſiſtible Will: He is therefore called, *The Lord of Heaven and Earth*: Hence that, Iſa. 59. 1. *Behold the Lord's hand is not ſhortned that it cannot ſave; nor his ear heavy, that it cannot hear.* So that his Children never have any need to go for help to any other, and he muſt needs be Angry if they do.

(2.) *THAT He is Ready to help them.* And this is a genuine reſultancy from his Relation to them as a Father. Earthly Parents that have not loſt their natural Affection, are ever ready to their ability, to relieve the real wants of their Children: and will never do any thing to them that ſhall be for their hurt, but evermore for their good; how much more our Heavenly Father. So Chriſt argues, *Matth.* 7. 9, 10, 11. Thoſe therefore that are his Children may from thence ſafely confide in him, and reſolve that he is very ready to do for them. Now,

2. *THE Grounds of this Confidence are ſpecially two*,

(1.) *BECAUSE he Loves them*: So Chriſt argues in the forecited, *Joh.* 16. 22. Now it is the nature of Love to be concerned for the Beloved, to lay it ſelf out for their good; to be tenderly affected with their troubles and indigencies; and when it ſees them in want, it cannot lie ſtill. Hence that wonderful ſaying, Iſai. 63. 9. *In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his preſence ſaved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.* Yea tho' they have given him provocation, Judg. 10 16. *And his ſoul was grieved for the miſery of Iſrael.* And in none more doth this appear than in tender Parents, who have a natural Storge in them to prompt them to this: Needs muſt it then tranſcend in our Heavenly Father, whoſe Love infinitely outbids all the Love that is to be found in the beſt Parents on Earth, and therefore well may they acquieſce in it.

(2.) *BECAUSE all the good they need is ſecured to them in the Covenant*: Which hath Chriſt for its undertaker. They are his Children thro' Faith in Chriſt, *Gal.* 3. 26. Now Chriſt hath purchaſed all for them, and it is ſecured for them by Promiſe to him, *Tit.* 1. 2. 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. And they are alſo made over to them in the Covenant of Grace, *Pſal.* 84. 11. And they cannot fail of performance. And on this ſcore we may always come with holy Boldneſs to the Throne of Grace, believing that not one good Promiſe thus made to us ſhall fail: Becauſe as he loves us, ſo he is faithful. As to that Enquiry, *How far our Faith is to act in Prayer, as to a Confidence of having the thing Pray'd for?* I anſwer, Whatſoever ſome plead, I am ſure, that without ſpecial Revelation, we have no further ground of Confidence in regard of any thing individually, further than as it is needful and proper for the furtherance of God's Glory, and our beſt good; which, after all our reſolves about it, we are to leave to his allwiſe determination. And this is the moſt noble exerciſe of Faith in Prayer; and this Confidence every Child of God hath ground ſufficient to act his Faith upon.

IV. *THIS recommends to us the Duty of Social Prayer*: That Chriſtians ſhould join together in putting up of their Requeſts to God. He therefore doth not direct it in the ſingular, *My Father*, but in the plural, *Our Father*; not as if this excluded Secret Prayer, in which we preſent our perſonal Petitions to God, or as if we were obliged, *pro forma*, to uſe this plural word in our Solatary Prayers. And certainly it is the duty of every one, to ſeek after the Grace whereby he may in Faith ſay to God, *My Father*: And ſo have holy Men

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upon Scripture-record practiſed, and therein left us an example for imitation. Touching the Duty of Social Prayer, both as to the reaſon for it, and the manner of attending it, it hath already been diſtinctly handled. And the uſing this word *Our* in it, tells us that all preſent ſhould have their Hearts going up to Heaven joyntly in it. But here a Queſtion ariſeth, viz. *Who they are that we are to Pray withal, that we may rightly uſe the word* Our, *in our requeſt to God?* And the reaſon is, becauſe there have been ſome who out of ſcrupulosity, will allow none to be with them in this Duty, but ſuch of whom they are perſwaded that they are Converted; becauſe they think that no other can joyn with them in Faith. But this is a needleſs Superſtition; for, as Prayer is a Duty of Natural Worſhip, ſo Social Prayer follows from the conſideration of Man's being a ſociable Creature, and ought therefore to Worſhip God in Societies; and Prayer is none of the leaſt parts of this Worſhip: And Prayer is one of the Media by which God is pleaſed to Communicate his ſaving Bleſſings to Men; and to Pray with them may be helpful to perſwade them of their own need, and affect them to an earneſt ſeeking of God's Bleſſing for themſelves. Nor can we infallibly judge who are true Converts; we may ſuſpect ſuch as are ſincere, and think Charitably of ſuch as are hypocrites. Beſides, if it be the Duty both of Families and of Congregations to maintain the Worſhip of God among them, by calling on his Name, and thoſe that neglect it, may expect that God will pour out his fury upon them; ſurely then the Duty is to be attended, and every one that is preſent at it muſt be left with God. If we ſhut them out it is our fault; but if they do not joyn heartily in it, the blame will fall upon them. And indeed all Congregational Prayers muſt be ſhut out by this Rule; for we are aſſured that the Tares will be mixt with the Wheat, till the time of Separation comes, which will not be till the end of the World. And thus would the very Profeſſion of the true Religion ceaſe among Chriſtians, to the great reproach of the Goſpel.

V. *THIS alſo teacheth us, that we ſhould Pray one for another.* And this extends to all ſorts of Prayer, Secret, Private and Publick: And the reaſon of this ariſeth from that Love to Mankind which we owe one to another: And this alſo is included in the word *Our*; there is a Love which belongs to every Relation we ſtand in one to another, and is required of us in the ſecond Table of the Moral Law. And it is the nature of Love to ſeek the Good of the Beloved, and accordingly to uſe the proper Endeavours for the promoving of it. And tho' there are other Duties incumbent on us in this regard, yet becauſe God is the fountain of all Bleſſings to his Creatures, we ought to go to him for them, and ask them of him; and becauſe this Love will naturally prompt us, to deſire this Good, and it is agreable to the Will of God that we ſhould ſo do, it affords proper Matter for our Prayers: And this we are to do in every ſort of Prayer, in our moſt ſecret Applications to God, and in Praying together; and that not only for ſuch as are preſent, but alſo thoſe that are abſent; for all ſorts of Men, not only the Godly but Ungodly too; not for our Friends only, but our Enemies alſo; for ſuch as do us all Ill turns, as ſuch as ſhew us the greateſt Kindneſs: Not for Chriſtians only, but for Pagans too, that they alſo may be brought over to Chriſt, and made partakers in all the Benefits which he hath purchaſed for ſinful Men: And for all this we have abundant Direction in the Word of God; and no perſonal Prejudices ought to make us neglect this Duty. But it may here be Objected, That the Word of God approves of & directs to Imprecations againſt Sinners; and tells us that there are ſome whom we are not to Pray for; how then ſhall we know how to direct our ſelves in this Duty? And here let me briefly Reply,

1. *THAT Scripture Imprecations are for the moſt part Prophetical; and rather a Declaration of God's Counſel againſt ſuch, than a cordial Deſire of them that uſe them, that it may be ſo.* And theſe are no further to be Imitated by us, than to imprecate a blaſt on the Deſigns of the Ungodly, and that they may be diſappointed in all their wicked Devices againſt the People of God; and this is extenſive as well to our ſelves Perſonally, as the Church of Chriſt in general: Hence that, 2 Sam. 15. 31. *And David ſaid, O Lord, I pray thee, turn the counſel of Ahithophel into foolishneſs.* And we ought not to imprecate Ruin to their Perſons, but *Hypothetically*; i. e. That God would either Deſtroy them, or Change them; deſiring this latter if it may be. And there is no Child of God, when himſelf, but would heartily rejoice in the Converſion of the vileſt Perſecutors in the World, and give Thanks to God for it; ſo, Gal. 1. 23, 24. *But they had heard only, That he which perſecuted us in times paſt now preacheth the faith which once he deſtroyed. And they glorified God in me.* So we ſhould Imprecate, ſo as to Pray that if poſſible they may be brought home to God, and made ſerviceable to his Kingdom.

2. *THERE are none whom the Goſpel forbids us to Pray for, but only ſuch as are put beyond all hope of ever being ſaved.* And we are here to obſerve, that it is not their being ſo really, but our knowing them to be ſuch, that doth prohibit our asking Mercy and Bleſſing for them, 1 Joh. 5. 16. *There is a ſin unto death: I do not ſay that he pray for it.* And the reaſon of this is, becauſe not the ſecret, but the revealed Will of God is the Rule of our Duty, *Deut.* 29. 29. We are to deſire the Salvation of all Men, and accordingly to Pray for this and that Perſon and People, becauſe we are ſo enjoyned by the Precept; though we know not whether this or that Perſon individual, belongeth to the Election of Grace or no: But we owe them this Love

to

to deſire their Salvation, and ſo to ask it of God for them. And theſe Prayers ſhall not be loſt, whether they partake in the benefit of them or no. But there is a particular exception of one ſort of Men whom God hath excepted from our Prayers, viz. ſuch as have committed the *Unpardonable Sin*: But this can be no further practicable, than ſo far as we know them to be ſuch. We muſt know the thing: And this muſt not go upon bare Conjectures, but upon grounded Demonſtrations. And we may miſtake our ſelves in our prejudicate Conjectures, if we be not careful to withſtand the Temptation on this account. It is not every grievous Sin that amounts to this, nor is it the moſt virulent Perſecution of the Church of God: Who worſe than *Paul* in this regard, *Act.* 26.39,*&c.* Nor is it every fearful Apoſtacy that we make from a Profeſſion. How fearfully did *Peter* abjure his Maſter? and yet Chriſt Prayed for him, and he was forgiven. And whilſt there is any hope of that, there is room for Prayer. And yet on the other hand, there may a judgment be made of ſome; who after great Light received, great Affections raiſed, and a very zealous ſtanding up for the Profeſſion of the Goſpel, do not on a ſurprize of a Temptation, but deliberately caſt off all, and with all virulence & malice, blaſpheme the Truth they once profeſſed, and openly renounce the whole Goſpel, and vend all the reproach & calumny againſt it, which an unrenewed heart can utter; and ſet themſelves to undermine it. And it is to be feared that our Age hath produced not a few of ſuch who come under that deſcription, *Heb.* 6. 4,*&c.* But our duty is to hope well as far as there is room; and the worſe Men are, if within this hope, to be the more earneſt and importunate with God for them; and thus to ſave them with fear. And let us be excited thus to do, becauſe who knows but that our Prayers may ſpeed in Heaven, and obtain gracious Anſwers of Peace, which will afford matter of everlaſting Joy. In a word, let us endeavour to ſecure an Intereſt in God as our Father in Heaven, and let that animate us to bring all our requeſts to him in all things, as to a God who both can and will hear and help us.

Question CI.

WHAT do we Pray for in the firſt Petition?

Answer.

In the firſt Petition, which is, [*Hallowed be thy Name,*] we pray, that GOD would enable us and others, to glorify Him in all that, whereby he makes himſelf known, and that He would diſpoſe all things to His own Glory.

WE have conſidered the Preface of the *Lord's Prayer* already: The Second part follows; containing Six Petitions; ſome make Seven of them, but it matters not. There are two parts in the Body of that Prayer, each conſiſting of Three Petitions; the former reſpects the Glory of God, the latter our own, and our Neighbour's good. The Three Petitions of the firſt part may alſo be divided into two parts: The firſt Petition hath reſpect to the Glory of God it ſelf; the other two to the Means by which it is to be advanced. The firſt is now to be ſpoken to. In the Petition are two things; 1. The Object of it, *God's Name.* 2. The thing Petitioned, *Hallowed be it.* This Petition is made the firſt, becauſe it is the main and great thing that we have to deſire and pray for. Two things are hence to be conſidered, 1. What is meant by the Name of God? 2. What by Hallowing of it?

Queſt. 1. *WHAT is meant by the Name of God?*

Anſ. OUR Anſwer tells us, it is *all that whereby he maketh himſelf known.* A Name is uſed for a notation of a thing, or an expreſſion by which the knowledge of it is communicated. Name is ſometimes uſed metonymically for renown, or glory. *Gen.* 6. 4. Hence that, Joh. 17. 6. *I have manifeſted thy Name.* So that by God's Name we are to underſtand God himſelf, as far as revealed to us, in all his diſcoveries. God hath an incommunicable Glory,&c. We may underſtand by his Name, 1. Principally the Divine Perfections which ſhine forth in the Creature, *Exod.* 34. 6,7. 2. The ways or means whereby they are declared. 1. His Word and Ordinances, *Pſal.* 29. 9. 2. His Works of Creation and Providence, *Pſal.* 9. 16. 76. 1. In a word, it is his Declarative Glory.

Q. 2. *WHAT is meant by his Hallowing of it?*

Anſ. THE word ſignifies in common uſe, a ſeparation of a thing from common, and dedication to ſpecial and divine uſes. So the Sanctuary, Temple, the Prieſts,&c. In things we put to honourable holy uſes,&c. The language of the Petition expreſſeth two things, both of which are ſignified in the Anſwer.

1. *THAT he would enable us and others to glorify him.* We here confeſs, 1. That we owe him Glory. 2. That we cannot pay it him without his Grace: and therefore ask it. And that not ſo for our ſelves only, but others: for all his Works. And there are here many things Petitioned, 1. That God would make his Name known to us. 2. That we may acknowledge his Glorious Perfections. 3. That we may have Grace to eye & gather them up in his Works. 4. That our Lives may be ordered to his Glory, &c. Hence, he may be our laſt End in all things. 5. That we may be afraid of doing any thing to his diſhonour. 6. That we may grieve when others diſhonour him. 7. That we may ſubmit our ſelves, and all that we have to his Glory.

2. *THAT he would diſpoſe of all things to his own Glory.* And here we confeſs, 1. That God deſerves the Glory of the whole Creation.

2. That

2. That the Sin of Man hath robbed God of a great deal of his Glory, and brought vanity on the Creation. And the things eſpecially requeſted here, are 1. That God would publiſh his Glory to the World, and give ſaving knowledge of himſelf, *Pſal.* 67. 18. 2. That he would diſplay himſelf glorioufly in his Providence. 3. That he would glorify himſelf upon his implacable Enemies, that promote his diſhonour; get himſelf a Name and Renown. Now this is the firſt and chief thing we have to pray for. Hence, 1. With moſt Ardency of Affections. 2. Moſt abſolutely, *Math.* 6. 23. and that, 1. Becauſe God is the beſt Being. 2. His Glory is the beſt thing. 3. Becauſe it will beſt witneſs our Sincerity: God being our laſt End, and reductive to our everlaſting Happineſs.

USE. I. HENCE, how few in the World that Pray rightly to God. There is no right Praying without our Heart follow the Glory of God in the firſt place. And how many Men do ſhew it in their Titles that it is not ſo? Moſt Men ſeek their own glory: Many Men envy God his, and perſecute them that glorify him. Where is that Ardency & Zeal in Men's lives? Where is this readineſs to Veil our own Intereſts for his? Where that Exemplary Living &c?

USE. II. TO Exhort us thus to Pray; in the firſt place, We live in vain if God be not glorifyed by us. God hath a great deal of diſhonour in the World. If we truly ſeek God's Glory, in that way we ſhall have Peace and Glory. And for help, labour to be acquainted with God, and his Perfections. See your own Rebellion, and beg that he conquer it, that you may glorify him: Beg that he would ſhew you his Glory; that he would make you little and vile in your own eyes; that he would make all the Engagement lying upon you potent; that you may rejoyce in his Judgments; and ſo he glorifyed, that you may be ſatisfyed.

QUESTION CII.

WHAT do we pray for in the ſecond Petition?

ANSWER.

IN the ſecond Petition, which is [*Thy Kingdom come*] we pray that Satan's Kingdom may be deſtroyed, and that the Kingdom of Grace may be advanced, our ſelves and others brought into it, and kept in it, and that the Kingdom of Glory may be haſtened.

THE Second and Third Petition reſpect the means of Advancing the Glory of God; theſe are two. 1. The getting of himſelf a Kingdom and Promoters of it. 2. The Adminiſtration of the Affairs of this Kingdom according to his Sovereign Pleaſure. The firſt of theſe, in this Petition; I ſhall open the terms.

KINGDOM] The Word is ſometimes taken properly for a Nation or People that are under the Government of one Supream, Governing by Laws: Diſtinguiſhed from Ariſtocracy, Democracy, Tyranny, Anarchy.

THIS Kingdom] The Scripture ſpeaks of two Kinds, 1. The Kingdom of Satan; called God of this World, and ſaid to Rule, *Eph.* 2. 2. called the Kingdom of Darkneſs, and ſo oppoſed to the Kingdom of Chriſt: *Col.* 1. 13. Satan is ſaid to be the King, becauſe, Unregenerated Men are ordered and ruled by him, though they know it not, it is indeed a Tyranny; yet a Kingdom, becauſe Men are voluntarily Obedient. 2. The Kingdom of God taken in a double ſenſe in Scripture. 1. As Creator and Governour of the World, diſpenſing all by his Sovereign Providence, Angels, Devils, Men, *&c. Pſal.* 29. 10. 97. 1. 2. The Mediatourly Kingdom, he hath made Jeſus Chriſt God-Man, Ruler under him, and given him the Diſpenſation of it for the good of his Church, and this is here to be underſtood. And this Kingdom is taken in a threefold ſenſe in the Goſpel: 1. For the External Kingdom of Chriſt, in the outward vocation of Men to the Profeſſion of the Goſpel, *Mat.* 21. 43. 2. For the inward Converſion of Souls, or Effectual Vocation; *Luk.* 17. 21. 3. For Life Eternal, *Joh.* 3. 3.

COME] i. e. Let it be manifeſted, propagated, perfected, and ſo I come to the Anſwer it ſelf: They that truly deſire that God's Name ſhould be hallowed, will Pray that his Kingdom may come: the things to be Prayed for, as properly relating to the Petition, are expreſſed in the Anſwer, and they are reduced to three Heads.

1. *REFERRING to the Kingdom of Satan; that it may be deſtroyed.* This is properly included, becauſe theſe two Kingdoms are inconſiſtent: the more Subjects Satan hath, the fewer Chriſt will have: And when we Pray for any thing rightly, we Pray for all that is needful in order to it: and here we are particularly to Pray; 1. For the Subverſion of Heatheniſh Superſtition in the World, that all Idolatrous Worſhip may be Deſtroyed, becauſe by it, Satan rules in the World; for God cannot be ſerved by ſuch as Worſhip Idols, 2 *Cor.* 6. 16. 2. That the Devils Inſtruments may be Subverted; thoſe factours of his Kingdom, that uphold Satan's Intereſt among Men. 3. That all Satan's Policies & Crafts may be perverted & overturned; in a word, that Chriſt would bind the ſtrong Man and caſt him out

2. *REFERRING to the Kingdom of Grace:* We Pray for the Advancement of it; that it may be ſet up and exalted, and rightly exerciſed in particular. 1. That Chriſt may be owned King of the World: that Crowns and Scepters may be thrown down at his Feet, and He alone exalted; that this may be verifyed more and more, *Phil.* 2. 9, 10, 11. 2. That Chriſt may have many Subjects: it is the Glory of a Prince, *&c.* We muſt Pray for a large Kingdom for Jeſus Chriſt, and that both

in

in reſpect of his viſible and inviſible Kingdom, 1. His viſible Kingdom: *Pſal.* 81.15. — 72.8. 2. His inviſible: That the Spirit may be poured out plentifully: We are here to Pray for the Work of Converſion: the bringing Men ſavingly home to Chriſt. 3. That Chriſt's Laws and Ordinances may be Obeyed: that there may be a ſubjection of his Profeſſed Subjects to him in all things; that there may be Order in his Churches, and Orderly-Walking; that His Authority may be kept up, his Fear may dwell in the Hearts of his People. 4. That thoſe that are of his Kingdom, may be kept faithful to him. We Pray againſt Apoſtaſy. And here in order to theſe things, there are divers things to be Pray'd for, referring to this Petition, *viz.* 1. That Chriſt would ſend forth Labourers, *Mat.* 9. 38. 2. That he would ſpread his Goſpel abroad. 3. That he would fill his Miniſters with his Spirit, and Miniſterial Gifts & Graces; and Bleſs means for the raiſing more up for that Service. 4. That he would make the great ones of the World, favourers of his ways and people; *Iſa.* 49. 23. — 5. That he would be with his Miniſters, *Mat.* 28.20. — 6. Subdue our Hearts, and root out all carnal oppoſition to him, and reign in them by his Spirit and Law.

III. *RESPECTING the Kingdom of Glory*, That it may be *haſtened*. And this reſpects the ſecond coming of Chriſt, when he ſhall come to judge the World, and compleat the whole Work of his Mediatourly Kingdom; and flame out to the World Illuſtriouſly, and take his People home to himſelf. The People of God are to think of, expect, wait for, and delight in this Day, and hence Pray for it. *Cant.* 8. *ult.* *Rev.* 22. 20. 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. And here we are particularly to Pray that we and all his Elect may be fitted for it; that he would bring in his Choſen, that he would expedite his Work, give being to his Promiſes, and accompliſhment to Scripture-Prophecies, and ſo make way for this Kingdom. Now it is needful that we Pray for the coming of God's Kingdom, becauſe herein his manifeſtative Glory is moſt of all made to appear. None will really actively hallow God's Name, but they that entertain his Kingdom, and are voluntary faithful Subjects of it.

USE. I. HENCE, how few are there, that do indeed deſire the Glory of God! Many are ſo far from really Praying, *thy Kingdom come*, that they do all they can to hinder it, *viz.* 1. All Perſecutors of true Religion. 2. All Scoffers at the power of Godlineſs, and ſuch as reſt in a form of Godlineſs, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. 3. All Tempters of others to Sin. 4. All Impenitent Sinners under the Means of Grace.

USE. II. Exhortation, Let us herein Sanctify God's Name by Praying for the promoting Chriſt's Mediatourly Kingdom. Hence, 1. Have a care of hindring this Kingdom. Prayer that is right, will not be contradicted by Practice. 2. Do all you can to forward it. And for Motive conſider, 1. As God's Glory, ſo your Felicity is herein concerned. 2. Conſider, that Chriſt deſerves the Kingdom. He has earnt it, and it is fit he ſhould have it. 3. Conſider the Miſery of all that are out of this Kingdom. 4. The happineſs of thoſe that ſhall be found truly in the Kingdom of Grace, when the Kingdom of Glory comes: Then Chriſt will appear in full Glory; then all oppoſite dominion ſhall be put down; then ſhall you reign with him for ever.

QUESTION CIII.

WHAT do we pray for in the third Petition?

ANSWER.

IN the third Petition, which is [*Thy Will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven*] we pray that God by his Grace would make us able and willing to know, obey, and ſubmit to his Will in all things, as the Angels do in Heaven.

THIS third Petition reſpects the Adminiſtration of his Kingdom, according to his Sovereign Pleaſure, for his getting and promoting of which, we prayed in the former, and all means of advancing his Glory or Hallowing his Name. In the Petition are three things, 1. The poſitive thing Petitioned, *thy Will be done*. 2. The Latitude of the Petition, *on Earth*. 3. A comparative Degree, *as it is in Heaven*. The opening theſe three will ſhew us what we ought to Pray for, by this Petition.

1. THE thing Petitioned, *thy Will be done*. 1. By the Will of God underſtand two things, 1. The Eſſential Will, or the Divine Eſſence it ſelf; to which, according to Man, we aſcribe a Will, becauſe he is a Cauſe by Counſel; and that Will in us, is a Faculty, chuſing, approving, determining. 2. The Effects of this Will, which are of two ſorts, *viz.* 1. His Decreeing Will, or Counſels, that are in his breaſt from Eternity, called the good pleaſure of his Will, *Eph.* 1. 5. according to which, he manageth all his Works of Creation, and Providence. 2. His Declared Will, in which he manifeſts ſo much of his Pleaſure, as he ſees meet: And that, 1. In his Word called his preceptive Will; becauſe therein, he lets us know what is our duty. 2. In his Works, which is his Providential Will; by the things wrought in the World, we diſcover what was decreed from Eternity. Theſe two laſt are properly intended in the Petition. Hence the things pray'd for, are, 1. In reſpect to his Decreeing Will, we pray, 1. That God would fulfil his own purpoſes, and give us Hearts to let his Infinite Wiſdom, and holy Will do its pleaſure, *Mat.* 26. 29. *Act.* 21. 14.

Qu. *BUT is it not lawful to Pray againſt God's decreeing will?*

Anſ. 1. ALL true Chriſtians know & believe that God hath in infinite Wiſdom unalterably

decreed what comes to paſs; therefore to Pray againſt the Decree directly, or that God would alter his purpoſes, is ſinful, *Numb.* 23. 19. 1 *Sam.* 15. 29. 2. Yet the Decree is not the Rule of our Petition, but the Command, *Deut.* 29.29. Hence, if in Obedience to a Command, &c. So *Abraham* prays for *Sodom*. 3. But if God reveal his Decree poſitive, &c. *Jer.*7.16. Only obſerve, God ſometimes threatens, but it is with a reſerved condition, then we Pray, as *Jer.* 18. 7. 2. In reſpect of his Commanding Will we muſt Pray, that we may *know* it, and *obey* it. Hence, 1. That he would inform us of it, *Pſal.* 119. 33. 2. That he would ſubdue the oppoſition of our Hearts againſt it, *Hoſ.*14.3. 3. That he would make us to be in love with his Law, *Pſal.* 86. 11. 3. In reſpect of his Providential Will, we are to Pray for a Submiſſion to it, and that *in all things*. And here we Pray, 1. For an Heart to approve what God doth, 2 *Kin.* 28. 19. 2. That we may not think or ſpeak hardly of any thing that befalls us, *Job* 1. 22. 3. That we may have patience and joy to honour God under all his Providences, *Col.* 1. 11.

Q. *BUT is it not lawful to deprecate all ſuch Providences?*

Anſ. Yes, and mourn under them too. But, 1. We muſt mourn more at the Cauſe then at the Effect. 2. Our Deprecations muſt be with ſubmiſſion. *Mat.* 26. 39.

2. THE Latitude of the Petition: *On Earth.* Which phraſe implies both the Excluſiveneſs and Incluſiveneſs of the Duty. 1. Excluſively; it is limitted to Earth; Angels and Glorified ones need not our Prayers; Prayer is an Ordinance, an help, a part of the glaſs; and therefore they that are above Ordinances are not in want of it. 2. Incluſively; We muſt Pray that the Will of God may be actually here done by all Men; and ſubmitted to by our ſelves, and by others; *Pſal.* 67. 2. It relates properly to Mankind; for Devils are not to be Prayed for. Inferiour Creatures do in their kind the Will of God, but Earthly Men are Rebellious. We are to Pray for the Wicked and for the Godly.

3. THE Comparative Degree of this Duty; *as it is in Heaven*: Heaven is a place of Conformity: by Heaven (by a Metonymie) underſtand the Angels eſpecially: by that note of compariſon, *as*, underſtand not ſo much Parity as Similitude: we cannot expect ſuch degrees of Obediential Subjection, but we muſt Imitate them: and yet we ought not to reſt at any degree ſhort of theirs. Angels are very Obedient; *Pſal.* 103. 20. we muſt Pray that we may Live like them. Now their Imitable Obedience appears in ſeveral things, 1. They do God's Will with great Freedom and Willingneſs, no reluctancy: be the Service what it will, they are ready. 2. Angels do God's Will with ſpeed: as ſoon as the Word is given, they fly to the Work, *Dan.* 9. 2. 3. They do it Indefatigably. 4. Conſtantly. 5. Faithfully. 6. With all their might.

USE. I. HENCE, what great Cauſe is there of Mourning to ſee God's Will ſo little known, and done in the World, by our ſelves & others; by the Wicked, and by the Godly. Look every where, &c.

USE. II. LET it put us upon it to be earneſt in this requeſt. Conſider, 1. The Rebellion of our Wills, is ſuch as none but God can ſubdue. 2. The not doing of God's Will is the reaſon of all the miſchiefs that come upon the World. Pray therefore over our own unruly Hearts, Pray over an hard-hearted Generation, Pray that God would enable others to do his Will; Pray that we may do it, yet now more than ever.

USE. III. TO teach us Patience in all Providences whatſoever.

QUESTION CIV.

WHAT do we pray for in the fourth Petition?

ANSWER.

IN the fourth Petition, which is [*Give us this day our daily Bread*] we pray, that of God's free Gift, we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this Life, and enjoy his Bleſſing with them.

WE have conſidered the Three firſt Petitions already, which refer to the Glory of God: The other Three that follow, reſpect our own, and our Neighbour's good. By the order of the Petitions we learn our Saviour's direction, *Mat.* 6. 33. Of theſe Three, the firſt relate to our outward Man, the two latter to our Souls. The *Former* of theſe now. In the Petition obſerve, 1. The thing Petitioned, *Bread*. 2. The nature of it, *daily Bread*. 3. The relation, *Our*. 4. The time, *this Day*. 5. The way of Communication, *Give*. 6. The ſubject, *Us*. The meaning of the whole is briefly comprized in the Anſwer.

1. *BY* Bread *underſtand the good things of this Life*. Bread is one of the chief ſupports of Life. Hence, by a Synecdoche, all things that are needful & uſeful for the ſupport of the Bodily Life, *Prov.*31.14. Papiſts interpret it of Sacramental Bread, thinking it too mean to Pray for outward things; but in vain. *Jacob* prayed for it, *Gen.* 28. *ult.* *Agur*, *Prov.*30.7. The things here to be Prayed for are, 1. Food and Rayment, *Gen.* 28. *ult.* 2. Health, *Jam.* 5.13. 3. Preſervation of our Bodies from Danger and Death. 4. Liberty from Bondage & Servitude. 5. Peace.

2. *BY* daily Bread *we underſtand a competent Portion of theſe good things.* The word here uſed is obſcure, but ſome Interpreters underſtand by it, Bread ſufficient for the day. *Agur* ſeems to give a good interpretation of it, *Prov.* 30. 7. It intends not only what is abſolutely neceſſary, but what is for convenience and comfort. Such as we may diſcharge our duty

duty with, and ſerve God cheerfully; a moderate Portion: And hence, under this Head, we Pray for God's bleſſing upon and with our outward Mercies. viz. 1. That the Lord would preſerve theſe comforts to us from loſs, and deſolation: Our Houſes from Fire, &c. *Pſal.* 127. *begin.* 2. That he would give us an Heart to make uſe of theſe things for our Comfort, *Eccl.* 2. 24. — 3. 12. 3. That he would comfort us by them, *Mat.* 4. 4.

3. *When we ſay* give, *it ſignifies, that we are to expect all this from God, as a free Gift.* Hence, 1. In asking theſe things, we muſt confeſs our own unworthineſs of them, that we merit them not; that we have forfeited the right once given us, in Innocency: that though the leaſt of Mercies, yet too big for us, as to our own worthineſs, *Gen.* 32. 10. 2. Hence, we muſt ask them humbly, with great ſubmiſſion, as Beggars an Alms. 3. We muſt be willing to wait for them. 4. We muſt ask them in Chriſt's Name, not pleading any good deeds of our own, for we never did more than our duty, nor that neither. 5. If God delay, we muſt count it no Injury, nay if he deny them, we muſt not charge him with injuſtice. 6. We muſt take what he gives us with Thankfulneſs. Furthermore we muſt ſay give, as acknowledging that our labour ſignifies nothing without his Bleſſing.

4. *WHEN we ſay* this Day, *we are therein to profeſs our conſtant and continual dependance upon him for our outward Comforts.* And this is right for Children. And here, 1. We acknowledge all to depend upon him, not only for the beſtowing it, but the continuance of it; every days preſervation of our Comforts is of him, and to be ſought; we therefore ask him to preſerve our Comforts; not that it is Sin to have more than for a day; but it is a Sin to think that it ſhall be ours a day longer than he will. 2. We Pray for a Spirit of Contentation, and againſt Sollicitude; if God gives us preſent Supplies, we muſt pray, that we may be ſatisfied. ——— We profeſs our truſt in God, and reliance on him continually. ——— We pray againſt diſtracting Cares, and Sollicitude: Thought-taking for to Morrow; and fear of Starving, though we have but as we need it.

5. *WHEN we ſay*, our Bread, *there are two things Petitioned*, 1. That we may have a right to it: And that, 1. Spiritual: That God would of his Grace, reſtore the title loſt by the Fall, *Gen.* 2. 17. and that by giving it us in Chriſt, and through his Righteouſneſs, and Merit applied, who is made Heir of all things, that we may be joynt-heirs with him. 2. A Temporal Right: Wherein, 1. Our Praying for it excludes not our Endeavours, but ſuppoſeth it. Hence we Pray, that God would give us a lawful Calling. 2. That he would Bleſs and Succeed us in it. Hence we cannot without Impudence Pray over an unlawful Occupation, nor expect God's Bleſſing, we may gain, but it is with a Curſe. 2. We Pray for the convenience of it: *Our Bread*: i. e. Such a Portion as is ſuitable for our Eſtate and Condition that God hath put us in; as God hath put Men into various Conditions in this Life, ſo there is a part ſuitable to this condition, whence that may be Pride in one which is Frugality in another. And there is alſo a Convenience in reſpect of the Soul, ſuch as may beſt ſuit it, to ſerve God. *Prov.* 30. 8, 9.

Use, I. SEE then their Sin, who, 1. Seek the things of this Life, without Prayer to God, truſting to their own Ability & Induſtry. 2. Quarrel with God about his Providence, if he doth not Anſwer them in their exorbitant deſires.

Use, II. EXHORTATION. 1. Would you have your outward Affairs to Proſper; commend them to God. If you meet with Diſappointments, Examine, *&c.* 2. See God in all Providences, referring to your Outward Man, to praiſe him, or to be humbled under his Hand.

Question CV.

WHAT do we pray for in the fifth Petition.

Answer.

IN the fifth Petition, which is, [*And forgive us our Debts, as we forgive our Debtors.*] we Pray that GOD for CHRIST's ſake would freely Pardon all our Sins, which we are the rather encouraged to ask, becauſe by his Grace, we are enabled from the Heart to forgive others.

THE firſt Petition of the ſecond part reſpecting Temporal Bleſſings, hath been conſidered; the two following reſpect Spiritual: and in that, there are two of them to one of the other, Teaching us, that our care for our Souls, ſhould be double to that of our Bodies. If any Object againſt the order of the Petitions, Why we are taught to Pray for Temporal before Spiritual; when he bids us, *Mat.* 6. 33. *Seek firſt the Kingdom of God*, &c. I Anſwer, the firſt intends the Principal: but there may be theſe Reaſons for this Order. 1. The Spiritual Bleſſings are moſt needful; yet Temporal are moſt ſenſible; and becauſe it comes in by the Senſes, Chriſt begins here. 2. God by Temporal Bleſſings, wins upon the Soul to ſeek Spiritual ones. 3. Chriſt thus ſtrengthens the following Petitions: ſhewing that if we depend upon God for a piece of Bread, much more for Spiritual Bleſſings. The two following Petitions may be conceived to involve in them all the Spiritual Benefits that Chriſt hath purchaſed for his People, which God hath in his hand to diſpoſe, and we muſt go to him for them; the former eſpecially reſpects Juſtification, and may contain Adoption under it, the latter reſpects Sanctification directly, and Glorification conſequently, as the Perfection of it; the firſt of theſe is now to be con-

ſidered, and it hath a peculiar reſpect to Juſtification, but it is to be looked upon as involving Adoption, which is not mentioned, but preſumed. Here we are to Pray to God as a Father, and therefore every one that would Pray right, and in Faith, ought to ſee to his ſtate of Adoption, as was intimated in the Preface. In the Petition 2 things, 1. The thing Petitioned, *Forgive us*, &c. 2. The Modification of it, *as we Forgive*, &c. Of theſe particularly,

1. IN the Thing Petitioned, or in the Matter of the Petition, there are two things. 1. The Grace ſought for, viz. *Forgiveneſs*; the word properly ſignifies to ſend a thing away; to remove it from one; it is uſed for a Man's remitting of a Servant, or a Debtor, by taking off his Servitude or Obligation from him, and is fitly applyed to Juſtification, in which Sin is ſent away from the Man, typifyed by the High Prieſt's confeſſing the Sins over the Scape Goat, &c. 2. The ſubject matter about which this Forgiveneſs is requeſted, *Our Debts*; Sins are therefore called Debts, becauſe we owe our ſelves to the Penalty of the Law, by reaſon of them; we have by them run our ſelves on the Score to Divine Juſtice. Hence in the Parable, *Luk.* 11.5. called our Sins, this is expreſt in our Anſwer, that God would, *&c.* There are five Concluſions here contained for the opening this truth; 1. That we are all guilty of Sin, this is the ſtate into which all Mankind are fallen; all are Sinners: *Rom.* 6. 12. 2. That by vertue of Sin, we are become Debtors to the Law of God. All Sin is either of Omiſſion or Commiſſion; by both we are made Debtors: by Omiſſion, we neglect to Pay the Tribute: by Commiſſion we abuſe all his Goodneſs: And this Debt is an Obligation either to Pay the Debt, or to go to Priſon till it be paid. *Mat.* 5. 25, 26. 3. That there is no way to get this Debt diſcharged, but in a way of Forgiveneſs. Forgiveneſs is properly the diſcharging of a Sinner from the guilt of his Sins, by the Application of the Merit and Satisfaction of Chriſt to him. Hence in the Anſwer. For Chriſt's ſake there muſt be a ſatisfaction, elſe Juſtice is not ſatisfied; there muſt be an application of it to us, elſe we are not profited by it. This is the only way to be diſcharged as will appear; 1. From the greatneſs of the Debt. 2. From the Nature of that Debt or Offence. 3. The Impotency of the Creature. 4. This is the way to obtain Forgiveneſs; Jeſus Chriſt was provided for that end, *Joh.* 1. 29 5. That hence Forgiveneſs is a Grace that is dayly to be Prayed for.

Object. *BUT Believers are Forgiven once for all, Juſtification is an Act of God, and a State of the Creature.*

Anſw. 1. WE ſin dayly. 2. There is the Merit of Death in that Sin. 3. If the ſin be Preſumptuous, God is provoked by us. Hence, 4. There are Temporal Chaſtiſements. 5. The ſenſe of Forgiveneſs may be loſt in a great Meaſure by ſuch ſins. 6 Hence, we need to call for farther Teſtimony, and the Fathers Reconcilement to the Child which is worth asking, though we know our ſelves Children.

AND let it be farther here obſerved, that Forgiveneſs, which is one part of Juſtification, implies, by a Synecdoche, the other part, *viz.* our being adjudged to receive the reward of Life and Happineſs, by the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, and is therefore to be Prayed for, by this Petition.

2. FOR the Modification of the Petition, *As we Forgive*, &c. This doth not ſet a Law to God, or give him a pattern, but is only a Subſcription to God's order of pardoning, which he hath required, *Mat.* 6 14, 15. it is our ſhewing a Conformity of Heart to God, that we are like him, that we have his Grace in us, and there is great Reaſon; For, 1. If there be a due ſenſe of the greatneſs of our Sins, it will make all the wrong we have receiv'd, little in our eſteem 2. The apprehenſion how little we deſerve Pardon, will put us to conſider what manifold Reaſon there is, that we pardon others. 3. How can we ſay, that we Love God, if we Love not our Brother, 1 *John* 4. 20. and if we Love them, we will readily Forgive them.

USE I. TO quicken all to be much in this requeſt. Conſider, 1. If we are Unbelievers, unpardoned, 1. We are undone without it. 2. There is Forgiveneſs with God for Sins 3. God will be Glorifyed. 4. You will be Happifyed. 2. If Believers are Pardoned, 1. This is the way to keep up the Peace between God and your own Souls. 2. It will be a mean to keep you more Watchful againſt Sin.

USE II. TO teach us, if we would ſpeed, let us be able to ſay, we have forgiven; to quicken us, conſider Chriſt's Parable, *Mat.* 18. 23, *&c.*

QUESTION CVI.

WHAT do we pray for in the ſixth Petition?

ANSWER.

IN the ſixth Petition, which is [*And lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil,*] we pray, that God would either keep us, from being tempted to Sin, or ſupport and deliver us, when we are tempted.

THIS is the Sixth and laſt Petition: the next foregoing Prays for Juſtification and Adoption, this for Sanctification and Glorification: under which Four are compriſed all the Benefits we receive by Chriſt, Spiritual. In the former we Prayed that Sin might be Pardoned, in this that it might be done away or purged: The order of the Petitions is according to the order of the Benefits of Chriſt; for

for thence all come to the Soul at the ſame time: We are Juſtified and Sanctifyed at the ſame time, yet there is a precedence in the nature of the things; the one is relative, the other is real: the one is in an Act, the other is in a Work, the one is perfect, the other is imperfect at firſt, and carried on ſucceſſively. Some make two Petitions of this, that ſo they may make Seven in all, not ſetting aſide the tendency to Superſtition, judging the number Seven would not be ſo material, yet it is certain, the matter of the Petition is one, and not two. The thing Prayed againſt in each part is Sin, and therefore moſt properly belongs to one Head. The Petition is expreſſed Negatively and Affirmatively; there is a Deprecation and an Apprecation. The joyning of this Petition to the other, intimates, that when Pardon is ſeriouſly ſought for, there will be alſo a ſeeking for Purification. The following of this Petition after the former, tells us, that a Perſon may be Pardoned, and yet not free from Complaints, and being prevailed over by Sin.

THE Anſwer takes up the meaning of both parts comprehenſively; but needs a little Explication.

1. WHEN we Pray, *Lead &c.* we pray that God would keep us from being Tempted. Temptation was conſidered under a double reſpect, 1. As offered, 2. As Embraced, or, Entertained. As to the firſt of theſe, we cannot abſolutely Pray againſt it as long as here; becauſe God hath revealed it to be his Will, that we ſhould meet with Temptations to Sin: yet here this requeſt hath place. 1. With ſubmiſſion, we may Pray againſt them as evil things, but ſo far as God ſees meet, they may not be. 2. With reſpect to the time of coming; that God would fit us for, and bring us in his time, to the place where Temptation ſhall be no more. But with reſpect to the Second, it is more peculiarly intended: And the Sum is, that if Temptation comes, it may not prevail. *Lead* &c. Some read it, Suffer us not to be led; to avoid the making God the Author of Sin; but the word is active: And tho' God is not the Author of Sin, yet he hath an Hand about it: In every Sin there is an Action that is good as an Action; and the Obliquity of it, which is Sin, &c. No Action without God. We here confeſs, 1. That we are liable in our ſelves to be born down by Temptations. 2. That we are not our own keepers, but our Enemies are too much for us. 3. That God can either preſerve us, or leave us: Our requeſt therefore is, that he would not ſuffer the Temptation to be powerful, by doing that which may give it an advantage. 1. That he would not leave us to our ſelves, and Corruptions, but guard us. 2. That he would not ſuſpend his Grace, or take it away from us. 3. That he would not ſuffer us fooliſhly to expoſe our ſelves. Here therefore we properly Pray for his good Spirit to warn us, counſel us, influence us, fill us with his Grace, help us to reſiſt, &c.

2. WHEN we Pray, *but Deliver*, &c. we Pray that God would ſupport, &c. Evil is in itſelf troubleſome, and harmful to us: It is either Temporal, or Spiritual: The former not in this Petition, but the Fourth. In the Greek it is, *the Evil*, with the Article. Hence ſome underſtand it, the *Devil*; and he indeed is the Temprer. But there is Sin, which is the Evil of Temptation, and the fruits of it. The word tranſlated deliver, ſignifies to pluck a thing away by main force. And there is a twofold deliverance here intended, according to our preſent order,

1. IN reſpect of the Temptation *offered*. When a Chriſtian finds himſelf aſſailed, he is then to Pray to be delivered from the force of it; and this is the poſitive Apprecation oppoſed to the former Deprecation; we Pray that we may not Sin, though Tempted. And to this belongs our Praying, 1. That God would diſcover the Temptation to us, that we be not cheated. 2. That he would ſtint the Temptation, that it be not beyond bounds. 3. That he would ſeaſonably put his Fear into us, that we may be afraid of Sin. 4. That he would give freſh ſupply of Grace. 5. That he would give preventing Grace, withdraw the fewel, *&c.*

2. IN reſpect of the Temptation *entertained*. A Chriſtian is ſometimes led Captive by a Temptation. He falls into Sin, and now he is to Pray for Deliverance. Hence to this Petition belongs, 1. Confeſſion of Sin, Aggravations of it. 2. Taking ſhame to it. 3. Burden of it, when under it crying for help. 4. Not contenting our ſelves with Pardon, but ſeeking power over it. We here Pray for Repentance; that God would make it evil and bitter, and make us hate it more, and be more watchful againſt it: That he would bruiſe Satan, &c. Then we Pray, that he would make way for our final deliverance; that Sin may die daily, and we may be perfecting Holineſs.

USE. I. SEE what a folly it is to reſt in hopes of Pardon, and not regard Sanctification.

USE. II. TO urge us to be much in Prayer againſt ſinful Corruptions. Conſider, 1. Our Tempters are many & ſubtle. 2 Our ſtrength is ſmall. 3. Our corruption is great. 4. The conſequence is weighty; every Sin provokes God, wounds the Conſcience, brings Sorrow. 5. Our whole dependance is on God, who will be ſought to, *&c.*

QUESTION CVII.

WHAT doth the Concluſion of the Lord's Prayer teach us?

ANSWER.

THE Concluſion of the Lord's Prayer, which is, [*For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever, Amen.*] teacheth

teacheth us to take our Encouragement in Prayer from GOD only, and in our Prayers to praiſe Him, aſcribing Kingdom, Power, and Glory to Him, and in Teſtimony of our Deſire and Aſſurance to be heard, we ſay, *Amen*.

IN the Concluſion two parts, a Doxology, and a Seal; the meaning of both which is included in the Anſwer.

1. IN the Doxology, there are two things, one implyed, the other expreſt. 1. That which is implyed is, *That we take our Encouragement in Prayer from him only*; this is intimated in the Illative [For] which ſhews that it is brought in by way of Argument, 2. That which is expreſſed is, that Praiſing of God belongs to our Prayers, and what the Praiſe is that is to be given him, viz. *Aſcribing*, &c. For a more full underſtanding of theſe, we may enquire,

Queſt. 1. *WHAT is meant by Kingdom*, &c.

Anſw. 1. A Kingdom is here put for Sovereign Authority, Supream Juriſdiction or right of Governing & Ruling over all things; it is the higheſt Power among Men. Now the Kingdom of God is the Government of the whole World, and all things in Heaven and Earth by his Pleaſure, *Pſal.* 29.13. *Anſw.* 2. The Word Power doth not here ſignify Authority, this is implyed in Kingdom, but a power of Efficacy, theſe two are by Men ſeparated, *&c.* *Anſw.* 3. Glory ſignifies an high eſteem, & includes in it high Thoughts, and magnificent Expreſſions: which Glory follows the former; as God is King and Mighty, ſo he ſhould be highly eſteemed and magnified.

Queſt 2. *WHY are theſe to be Aſcribed to God?*

Anſw. 1 IN Reference to God, they are the Praiſe *due* to his Name, and he *expects* to be Glorified by all that draw near to him. *Anſw.* 2. In reſpect of our ſelves; there are ſeveral grounds for it, *viz.* 1. To teſtify our high eſteem of him; acknowledgment is a neceſſary Ingredient in Prayer; for Prayer is a part of Worſhip. 2. To confine our Prayers to him alone; for it is only ſuch an one that is an Object ſuitable for us to Pray to, *Exod.* 15. 1, 2, 11. *Pſal.* 86. 2. 3. To ſtrengthen our Faith in God; Prayer without Faith, is of no worth; now theſe help Faith. —— This encourageth us to Pray earneſtly, it tells us that we have a God to go to, who is not like Idols, that have Eyes, and ſee not, *&c.* We are hereby certifyed that we are at the right Door. 4. To Quicken to Humility & Holineſs in our Prayers: when we conſider what vile Creatures we are, we oppoſe the conſideration, what a Glorious one we draw near to.

2. HERE is the Seal of Prayer, in the word *Amen*: Our Anſwer ſaith, *It is a Teſtimony of our Deſire and Aſſurance to be heard*; the word is uſed in Scripture in three or four ſenſes. 1. As an Adverb, and ſo it is an Aſſeveration, and it is tranſlated, Verily. 2. As a Verb in the Optative; and there it expreſſeth an inflamed Deſire; Hence Tranſlated, So be it. 3. As a Verb in the Indicative Mood; and then it ſignifies Aſſurance; and is as much as, I believe, 1 *Cor.* 14.16. Now our Anſwer ſuitably extends it to both theſe latter ſenſes: it is a winding up the Prayer with Faith and Hope, and an expreſſion of deſire and credit. It ſpeaks theſe two things, 1. That in our Prayers we are in earneſt, do not Compliment with God. 2. That we ask and rely upon him for an Anſwer, leave it with him, truſt in him; and both of theſe are neceſſary Ingredients in Prayer: for not to deſire heartily, is to diſſemble with the Heart-ſearching God: and he anſwers according to the deſires of his People. And Faith is that which commands the Bleſſing: *Be it according to thy Faith.* Yea, and the Soul is ſatisfyed in Praying according as it believes. And in a Word, theſe two Graces are the proper diſtinguiſhing notes, between a formal hypocritical, and ſincere Prayer to God.

USE. TO quicken you to theſe two things, 1. Be ſure to Addreſs your ſelves to God, as ſuch a God: *taking all your encouragement in Prayer from Him only, and in your Prayers to Praiſe Him.* 2. Make Conſcience in all your Prayers to have the *Amen*: Get your Deſires ardent; Feel your wants, and get Faith up, acting on the Power and Promiſe of God.

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